



The League of Women Voters Of Weston

March, 2012

No. 144

OPENING MESSAGE

Katty Chace

League of Women Voters of Weston

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This LWV/Weston Newsletter is published monthly except July and August. The LWV is a nonpartisan political organization open to all citizens of voting age.

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Submit articles to Katherine Wolfthal in
typewritten hard copy or by e-mail to
kate@weichi.com

Our Civics Bee against Wayland and Sudbury is the next big event on our calendar. Taking place this coming Sunday, March 25 from 2:00-4:00 in the afternoon at the Weston Middle School at 201 Main Street on Route 27 (near the old Finnerty's Restaurant). Each town will be represented by a team of nine, three adults, three High School students and three Middle School students. Weston will be ably served by Joe Mullin, John Fiske and School Committee member Sanjay Saini. The contestants will answer questions in mixed age groups of three. Our judge, for the 3rd year in a row, will be Boston College Professor of Constitutional Law Richard Albert. Refreshments will be served. Please come to cheer on Weston's team in this friendly competition. A beautiful eagle trophy will be awarded to the winning team.

Our spring Candidates' Night is scheduled for Thursday, April 26 at 7:30 at the Amy Potter Center at the Middle School. We'll start the evening with brief statements from the uncontested candidates, and then move into the contests for the Planning Board and the Moderator. We will follow our long-time practice of giving each contested candidate 5 minutes to make a statement, followed by an opportunity for questions from the audience. Since we haven't had any contested elections for the last couple of years, we hope that you will take this opportunity to attend and ask all your questions, so that you can make an informed choice in the election.

The Massachusetts League's annual Day on the Hill will take place on Wednesday, April 25 in the Gardner Auditorium at the State House. The topic will be "Money in Politics", and the keynote speakers will be noted public figures. The last hour is devoted to the unveiling of the League's legislative priorities for the coming year.

That same evening, Wednesday, April 25 at 7:30 pm, we are co-sponsoring with the Wayland and Sudbury Leagues a talk by

Professor Gordon Martin on his recent book "Count Them One by One: Black Mississippians Fighting for the Right to Vote", about the 1960s. Professor Martin has also been encouraged to include his observations on recent attempts by some states to restrict voting rights. The lecture will take place in the Lecture Room at the new high school in Wayland.

We have been approached by the Women's Community League to co-sponsor a talk by Gabrielle Clemens, our former board member, about recent changes in Massachusetts divorce law, particularly as they apply to alimony. We are happy to join the Community League in this project and will keep you informed when a date is chosen.

Our Annual Meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, May 24 at 6:30 at the library's Community Room. We have invited Senator Susan Fargo to be our guest and speaker, as she is stepping down after many years as our senator. We hope she'll be able to join us there.

CALENDAR MARCH - MAY 2012	
March 25, Sunday..... 2:00-4:00 p.m., Wayland Middle School, Rte. 27/Rte. 30	2012 Civics Bee
April 10, Tuesday..... 31a Coburn Rd. (David Hutcheson, 781-891-8046)	LWVW Board Meeting
April 25, Wednesday..... Gardner Auditorium, State House, Boston	LWVMA Day on the Hill
April 25, Wednesday..... 7:30 p.m., Wayland High School Lecture Room	Prof. Gordon Martin on voting rights and laws that threaten them
May 5, Saturday.....	LWVMA Council
April 13, Friday..... Clerk's Office, Town Hall 8:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Last Day for Voter Registration
April 26, Thursday..... 7:30 p.m., Weston Middle School, Amy Potter Center	Candidates' Night
May 4, Friday..... 12:00 Noon	Absentee Voting Expires
May 5, Saturday..... Town Hall Auditorium	Town Election
May 7, Monday..... 7:30 p.m., Weston High School Auditorium	Annual Town Meeting

WHEN IT'S TIME FOR ACTION

President

President Barack H. Obama
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20510
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/>

U.S. Senators

- The Honorable Scott Brown
2400 JFK Building
55 New Sudbury Street
Boston, MA 02203
(617)565-3170
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Washington, DC 20510
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- The Honorable John F. Kerry
One Bowdin Square, Tenth Floor
Boston, MA 02114
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304 Russell Senate Office Building
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U.S. Representative 7th District

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(781)396-2900
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2108 Rayburn House Office Building
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Governor Deval Patrick
Office of the Governor
State House, Room 360
Boston MA 02133
(617)727-3600
E-mail: Goffice@state.ma.us

State Senator 5th Middlesex District

The Honorable Susan Fargo
(617)722-1572
State House, Room 505
Boston MA 02133-1054
E-mail: susan.fargo@masenate.gov
Home: (781) 259-9623

State Representative 14th Norfolk District

The Honorable Alice Hanlon Peisch
(617)722-2070
(781)237-4719
State House, Room 473G
Boston MA 02133-1054
E-mail: alice.peisch@state.ma.us

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Kathleen Rousseau

The LWVW board meeting was held on March 13, 2012 at the home of Barbara Flannery.

We have paid the most recent installment of our per-member-payments to the state and national LWVs and still have money in the bank, thanks to our advertisers.

There was a discussion of the Moderator's Advisory Committee. Even before the study of Town Meeting practices has taken place, there are nine citizen's petitions for warrant articles on this subject. A concern was expressed that many of the responsibilities of the Moderator, such as appointing some committee members, will go unexamined. The Open Meeting Law now requires that the minutes of public meetings include the substance of any discussion.

Voter Registration at the High School was highly successful; 30 students were registered. Registration can take place as long as the student will be 18 by the date of the next election.

Gabrielle Clemens has agreed to talk about the changes in Massachusetts divorce law for the Women's Community League. The Community League has asked the LWV to co-sponsor this event. We discussed whether this could be done as a coffee hour, but we probably want to save our spring dates for a discussion of warrant articles. It is a good idea to work with other town organizations, so we will agree to be a cosponsor of this presentation.

We have tentatively selected April 26th for our town-election candidate's night.

The Civics Bee will take place on March 25 at 2-4pm. at the Wayland Middle School. We have the adult team, and the schools will provide the student team members.

Candidate's Night for the fall. The Primary is on September 6, just as school is beginning. We will try to arrange a meeting for Sept. 4; otherwise we will look for a time in the last week in August, Monday or Tuesday, in order to get a report into the Town Crier.

Annual Meeting – We will ask Susan Fargo to be our guest. Tentative dates are: May 24, May 16, or May 17.

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TOWN CAUCUS Katty Chace

The Town Caucus took place last Monday with a larger crowd and a bit more excitement that we've seen in recent years. There are two contests in our elections in May: Moderator Wendy Spector, who has held the office for two years is being challenged by Bill Sandalls, former Finance Committee member, and long-time Planning Board member Pam Fox is up against political newcomer Mike Gordon, owner of the Gulf station on route 117. In addition, lifelong Weston resident Ed Coburn is running to fill the seat of Selectman Steve Charlip, who has decided not to run for another term.

Two boards will have a new member next year, along with a returning member. Rick Manley was nominated to another term on the School Committee, along with newcomer Rosemary Thomaso, who has been active in the PTO. On the Recreation Commission, incumbent Richard Hall will be joined by first-timer Allison Elvekrog. Allison will be filling the seat of Greg Czarnowski, who is stepping down after 20 years on the Recreation Commission.

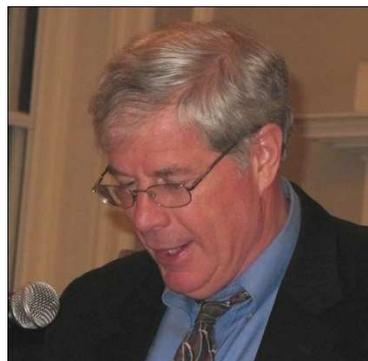


Ed Coburn, unopposed candidate for Selectman

In addition, several candidates were nominated for another term without any opposition: Assessors Gary Koger and Phyllis Kominz, library trustees Denise Mosher and Joel Angiolillo, Board of Health member Peter Taylor and Commissioner of Trust Funds Tom Bator.

Finally, John Fiske, Moderator of the Caucus, asked for three volunteers for the 1-year position of Measurers of Lumber. Robin Coutts, Susan Kannenberg and Richard Hall stepped up to the plate and were anointed caucus nominees.

In the balloting that followed for the two contested offices, Bill Sandalls garnered 61 votes over Wendy Spector's 27 votes. Mike Gordon got one more vote than Pam Fox, 42-41. Therefore all four of these candidates are caucus nominees, having received at least 15% of the vote. You will be able to hear all four of them at the League's Candidates' Night on Thursday, April 26 at the Amy Potter Center at the Weston Middle School. The uncontested candidates will also be given the opportunity to speak briefly that evening. The Town Election will take place on Saturday, May 5th at the Town Hall.



Also present was Selectman Michael Harrity



John Fiske acted as moderator...



... assisted by Town Clerk Debbie Davenport



Gary Koger is a member of the
Board of Assessors

Photos by Robin Peakes Coutts



WESTON'S TOWN MEETING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Barbara Hill

The Town Meeting Advisory Committee met for the fourth time on March 13, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the lower level conference room of Town Hall. Invited to form by invitation of Moderator Wendy Spector, the self-selected group, together with ex-officio (voting) members from the Board of Selectmen, the School Committee, the Finance Committee and the League of Women Voters, is mulling all of their respective thoughts on ways (big and small) to improve Weston Town Meeting. In addition, members of the Advisory Committee will attend other Town Meetings and speak with other moderators to gather additional information on protocols followed at other town meetings. Further, the Advisory Committee intends to address the question of how to increase

participation in Weston Town Meeting. The Town Meeting Advisory Committee meets every second Tuesday for the next few weeks, and I encourage all interested people to consider attending these meetings (as a guest, since the Advisory Committee voted to close the membership except by additional vote of the Advisory Committee.) Wendy Spector has encouraged the Advisory Committee to submit some recommendations for consideration as soon as May Town Meeting, so progress may be quite quick. Specifically, additional meetings are scheduled for March 27, April 10 and April 24 before this year's Annual Town Meeting, in each case at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall.

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CPC UPDATE

Some projects under discussion for Town Meeting

Nina Danforth

Hobbs Brook Dam

Off Lexington Street, just south of the Waltham line and the Hobbs Reservoir (part of the City of Cambridge water system) is Hobbs Brook and a sizeable pond created by the owners in the 1950's. At that time the property was jointly owned by the Albert B. Hunt and Frederic C. "Buck" Dumaine families. At that time, Buck Dumaine was president of the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad. He brought in railroad workers to dredge and bulldoze the brook. There was no Rivers Protection Act in place at that time; if it had been, the owners would

have had to apply to the Conservation Commission for a special permit to alter his wetlands to create a private hunting and fishing preserve. Such a project would probably not be approved under today's wetlands protection laws.

In a heavy rain storm in March 2010, the old dam burst and a wide swath of water gushed down through the woods. The current landowner, Weston Conservation Commission, oversaw temporary repairs and later sought advice from several sources as to what could be done to solve the problem permanently. Three public meetings have been held with outstanding visuals and

explanations of what has been done in similar cases. There are over 3,000 dams in the state, and many are unsafe, leaving owners worried about their liability. Several towns have undertaken to remove dams and restore the stream flow, putting in bridges, plantings and paths as appropriate. Weston has narrowed its choices to two: either put in a new 30' long spillway (dam) with heftier dimensions than the last dam, or remove the dam altogether and restore a meandering stream. The vote will take place at Town meeting, with the Con Com's recommendation to be made at that time. Voters will be asked to approve use of Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds for one of the two alternatives.

Case Corner Roundabout halted for this year

Every weekday, Wellesley Street backs up nearly to Regis College as motorists approach the stop sign in front of Lands Sake. Unless waived on by a traffic police detail, drivers often have a long wait for a break in the Newton Street traffic. The Weston Traffic and Sidewalk Committee has been working hard to solve this problem since 2010 and have proposed a new \$500,000 "roundabout" to the Selectmen. This small circle would be the first of its kind in Weston. It would slow and moderate traffic on all sides, with no more stops for drivers-- just a green, planted circle marked with arrows, with a raised edge for truck wheels. The committee is in agreement that it would be a great improvement to that part of town, though it

would not completely solve the backup for southbound drivers along Wellesley Street in the evening. Selectmen voted last week to table the proposal for this Town Meeting, since the Field School Area Master Plan has not yet been reviewed and evaluated.

Old Buildings needing a New Skin!

Weston is undertaking a major new push to catch up with its older buildings. Normal deterioration, on top of accrued delayed maintenance, is being examined by Facilities Director Jerry McCarty and the Permanent Building Committee (PBC). The results are neither simple nor low cost. On the Brook School apartments, for example, all three of the older buildings could get new roofs, replacement windows, repaired bricks and exterior trim for about \$4 million. The Community Preservation Committee is being asked to fund approximately half of this, with the rest paid by the Weston Elderly Housing Committee funds. Stay tuned for the details at the May town meeting; pop in to Brooks School Building C's common room to see a prototype of the new windows.

Last fall Town Meeting approved \$850,000 in CPA funds to restore the exterior of the Old Library. In the process of preparing bid documents, the Permanent Building Committee has come up with higher estimates for this work. Stay tuned for additional details and information on what may be requested in additional CPA funds.

Join us for **SPRING 2012 SPA WEEK!**

Spa Week

April 1- 30, 2012



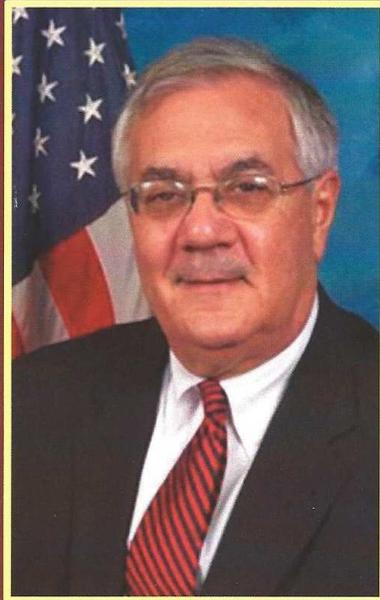
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CONGRESSMAN BARNEY FRANK



MONDAY, APRIL 2 ~ 7:00 PM

Amy Potter Center, Weston Middle School
456 Wellesley Street, Weston

HOSTED BY:

Weston, Concord, Lincoln, Natick, Newton, Sudbury,
Waltham, Wayland & Wellesley Democratic Committees.

For further information contact Jackie Haas
jacqueline_Haas@yahoo.com

All are invited

Press, Media & Bloggers Welcome

OBSERVER CORPS
Jean Thurston

WESTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Monday, February 27, 2012

1. Presentation of Proposed Traffic Roundabout – Case’s Corner

Traffic Advisory Committee
Tim McIntosh, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin

A proposed design for a roundabout was presented, with information on traffic counts and timing with and without changes.

2. Update on Old Library Exterior Preservation Project – Neil Levitt, Permanent Building Comm.

The cost estimate for stabilizing the exterior came in much higher than expected - \$850K originally and \$1.2 million currently. In part this is due to the discovery of serious drainage problems around the perimeter of the building as well as infiltration from the roof. It was decided not to spend money on the drainage problem at this time.

Roof repair will involve peeling back and sealing underneath slates and replacing all gutters and downspouts. The building structure is in good shape. It was well built originally. The windows need re-flashing but can be reused. A minimal heating system is needed to prevent further deterioration of the interior, but the eventual heating system should be done by the future tenant.

Selectmen Harrity proposed that the town wait to see what comes from the RFP before doing anything.

3. Approve Josiah Smith Tavern/Old Library Request for Proposals – Steve Cecil, The Cecil Group

Additional “wordsmithing” on the RFP is needed and examination by legal counsel is needed, along with some idea of CPA funds and town funds needed. Mr. Cecil said that eventual sale of the property is more likely than lease. (Lease would not allow for the Historical deduction.) A 60-day period is proposed after the RFP is published.

4. Receive Citizens’ Petitions for Articles to be Placed on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant and Refer Proposed Zoning By-law Amendments to Planning Board

- a. Amend General By-laws, Article 1, Section 9 Town Meeting
- b. Observance of Rules by Elected Officials
- c. Timely Agenda and Minutes
- d. Amend the General By-laws, Article XX, Dog By-law
- e. Term Limits for Weston Selectmen and Selectwomen
- f. Amend Zoning By-law, Section V.D.1. – Office Use as By-Right Use

- g. Raise the Quorum for Weston Town Meetings to 160
- h. Authorize Study of Distributed Antenna System (DAS) Options, Amend Zoning By-law to eliminate Cat Rock Tank from PWSOD District II, Repeal leasing authority granted to Selectmen to lease Cat Rock site to Telecommunications service providers
- i. Amend Zoning By-law to exclude Residential Standby Generators from the definition of Structure
- Items f., h. and i. were referred to the Planning Board.
- 5. Executive Session (exemption 3 – discuss strategy for collective bargaining with Weston Firefighters’ association, Inc., I.A.F.F. Local #3660)**

Sunday, March 25, 3:00 P.M.

Weston High School Auditorium

Bill McKibben

Author, Educator and Environmentalist, will speak on

"Report from the Front Lines of the Climate Fight: A Few Jailhouse Notes on What We Still Can Do."
Working together for a sustainable environment

Mr. McKibben will also be the guest preacher at the Congregationalist Church of Weston at 10:30 a.m. that same Sunday.



TOWN OF WESTON

Volunteers Needed - Tercentennial Steering Committee

Weston will celebrate its 300th birthday in 2013. The Board of Selectmen is seeking volunteers who are interested in planning activities and events for the celebration. There is a need for three people to fill the following roles: 1) chair the June 1 field day and fireworks event, 2) treasurer, and 3) member at large who can take over as chair of the steering committee.

Residents should send a letter of interest by Friday, March 30, 2012 to the Board of Selectmen, P. O. Box 378, Weston, MA 02493 or email selectmen@westonmass.org.