



The League of Women Voters Of Weston

September, 2011

No. 138

OPENING MESSAGE

Katty Chace

League of Women Voters of Weston

President..... Katty Chace
781-891-1087

Treasurer..... Kathie Strehle
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781-235-9506

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781-790-1138

Bulletin..... Katherine Wolfthal
Editor 781-891-9549

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.

League of Women Voters of Weston
15 Conant Road, Weston MA 02493

VOTER INFORMATION

1-800-882-1649

League of Women Voters
of Massachusetts
133 Portland Street
Boston MA 02114
(617)523-2999

Submit articles to Katherine Wolfthal in
typewritten hard copy or by e-mail to

kate@weichi.com

Welcome to the new fall season, and a new year for the League and the schools! We hope your summer was restful and rewarding. It's time to renew your League membership. Enclosed in this Bulletin you can find a renewal form. Our program for the year includes sponsoring Candidates' Night and Issues Forums, and providing voter information and voter registration drives. Our dues are the same as last year. Please send your checks to Rochelle Nemrow while it's fresh in your mind.

Superintendent of Schools Cheryl Maloney had asked whether the League would like to sponsor a Saturday morning coffee hour on October 15 to help get the word out about the schools' request for funding the new Field School. That proposal will be voted on at a Fall Town Meeting on Monday, November 14. We readily agreed to do that, and suggested that Field School itself would be a perfect venue, so people could see the problems with the old building first-hand. Plan on joining us at 11:00 am for a presentation and walk-through. The schools will also hold a public session in late October (tentatively scheduled for the 25th), which the League will co-sponsor.

Last Tuesday night the Selectmen held a hearing on the proposed Pay-As-You-Throw system at the transfer station. It entails charging a much smaller sticker fee and then charging people for each (specially purchased) bag they throw. The Selectman had gotten quite a bit of negative feed-back about the proposal, so have decided to hold a non-binding referendum at the Town Meeting on November 14. A more detailed account of the meeting can be found elsewhere in this Bulletin.

The Newton and Needham Leagues had asked if the Weston League would like to co-sponsor a Transportation Forum on November 29 at the Newton Free Library. Since transportation is very much a regional issue, especially considering our

frequent use of Riverside and Woodland T stops, we agreed that we would like to do that. More information will be presented in future Bulletins.

We will once again be participating in the Civics Bee this year, with the Sudbury and Wayland Leagues. It will take place in the spring in Wayland. Since each town has won the trophy once, now it should prove to be an exciting competition.

The vote on the most recent casino bill, allowing three casinos in the state, passed overwhelmingly in the House last week. The League strongly opposes casinos. This would be a good time for you to communicate your thoughts about casinos to State Senator Susan Fargo.

CALENDAR SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER 2011

October 10, Monday	Columbus Day
October 11, Tuesday 9:15 a.m. - 3 Claybrook Rd, Dover 02030 (Robin Reisman, 781-235-0005)	LWVW Board Meeting
October 15, Saturday 9:00 a.m. – Field School Lobby	LWVW Coffee Hour Proposal for a new Field School. Coffee and tour of school, followed by Question Period in the lobby
October 25, Tuesday Evening; time and place TBD	Public session on new Field School
November 5, Saturday	Tours of old Field School
November 11, Friday	Veteran’s Day
November 12, Saturday	Special Town Election
November 14, Monday 7:30 p.m., Weston High School Auditorium	Special Town Meeting: Vote on Field School funding

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
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202)224-4543
No e-mail address currently available
- The Honorable John F. Kerry
One Bowdin Square, Tenth Floor
Boston, MA 02114
(617)565-8519
304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
(202)224-2742
E-mail: john_kerry@kerry.senate.gov

U.S. Representative 7th District

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
(781)396-2900
(202)225-2836
2108 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202)225-2836
<http://www.house.gov/markey>

Governor

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: sfargo@senate.state.ma.us
Home: (781) 259-9623

State Representative 4th Norfolk District

The Honorable Alice Hanlon Peisch
(617)722-2320
(781)237-4719
State House, Room 26
Boston MA 02133-1054
E-mail: alice.peisch@mahouse.gov

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Robin Reisman

The LWVW board met on September 13, at the home of Katherine Wolfthal.

Treasurer's Report: Kathie Strehle reported that she received notice that our tax exempt status has been revoked because we have not filed taxes for 3 years, which she had been advised was not necessary, as our revenues were below the threshold level for taxation. She will repeat her attempts to get clarification from the State League. She will assemble the paperwork necessary to prove that our annual receipts are under \$25,000.

The PMP bills from both the State and national Leagues were higher than last year and higher than budgeted for, whereas last year they were lower than budgeted for. KS will pay the quarterly amount, as there are insufficient funds to pay the entire amount. The membership appeal will go out soon, so dues should start coming in before long.

Coffee hours: We will sponsor a coffee hour on October 15 at the behest of the School Committee to showcase the Field School construction project. We will try to get permission to hold the coffee hour in the Field School gym. We will also jointly sponsor a proposed evening forum on October 25. A tour of the Field School is proposed for Sat. Nov. 5.

Pay As You Throw (PAYT): The Town's recent decision to implement a PAYT protocol for trash and recycling disposal has generated a lot of controversy, including on the LWVW Board. Bill Sandalls's recent article from the Town Crier, opposing PAYT, was circulated. The general feeling was that the Town's decision was made quickly without adequate opportunity for public commentary. The idea of implementing PAYT for a trial period of a year was suggested, as long as there were good criteria for measuring success. There is to be a public hearing this evening and attending the meeting if possible was encouraged.

Regional Transportation Forum: The Board agreed it was a good idea to co-sponsor the Nov. 29 forum in Newton,

sponsored by the Newton League. The objectives of the forum would be to educate people on the current state of transportation options and present alternatives.

Membership: Renewal notices will be sent out soon. Announcements about joining the League or renewing one's membership should be made as a matter of course at all LWV sponsored events.

Community Preservation Committee: Barbara Hill reported that Nina Danforth had been appointed to the committee, replacing Harold Hestnes.



The League of Women Voters of Weston
wishes to extend sincere thanks to the following Friends
and Sponsors who have generously given their support to our work.

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NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS OF WESTON RESERVOIR, FALL 2011

Kay McCahan

Recent news about Weston Reservoir includes two items:

1. Dam Modification Project
2. Renewal of Memorandum of Agreement between Weston and MWRA regarding use of Weston Reservoir land for public access.

Dam Modification Project

As any of you who have visited the Weston Reservoir recently know, there is a construction project underway.

This work on the earthen dam is being done to meet the standards required by the Massachusetts Office of Dam Safety. Basically the project is composed of two parts: removal of trees from the earthen dam to prevent further erosion, and construction of a 36-inch parapet wall along the top of the dam to provide increased protection from heavy flooding events.

The Weston Conservation Commission reviewed the project at a public meeting in February and the Conservation Administrator will be overseeing the details on site from the beginning of work which started in early September to the end of the job in about four months. The MWRA has alerted the Friends of Weston Reservoir group and a public information meeting and site walk was held. There is signage on the site to alert visitors.

For a full description of the project you can go to the [website:](http://www.mwra.com/01news/2011/dams/weston/westondam-publicnotice.html)
<http://www.mwra.com/01news/2011/dams/weston/westondam-publicnotice.html>.

Ramifications for visitors include:

- The pathway around the reservoir will be closed until around Oct. 15. This is to insure

safety of pedestrians and dogs since there will be heavy equipment used for tree clearing and stumping. After that the area will be backfilled with stable, especially designed soil to fill in voids. Then there will be a layer of loam and seeding to ensure the embankment is stabilized before winter arrives.

- When this tree removal and stabilization phase is complete, a pedestrian access corridor, about 10' wide, will be established to provide an open pathway around the reservoir again. Meanwhile contractors will be working on the new 1000-foot-long, 36-inch-high crest and parapet wall along the top of the dam to provide protection from heavy flooding events.

The Weston dam is one of four dams in the MWRA system that are being modified to meet requirements of the Massachusetts Office of Dam Safety.

For more information contact Tom Lindberg, MWRA Public Affairs at (617) 660-7974.

Renewal of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) regarding Use of the Weston Reservoir for public access

On August 23, 2011, the Weston Board of Selectmen signed a 5 year renewal of the contract between the Town and the MWRA allowing public access to the Weston Reservoir land owned by the MWRA. Generally there were no changes made to the existing document. Participants agreed that things have operated well over the last eight years. The MOA will now go to the MWRA Board for its approval.



Trees on the earthen dam will be removed to prevent erosion



Artist's rendering of Crest and Parapet Wall - Weston Dam



Looking westward from Ash Street

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OBSERVER CORPS
Jean Thurston

WESTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2011

1. The Selectmen explained their plan for a **“Pay As You Throw” system** to be implemented at the transfer station. A large group was present and most were in opposition to this plan. The opponents believed that it would be more trouble, cost more and not necessarily encourage recycling. Others supported the plan as more fair for families of different sizes.

The Selectmen **agreed** to postpone implementation of the plan until after a vote to recommend or not at the Special Town Meeting Nov. 14*.

2. **Minuteman School district update**

John Blyzinskyj, Minuteman School Committee member from Weston spoke of the proposal to adjust town assessments to raise additional funds to compensate for students from non-member towns. These students pay tuition, but the towns do not pay annual assessments. The Selectmen **agreed** to send a strong letter objecting to this plan.

3. **Weston Affordable Housing Trust – Appoint Trustees**

The Selectmen **appointed** all the candidates interviewed: Edward H. Coburn, Susan McGann, Eileen M. O’Halloran, Michael J. Price, Sarah Like Ratigan, Nicholas Timperio and Steven L. Charlip, Board of Selectmen Rep..

4. **Special Town Meeting and Special Election Dates**

Special Election Sat. Nov.12, 2011 Special Town Meeting Mon. Nov. 14, 2011

5. **Policy on Town Manager Performance Review**

This will be in the form of a questionnaire returned to the Selectmen.

6. **Other business**

There will be a hearing on the Field School on Sept. 19 at Case House and a further discussion at the Selectmen’s meeting on Oct. 25.

*For a detailed report on this issue, see article by Katty Chace on Page 11.

The initial Brainstorming Session for Weston's 300th Anniversary year (2013) was well attended by members of many Weston organizations and a great array of good ideas were produced. Planning progress can be followed via agendas and minutes of meetings of the Tercentennial Steering Committee Weston300 Committee on the Town Website/Weston.org.

Suggestions are welcome, please send to Tercentennial Committee, Town Hall, P.O. Box 378, Weston, MA 02493.

Weston's 300th Birthday is coming in 2013



U.S. Bicentennial Parade 1976 (photo by Herb Randle)

How do *YOU* want to
Celebrate?

SELECTMEN'S MEETING: HEARING ON THE

THE WESTON300 COMMITTEE IS SPONSORING A LOGO DESIGN CONTEST TO PRODUCE A GRAPHIC SYMBOL THAT WILL BE USED ON ALL MATERIALS PRODUCED FOR THE TOWN'S 300TH ANNIVERSARY. THE WINNER AND RUNNER-UPS WILL BE HONORED AS PART OF THE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS. ALL ENTRIES WELCOME!!!

NEW TRANSFER STATION PAY-AS-YOU-THROW (PAYT) PROPOSAL

Katty Chace

A large, spirited and perhaps even angry crowd gathered at the Selectmen's meeting in the auditorium at Town Hall on Tuesday, September 13, to let the Selectmen know they weren't happy about the new Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) plan for the transfer station due to start on November 1. Selectman Michael Harrity started the meeting with a description of the rationale for the change. Explaining that the new method was intended to be revenue-neutral initially, it addressed two complaints of dump users: 1. some people make no attempt to recycle, just throwing all their refuse into the catch-all bin, and 2. it's inequitable that single people pay the same for a dump sticker as large families. (There is already, however, a reduced rate for seniors.)

The new plan would charge a much smaller fee for the sticker, and people would then pay \$1 for 15 pound or \$2 for 33 pound plastic bags at local stores (Omni, Ogilvie's, Walgreens, the market on Route 117). Harrity expressed surprise at the level of opposition to this plan reflected in calls and email.

When the floor was opened for comments and questions, about 20 people leapt up to form a line at the microphone. The first 15 or so speakers



were all strongly opposed to the proposal. Their objections ranged from anger at the process as having been undemocratic and sneaky ("decided in the summer when everyone is away") to being terribly inconvenient to being some sort of cozy collusion between the Selectmen and the bag-selling store-owners. Each criticism drew enthusiastic applause from the audience. Henry Viles said a petition with 237 signatures had been delivered to Town Hall which would delay implementation of the proposal until after a vote at the November 14 Town Meeting scheduled to address the Field School project.

After the negative comments, about five people spoke in favor of the Selectmen's proposal, saying it seemed fair, equitable and rational to them, including a man who said he's lived in two towns that had just such a system, and that it worked well.

At the end of the hearing, all three Selectmen agreed that, given the extent of the negative reaction, it would make sense to have a non-binding vote on the issue at the November 14 Town Meeting, thereby delaying the implementation of the new system.



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IT'S TIME TO RENEW!

Welcome back and thank you to all those who support the League of Women Voters. Once again, it's time to renew your membership. We are fortunate to have a group of dedicated individuals who have kept the Weston chapter active and vibrant, but it is only through your continued support that our League can survive and flourish.

In order for our League to remain strong, in numbers as well as in spirit, we need new people with new ideas. Men are welcome too! I encourage members to invite friends and newcomers to join the League. It is a perfect way for a newcomer to understand and participate in local government on a variety of levels

As a member, you'll receive our informative monthly Bulletin about local issues. You'll also be a member of the state and national chapters and will receive their newsletters and other educational materials. You can stay informed, understand the issues and support the power of women's influence in politics.

Your membership does not require any time or work on your part. However, we welcome and encourage you to attend our monthly board meetings and weekly coffee hours, and to contribute to our monthly newsletter. Any activity or event you participate in will be an even greater benefit to the League and will enrich your experience as a member and a citizen.

Please complete and return the attached membership form with your check made payable to the League of Women Voters of Weston.

Thank you for your support.

Warmest regards,
Rochelle Nemrow

League of Women Voters of Weston

MEMBERSHIP FORM 2011-2012

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan, political organization, which encourages informed and active participation in all levels of government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. We serve the local community in many ways:

- Sponsor Candidates and Issues nights before elections
- Provide voter information and conduct voter-registration drives
- Encourage voter participation with banners and rides to the polls
- Study local, state and national issues and hold open meetings
- Act upon carefully considered positions by lobbying and circulating petitions
- Publish a "Know Your Town" booklet
- Train members to be active and involved citizens.

Our membership year runs from July 1 to June 30. As a Weston member, you also belong to and receive publications from the State and National Leagues.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

Check one: Renewal New Member

I enclose a check made payable to **The League of Women Voters of Weston*** for:

\$60 Individual Membership (covers required local dues to the State and National Leagues)

\$75 Family Membership (two individuals in the same household)

Name of second household member: _____

\$50 Basic Membership

\$ _____ Additional Contribution (Any contributions above and beyond regular dues are greatly appreciated and assist our local league in providing more services and offsetting our operating expenses.)

\$ _____ TOTAL ENCLOSED

.....

\$ _____ LWV Education Fund (Tax-deductible contribution made payable by separate check to the LWV Education Fund)

Return form to: Rochelle Nemrow, 61 Beaver Rd., Weston, MA 02493

Do you know a friend who might be interested in joining the League of Women Voters?

Name, address & phone _____

* It is the policy of the LWV of Weston that no resident shall be refused participation in the League because of inability to pay. If a hardship preventing payment of dues exists, please contact Katty Chace at 781-790-1087.