

BULLETIN

October 2005

P.O. Box 34 Concord, Massachusetts 01742-0034

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CALENDAR

OCTOBER

19	Wed	LWVCC Member Open House, Harvey Wheeler Center	9:00-10:30 AM
22	Sat	LWVM Fall Conference, Empowering Voters: A force for change	9:30 AM-3:00 PM
20	Thurs	LWVCC Observer Corps Meeting, Everett Garden	9:00 AM
27	Thurs	LWVCC Member Open House, Concord Art Association	7:00-9:00 PM

NOVEMBER

2	Wed	LWVCC Board Meeting, 282 E. Riding Dr. Carlisle	9 coffee, 9:30 meeting
7	Mon	LWVCC Book Group, Trustees Room, Concord Main Library	10:00 AM
16	Wed	LWVCC Open Meeting, Concord Decisions 2006: Today & Tomorrow	7-9:00 PM
17	Thurs	LWVCC Observer Corps Meeting, Everett Garden	9:00 AM

DECEMBER

3	Sat	Concord Town Coordination Meeting, Town House	8:00 AM
7	Wed	LWVCC Board Meeting & Member Holiday Potluck, 1360 Monument St.	9:00 coffee, 9:30 meeting 12:00 potluck lunch

JANUARY

5	Wed	LWVCC Board Meeting, 342 Sudbury Rd.	9 coffee, 9:30 meeting
19	Thurs	LWVCC Observer Corps, Everett Garden	9:00 AM
30	Mon	Concord Town Caucus	

FEBRUARY

1	Wed	LWVCC Board Meeting, 41 Canterbury Ct. Carlisle	9 coffee, 9:30 meeting
8	Wed	LWVCC National Program Planning Meeting	
16	Thurs	LWVCC Observer Corps, Everett Garden	9:00 AM

MARCH

1	Wed	LWVCC Board Meeting, 63 Coppermine Rd.	9 coffee, 9:30 meeting
12	Sun	LWVCC Concord Candidates Forum	
15	Wed	LWVCC State Information Meeting	
16	Thurs	LWVCC Observer Corps, Everett Garden	9:00 AM
29	Wed	LWVCC Local Program Planning Meeting	

*Members are invited to attend monthly Board and Observer Corps meetings.
Contact Susan Sekuler or Cindy Nock for Board meeting location.*

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan grassroots organization of men and women formed in 1920 and dedicated to the principles of self government established by the Constitution of the United States. The League works to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizenin government.

President	Susan Sekuler	President@lwvcc.ma.lwvnet.org
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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Susan Sekuler, Presidents LWVCC

Dear LWVCC Members,
October is **LWVCC Membership Month** and to celebrate we are planning two events to give members an opportunity to reconnect with old friends and colleagues, meet new ones and hear about our exciting 2005-6 programs. You, your friends, neighbors and family members are welcome to attend both the October 19 kickoff brunch at the newly refurbished Harvey Wheeler Center and the wine and cheese social on Thursday, October 27 at the Concord Art Association, where we will have the opportunity to socialize as we tour the current sculpture exhibit.

Our local membership drive is part of LWVM's 2005-6 priority program designed to grow membership, to increase the diversity of the League and to introduce LWV to more Massachusetts citizens in order to strengthen our organization as we increase voter awareness and participation through our Voter Empowerment Project. We urge you to actively participate in helping us achieve our goal by searching your phone book, databases, email lists for people (men as well as women) whose interests suggest that they would be interested in joining LWVCC. Bring them to one or both of our membership events. Or, if you prefer, send your contact names to Membership Chair, Barbara Lewis, who will follow up with new member information.

Other October Events

October is also **LWVM Phonathon Month**. Several LWVCC members will be staffing phones for this annual fundraiser. Remember when they call you that 10% of all money raised by our members is returned to our local. Please give generously. And don't forget **LWVM Fall Conference on October 22 in Burlington!** Details are on the flyer inside the Bulletin.

November and December Events

Busy as October is, it's just the beginning. In November we will host a forum of town staff and committee members: **Concord Decisions: Today and Tomorrow**, where we will hear about plans for our town for the next five years. Our new **Book Group**, organized by Anne Hayden and Mary Wilinsky will also take off in November and will provide yet another opportunity for friendly get

together to discuss meaningful literature as well as current events. December brings our annual **Holiday Luncheon** which will feature Council on Aging Director Mary Ann Mortensen. And much more is planned for 2006, so be sure to buy a big new calendar for the New Year.

Independent Redistricting Commission Constitutional Amendment

Last Spring, LWVM presented testimony in favor of creating an independent redistricting commission. The LWVM views redistricting reform as critical to achieving proper political representation of our communities and minority groups and to fostering healthy competition in legislative races. This proposal also has popular support. In November, 2004, the non-binding "Fair Districts for Fair Elections" initiative, which called on state representatives to support an amendment to the Constitution creating an independent redistricting commission, passed in all 15 representative districts where it was on the ballot. The initiative assumes strict guidelines for public participation, nonpartisanship, retaining the integrity of existing communities, and respecting voting rights of minorities.

LWVM studied the specifics of this amendment and found it is well-designed to ensure the commission represents the diversity of the state of Massachusetts and that it will have the expertise necessary to do the job. Its actions will be bound by strict, common-sense criteria for drawing districts, such as compactness and maintaining the integrity of town boundaries, but the criteria will not allow the consideration of party registration of voters or candidate address, which open the door to gerrymandering. The legislature will retain a strong role as it must vote on the final map. More information about this initiative is contained elsewhere in this Bulletin.

As you can see, we are looking forward to a fruitful and exciting League year and I hope each of you will play an active part in keeping the League a vital part of our communities. I'll look for you at Harvey Wheeler and the CAA.

Susan Sekuler

LWVCC AUTUMN OPEN HOUSES

Wed. October 19th 9-10:30 AM

**Harvey Wheeler Center
Main St., West Concord**

Thurs. October 27th 7-9:00 PM

Concord Art Association

37 Lexington Rd, Concord Ctr

This month of October, the League of Women Voters of Concord-Carlisle will be holding two Autumn Membership Open Houses. These will be social gatherings, wonderful opportunities for members to enjoy time together with good friends. These will also be good times for anyone in our communities, women and men, who are interested in meeting the League, to find out more about activities and opportunities to become involved. If you happen to know someone who you think of as a 'League' kind of person, someone who cares about their community and is active in small and big ways to make a positive difference, then please ask them to join you.

The first Open House will be held on the morning of Wednesday, October 19th, from 9 to 10:30, at the Harvey Wheeler Center in West Concord. The second will be in the evening, from 7 to 9, on Thursday October 27, at the Concord Art Association, 37 Lexington Road. Refreshments will be served, coffee and tea and breads, or wine and cider and cheese and sweets. For more information or to rsvp for planning purposes, call 978-287-0049.

Barbara Lewis. Membership Chair

LWVCC BOOK GROUP

First mtg: Monday, Nov. 7th 10:00 AM

Trustees Room, Concord Library

This year the League has formed a book group which will meet three or four times a year to discuss a particular book. While the overall focus of the reading material will be nonfiction, the books that we read will be chosen by those who attend and thus will reflect the interests and backgrounds of those who want to participate.

The book which we have chosen for our first meeting is *Founding Mothers* by Cokie Roberts. The back cover indicates that in *Founding Mothers* "Cokie Roberts brings to light the stories of the women who fought the Revolution as valiantly as the menDrawing upon personal correspondence and private journals, *Founding Mothers* brings to life the everyday trials, extraordinary triumphs, and often surprising stories of Abigail Adams, Mercy

Otis Warren, Deborah Reed Franklin, Eliza Pinckney, Martha Washington, and other patriotic and passionate woman, each of whom played a role in raising our nation."

We will meet in the Trustees Room at the Concord Free Public Library at 10:00 AM. All League members and their friends are invited to attend and participate in the discussion. Participants are welcome even if they can only come to one or two meetings. At the end of this meeting those present will decide on the book that we will read for our next meeting. For more information, to express your interest even if you cannot make it to the first meeting, or if you have suggestions for books for the group to consider, please call or email Anne Hayden (Bulletin@lwvcc.ma.lwvnet.org)

Anne Hayden & Mary Wilinsky

CONCORD DECISIONS 2006:

TODAY AND TOMORROW

Wed. November 16th 7:00 PM

Town House

LWVCC's Fall Open Meeting will be on the topic **Concord Decisions 2006: Today and Tomorrow**. This will be a panel presentation on Concord's Long Range Plan. The panelists include Timothy Blanke (Long Range Plan), Chris Whelan (Town Manager), Marcia Rasmussen (Town Planner), Bill Edgerton (Public Works Department), and Brenda Finn (Superintendent of Schools for CPS and CCRSD).

Concord residents are invited to attend and hear an overview of upcoming Town projects and the costs and benefits of both major and minor programs, all of which will be servicing the current and future needs of Concord and its citizens.

Shawna Reid, Vice President

LWVCC HOLIDAY SOCIAL

Wed, December 7th 12:00 noon

1360 Monument St. Concord

(Nancy Beeuwkes' home)

Once again our annual holiday potluck social will be held at Nancy Beeuwkes' home. It gives all LWVCC members the opportunity to meet over a delightful meal, see old friends and meet new ones, and learn something new about our Concord and Carlisle towns. This year our speaker will be Mary Ann Mortensen, the director of Concord's Council on Aging.

MEMBERSHIP

Thank you to the great numbers of members who have returned the membership forms and dues this fall. Our response has been very strong. Let me give you a little run down on how our numbers are standing at this time.

On the roles of the LWV of Concord-Carlisle we have 179 current and what are referred to as 'active' members. 18 of those are affiliated by location only and actually joined at the state or national level. We are advised by national about these members so that we can communicate to them and involved them as if they were local members, which we and National encourage them to become officially as soon as their membership is ready for renewal. This fall 2 previously National members chose to renew with our local chapter and we thank them and welcome them.

Among our numbers we count 4 Honorary Members, who have been with the League for 50 years or more! There are 29 members who are husbands of LWVCC members. Additionally, there are several members who are men without the connection of a wifely League member. In this past year 9 women have become LWV members for the first time by joining the Concord-Carlisle chapter, and quite a few more have renewed lapsed memberships. This is great news and we hope to see this number grow. There are still 61 members who have not yet returned their forms and dues. If you have not renewed yet, go to the website, print out a form and send it in with your dues ASAP. If you are uncertain about whether your membership is current or not, give me a call and I will let you know and send you a form right away if you need it.

Something the League is trying to do to enhance the picture that the membership data offers, is to record for each member the date that they joined the league. In the past two or so years, as people join, this date becomes a part of their personal record. But any further back than this we have almost no information. What I would like to do is to ask each of you to call or email me with the date that you first joined the LWV. Understandably, many of you will have to guess, but close is better than no info at all.

So now you are up to date on membership news. We hope to see you at one, or both, of our Membership Open Houses this month. They are being held for your enjoyment, and to give you and

all other interested people in our towns a chance to meet with board members and hear about activities of our League. I hope to see or hear from you soon!

Barbara Lewis, Membership Chair
Membership@lwvcc.ma.lwvnet.org

LWVCC BOARD SEEKS RECORDING SECRETARY

The LWVCC Board of Directors is seeking a Recording Secretary for the remainder of the 2005-2006 year. As a member of the Board, the Recording Secretary will participate in formulating LWVCC programs and policies; she also will have the opportunity to interact with some of our communities' most active, interesting, and dedicated citizens. Duties involve attending monthly Board meetings, recording minutes and circulating them to the Board. Computer/email is a must. Board meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of the month, from November, 2005 through May, 2006. If you wish to nominate yourself or another for this position, please contact Susan Sekuler at President@lwvcc.ma.lwvnet.org

LWVCC WEB USER PRIVACY AND SECURITY

The internet is a great tool for doing research on a wide variety of topics. It can also provide easy access to a person's email address or other personal information. The steps needed to protect the privacy and safety of users of the LWVCC web site will be discussed at our November Board meeting.

Over this past year, I have manually removed many personal email addresses and phone numbers from material that was submitted for posting on our web site. Personal email addresses have been replaced, if possible, with a generic LWVCC web address in order to protect the privacy of the submitter. We would like to raise the awareness of our members to the risks of internet crimes and SPAM, and also to convey to the writers of flyers or articles the modifications needed to make their materials safe for web publishing. The idea is to give out as much public information as possible while protecting personal information.

If you have questions on this issue or would like to contribute to this discussion, please attend our November Board meeting, and/or send an e-mail to webmaster@lwvcc.ma.lwvnet.org or to any individual board member (see "Contact Us" page of our web site <http://lwvcc.ma.lwvnet.org>).

Li-Jen Lin, LWVCC Webmaster

LWVCC OBSERVER CORPS

The Observer Corps is an intrepid band of League members who attend meetings of the various Boards and Committees in Concord and write reports on their activities.

Concord is extremely fortunate in that so many of its citizens agree to give many hours of their time, with no compensation, to develop the policies and procedures which keep Concord going. Most of these committees labor in obscurity as the local paper cannot cover their meetings.

In many cases various committees are working on different aspects of the same problem. For example many land use issues are addressed by the Planning Board, the Natural Resources Commission, the Board of Health, the Historical Commission, and the Housing Authority. The League's Observer Report which is published several times each year is the one document which draws together reports from all these committees at the same time.

The Observer Report is mailed to all League members as a matter of course as well as many officials of the town and to other interested citizens. It is also placed on the League's website, making it available to anyone who logs on. At the moment the Report only covers Concord but a Carlisle section could certainly be included if Carlisle members would care to volunteer.

The Corps does need new members. At the moment we have no observer for the School Committee, the Housing Authority, the Recreation Commission, the Library committees, or the Finance Committee.

There are many other committees such as the School Building Committee, the Long Range Planning committee and the Historic Districts Commission which could also use observers. And of course we need substitutes!

The only requirements for becoming an Observer are that one be a member of the League, undertake to attend the committee meetings with reasonable regularity, and be able to write an objective report. The Observer Corps meets regularly on third Thursdays at the Everett Gardens Common room, however not being able to attend the observer meeting should not be considered an obstacle to being an Observer. Those who can come, though, do hear all the Town scuttlebutt.

At present the Observer Corps members are: Elsie Bracco-Board of Health; Gerald Lauderdale-Selectmen; Erica Morrison-Historical Commission; Frances Neville-Public Works; Jean Reinhardt-Planning Board; Tom Sisson-Light Board; Betsy Sluder-Natural Resources Commission. Sainly substitutes are Barbara Anthony and Valerie Dizenzo. This is a great group - Please join. For more information please call Louise Haldeman at (978) 369 8562.

LWVM SUPPORTS REDISTRICTING REFORM

Since 1973 the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts has supported redistricting to achieve proper political representation for Massachusetts communities and to foster healthy competition in legislative races. To this end the League currently is working as part of a coalition promoting passage of S12, the Independent Redistricting Commission constitutional amendment, filed by Senator Richard Moore on behalf of the League and other members of the Fair Districts Coalition.

Why is this amendment necessary? Massachusetts ranks 49th of the 50 states in electoral competition. Previous attempts at redistricting have exacerbated the problems by dividing cities and towns unnecessarily causing confusion and inconvenience and as well as interfering with minority rights.

To correct these flaws S12 would establish an independent redistricting commission whose members would have expertise in redistricting, would reflect the diversity in the state, and be insulated from the political process. Strict criteria for redistricting would ensure that districts would be compact and contiguous and of equal population, would respect the integrity of cities and towns, and would not dilute minority voting rights. The legislature will retain ultimate authority over the redistricting process, as it will vote on the final map.

Members of the Fair Districts Coalition are seeking individuals to assist in collecting signatures for The Fair Districts for Fair Elections initiative petition to assure that the amendment will be considered at the upcoming Constitutional Convention. If you are interested in learning more about the amendment or the initiative drive go to:
www.commoncause.org/ma/FDSign

