



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF ANDOVER/NORTH ANDOVER**

Bulletin

www.lwv-andovers.org

May/June 2012

Steering Committee: Ann Cobleigh, Maureen Sundberg
and Stefani Traina

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From Your Steering Committee

By Ann Cobleigh, Maureen Sundberg & Stefani Traina

Dear League Members,

Along with this "end of the 2011-2012 season" Bulletin, your Steering Committee sends sincere regards to all your families on this Memorial Day holiday.

While Annual Meeting will neatly close the 2011-2012 season, we look forward to establishing the new Board and goals, Voter Service activities which cover Presidential and State elections, then later, opportunities for the League to consider ways to improve our services to the local community and our members.

Our League has accomplished a great deal this year, in spite of the challenges and fallout from last year's advertising campaign (*so don't miss **Annual Meeting** when you'll hear all about things!*). At the State League level, we observed for ourselves, the progress and professionalism taking place while developing our own stronger support relationship with them. And coming quickly, our Board member Ann Cobleigh will attend the biennial **National League Convention** the first week of June returning the night before our Annual Meeting with the latest news. If you have any questions or concerns for her as our delegate, please be feel free to be in touch prior to her departure on June 8. Ann can be reached at 978-387-7160 or by email ann@realtor.com.

Locally, we've carried on the work that our local League does very well--conducting public information sessions about timely issues, organizing candidates' events, and helping to educate citizens before Town Meeting. We also had the pleasure of collaborating with Buzz to introduce

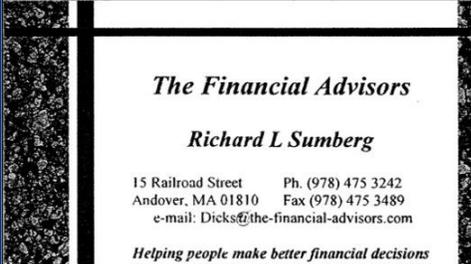
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a new program, **Youth in Town Government**. Be sure to read the article about the experiences of AHS students and town employees. Thanks to new member **Molly Foley** for spearheading this program for the League. We received lots of great feedback...more at **Annual Meeting**.

As the board looks forward to the 2012-2013, we see a daunting fall season as we will need to "Hit the ground running!" A Presidential election year along with state elections is always exciting and there will be the commensurate increase in tasks. We can foresee some of the event planning may have to begin during the summer so if you've been thinking about getting involved with a very short-term project, here's a great chance.

We know our members value what we do, we hope that you'll consider getting involved in the League next year. We have many ways to engage our members, and we would like to have as many of you involved as possible. If you have no extra time to give, please consider making a donation to our local League so that we can continue to provide programs of value to our communities.

We encourage you all to join us at **Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 13 at 6:30 p.m. at Memorial Hall Library**. Consider bringing a friend, as we are pleased to have Dr. Harry Wessel, Chair of the Political Science Department at Merrimack College as our guest speaker. He will talk about political advertising and its impact on voters. Dr. Wessel has a very engaging style of speaking and will share a wealth of information about this important topic. The business meeting will follow Dr. Wessel's talk.

The [Annual Meeting packet](#) will be available on our website for you to print and bring to the meeting. RSVP to [Stefani](#). Light refreshments will be served and donations of food or drink are welcome.

Ann Cobleigh
Maureen Sundberg
Stefani Traina

Spring Calendar

June

- 6 Wed Board meeting, 12 noon, Panera Bread
8-12 F-M LWVUS 50th Annual Convention Washington
- 12 Tue North Andover Town Meeting
13 Wed Annual Meeting and Presentation by Dr.
Harry Wessel

6:30 P.M. Memorial Hall Library, Andover

Students Experience Town Government

by Molly Foley

By all accounts Andover's first **Youth in Town Government Day** was a smashing success! On April 10th, the day was kicked off with a bang thanks to Andover Youth Service staff who engaged students and town employees in a game of Human Bingo. This was a great way for everyone to mingle and talk with each other while finding out fun facts such as who had had a pie thrown in their face and who could do "the worm" or play the piano.

After Bingo everyone settled in for the staff meeting portion of the day. Town Manager, *Buzz Stapczynski* opened the meeting by asking everyone to interview the person to his or her left and then to introduce that person to the group. This was also a nice way for everyone to learn some personal information about other members of the group. The remainder of the meeting included time for each of the department heads to talk a little bit about what was going on in their departments. Some of the projects that the department heads are working on include solar projects, upgrading sidewalks to be ADA compatible, removing a dam, creating an outdoor space at the back of the library, and presenting a warrant article to fund upgrades to the town's technology. *Kathy Urquhart*, Director of Elder Services, also read a beautiful poem written by a member of the writing group called The Write Stuff.

Following the staff meeting the students spent about an hour and a half shadowing the department head they were matched with. The students commented that it was helpful to see how the departments interact with each other. Everyone met back together for lunch which was followed by a lively discussion lead by *Sheila Doherty*, Town Moderator. This discussion included information about Town Meeting, which lead to a discussion about lowering the voting age and the general state of civics education in our schools.

Ultimately, *Youth in Town Government Day* was an excellent opportunity for our students to get a better understanding of what it really takes to run the town

the size of Andover, and it gave the leaders of our town the chance to find out what is important to our youth.

Thoughts from the Participants:

I thoroughly enjoyed my experience participating in the Youth in Town Government Program. I chose to shadow the Director of Elder Services, Katherine Urquhart. From Ms. Urquhart, I learned the basics of how the Senior Center is run and found out about the many and varied resources in place for Andover's senior citizens.

I also had a chance to meet other members of town government, including the Town Manager, Reginald "Buzz" Stapczynski, and the Town Moderator, Sheila Doherty. The discussion with town officials gave me a better understanding of the essential functions performed by town government as well as its complexity. I gained a newfound appreciation for aspects of my town that I take for granted, such as clean and clear roads, safe drinking water, and streetlights.

Most of all, I appreciated that fact that my fellow students and I were treated with respect by the members of Town Government, and our opinions were solicited and considered. This made me feel that I truly had a voice.

I very much appreciate having had this opportunity, and I hope that it will continue to be offered to Andover High School students.

~Marina Renton, AHS Junior

For me, this was a great experience to have and I am excited that it was offered this year. I personally am not very involved in government, so I was happy to get a first-hand look at how it works. I now know so much more about what the town government is, and what it does, from that one day of shadowing the officials. It's important to know how the system controlling the aspects of our lives in Andover works and I am happy to say I understand now!

Thank you so much Mrs. Foley for organizing this! I thought it was great to be able to ask questions and really get involved. Next year I would try to tell more

students about it. A couple of my friends said they wished they knew about it sooner, most of them will be graduating this year, but hopefully next year there will be more recruits!

~Brynn Stevens

I just wanted to share that Emily was articulate, very candid, and certainly willing to share her thoughts and feelings about Andover, the schools, and being an adolescent. I thoroughly enjoyed the time. Thank you.

Nancy A. Duclos
Assistant Superintendent
Andover Public Schools

How refreshing and invigorating to spend the day with such an interesting and interested group of high school students! The kids were so honest, so open, so insightful. We "elders" will be leaving the future in capable hands. I especially enjoyed showing "my" student just what I do all day at Memorial Hall Library and talking with her about what she does all day. Hopefully, this will be the first of many Youth in Town Government events.

Beth Mazin
Library Director
Memorial Hall Library

It was my pleasure in having the opportunity to participate in this year's Youth In Town Government Day. I was particularly impressed as to how knowledgeable the students were about the operation of Town Government and their interest in future economic growth in the Town. Having a chance to meet with Andrew Meshnick and his classmates to discuss ongoing projects in the downtown, provided me with a different perspective of youth needs and their perception of downtown.

Thanks again for including me in this forum.

Paul Materazzo
Director of Planning

I was very pleased with Youth in Town Government Day. The League did a great job lining up the students and matching them with department and division heads. The Andover High School students continue to impress me with their critical thinking skills. We had a stimulating discussion about

lowering the voting age to 17 years of age. The day gave us the opportunity to introduce the young adults to local government and Town Meeting. Perhaps we will have a future Selectman, Town Manager or Police Chief out of this group! Overall it was a huge success and something I would like to do again next Spring!

Buzz Stapczynski
Town Manager

FACT Hosts Annual Arbor Day Event

by Amy Janovsky

The Friends of Andover Community Trees (FACT) hosted its annual Arbor Day event on Saturday, April 21st at Memorial Hall Library. FACT was founded by several League members, along with members of the garden clubs and others who share their interest in trees. Chris Ward, of the Trustees of Reservations, started the event with a discussion of environmentally sensitive land management at the Ward Reservation, including their introduction of bow hunting to reduce deer population. Chris also described how the Trustees have opened up areas of savannah to augment the forested areas of the Ward Reservation. Increasing habitat diversity enables a wider range of insect, plant and animal species to thrive.

Andover Conservation Director Bob Douglas spoke next, explaining Andover has joined the effort to reduce deer population in town, after field reports from botanist Tom Rawinski showed that deer are browsing so heavily that tree regeneration is suffering. This leaves our forests particularly vulnerable to insects and storm damage. Without a healthy vegetative understory, a forest that is damaged cannot regrow. In consideration of tree damage by tornadoes in western MA and Asian Longhorned beetles in the Worcester area, it is important to reduce deer browsing so that the layers of the forest can regenerate. Wildflowers such as Ladyslipper orchids are another indicator of heavy deer browsing. If the wildflowers are missing, it's a clue that deer populations are likely on the rise. Both speakers showed slides of deer "exclosures" in which fencing limits deer browsing and allows plants to regrow.

Andover Health Director Tom Carbone spoke about tick-borne illnesses that are on the rise in Andover, including Lyme disease, Erlichiosis (or anaplasma), and Babesiosis. Deer are an important host of ticks, and are part of the reason ticks are becoming so prolific, although white-footed mice are also hosts. Tom agreed that it's crucial to manage deer populations, but difficult to predict whether this will significantly slow tick-borne illnesses, so he stressed the importance of protective clothing and repellents. Tom also spoke at length about beaver management, showing slides of beaver dams in which "beaver deceivers" have been installed. He shares oversight responsibility with the Conservation Commission, as permits are required for all beaver management activities, and trapping must be done by a licensed professional.

The event was recorded and will be rebroadcast on Andover Cable TV. It's available online at [ACAM](#).

Observing Andover Committee Meetings

Once the local Town Election process was completed, Ann Cobleigh has made it a point to continue attending a variety of committee meetings as both private resident and on behalf of the League. She hopes to provide written summaries for future Bulletin issues.

About the League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters is a 91-year old national nonpartisan organization that encourages the informed and active participation of individuals in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League neither supports nor opposes candidates for office, elected officials or political parties at any level of government.

The Andover/North Andover League focuses on topics directly impacting the citizens of our communities.

League membership is open to all citizens, both women and men.

Membership Form

Sign up [online](#) or complete and mail the form

below. When you sign up online you will have the option of paying by credit card or PayPal. The League's membership year is July-June.

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____ \$55 Basic Member

____ \$60 Contributing Member

____ \$75 Sustaining Member

____ \$100+ Patron

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____ \$35 Student (under 24 yrs. old)

____ \$75 Household Dues (2+ persons in same household)

____ In addition to my membership fee, I'd like to make a contribution of \$____.

____ Enclosed is a separate check containing my tax-deductible contribution of \$____ payable to the Education Fund, which supports the LWV's educational activities.

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