



Bulletin

May 2005

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P.O. Box 514
Andover, MA 01810

www.LWV-Andovers.org

President: Peggy Kruse Membership: Jennessa Durrani Editor: Michael Frishman

League of Women Voters of Andover/North Andover

President's Letter

With the arrival of spring, the League is starting to wrap up this year and plant the seeds for next. Thanks to the organizers of our recent programs: The Organic Lawn and Garden Fair, orgnized by Joyce Ringleb and the Sustainability Committee, was quite educational. A video is being edited for rebroadcast. Al Robbat's talk at the Andover library comparing spending practices in different Massachusetts communities drew a good crowd; his presentation should be available soon on the Andover High website. The annual Andover warrant forums were well done (thanks to Stefani Goldshein, Lolli Sumberg, Alix Driscoll and Diane Hender) and gave rise to stimulating discussions when it came time to decide whether we as a League should take positions on any Town Meeting Warrant articles.

We finish this year with an educational forum on Affordable Housing, three town fairs (N. Andover Women's Conference, N. Andover Sheep Shearing

Annual Meeting & Pot Luck Dinner

at Marland Place
15 Stevens Street, Andover

Wednesday, May 18, 2005

6:00 Appetizers & Dinner
8:00 Annual Meeting

R.S.V.P. Attendance and Meal Contribution
Jennessa Duranni 978-470-3290 by May 15 please

Please bring the Annual Meeting information (pages 2-7 of this Bulletin) and your red Handbook to the meeting. All members and guests welcome.

Day, and Andover Day), and our Annual Meeting (see calendar on back page for dates). The town fairs are a great way to spend time outside on a (hopefully) beautiful day while learning

about opportunities in your community; be sure to visit the League table if you attend.

The Annual Meeting starts with a social hour and potluck dinner and then proceeds to election of officers

North Andover Women's Conference
Sunday, May 1 – 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Stevens Estate, 723 Osgood Street, N. Andover

and approval of the League's positions and program for next year. New members are always welcome at Annual Meeting; it is a great place to meet other members and to get involved in the issues that most interest you.

During the summer months, we plan to continue the monthly Lunch & Conversation at Panera's. These are golden opportunities to meet and socialize with League members. Mark your calendars for the 14th of each month (or the Friday before if the 14th falls on a weekend), bring your kids and visitors, and come catch up with other League members.

The LWVA/NA has several delegates attending the state League convention in May and also several members attending the moderator training. The state League is proposing to focus on empowering voters and affordable housing in the upcoming year. All League members are welcome to participate on these state committees. The proposed slate for the LWVM Board of Directors includes the following Andover/North Andover League members: Madhu Sridhar (president), Cynde Egan (PR) and Michael Frishman (Voter editor). As Michael moves on to his new duties for the state Voter, he is stepping down as editor of the Bulletin, a service he performed

unflappably for almost five years. Many thanks, Michael!
I would like to thank every-

one whose contributions have helped make this past year a success for the League – the myriad of programs, the informative Bulletin articles, and the advocacy for issues are the backbone of what makes the League an asset to our communities.

And finally, I would like to thank the League board for cheerfully undertaking the tasks necessary to keep our League running. It's a pleasure working with you.

I hope to see many of you at our spring events, and wish everyone a wonderful summer. – Peggy Kruse

Local Program Planning

By Stefani Traina Goldshein

At our local program planning unit on Wednesday, April 6, the board approved the following study, action, and monitor items, contingent upon finding a chair for each project. The membership will vote on the following 2005-2006 Andover/North Andover program at the Annual Meeting Wednesday, May 18.

Ongoing local study and action programs:

- Affordable Housing (Study) – Annette Nickerson - Conduct research on the different aspects of affordable housing by attending seminars, speaking to experts and other people in the field, including research of 40R, (Smart Growth), developers, etc., with the intent of holding a unit in the Spring.
- Sustainability & Natural Resources (Action) – Joyce Ringleb - Inform about and advocate for building sus-

Thank You!

The LWVA/NA with gratitude thanks Andover High students Chris Mullen and Mark Sylvester for their fine work taping the LWV Warrant Forum Thursday, April 14, at the Andover Library. Their efforts made it possible for interested Andover residents unable to attend to also see the Forum.

tainable communities and assist with the development and adoption of sustainability indicators in both towns. Educate officials and the public about water quality and conservation, and advocate for reduced pesticide use.

- Voter Service (Action) – Diana Walsh, Andover and Kathy Stevens, North Andover - Encourage citizen participation in local government by sponsoring educational events such as Candidate Debates, precincting, and voter registration.
- Community Read-Along (Action) – Stefani Goldshein and Sondra Finegold
- Know Your Town Fair (Action) – Heather Holman (The event is now combined with Andover Day and will be held in June)
- Community Paths (Monitor) – Michael Frishman
- Reproductive Choice (Monitor) – Faith Johnson - Monitor the public policy (continued page 5)

Please Consider Renewing Your Membership Now or at Annual Meeting!

LWV Andover/North Andover 2005-2006 MEMBERSHIP

_____ \$55 Individual _____ \$60 Contributing _____ \$75 Sustaining _____ \$100 (and over) Patron

_____ \$75 Household (2 persons in same household) _____ \$35 Senior Citizen (65 and over)

_____ \$55 Associate Member (non-voting)

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

_____ Enclosed is a separate check, my tax-deductible contribution of \$_____ to the Education Fund.

Send checks payable to: **LWV OF ANDOVER/NORTH ANDOVER:**

Membership, P.O. Box 514, Andover, MA 01810

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____ Areas of Interest _____

Thank you! Jennessa Durrani, Membership, 978-470-3290

League of Women Voters of Andover/North Andover

Potluck Dinner & ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, May 18, 2005, 8PM – Marland Place, Stevens Street, Andover

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Appointment of Parliamentarian
3. Minutes: May 19, 2004, Annual Meeting
4. Appointment of Reading Committee
5. President's Report
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Budget for 2005-2006
8. Presentation of proposed Bylaw changes
9. Presentation to membership of new position on "Centers"
10. Re-adoption of existing positions
11. Local Programs – Discussion for Adoption
 1. Affordable Housing (Study) – Annette Nickerson
 2. Review of Andover's Budget (Study) – Lolli Sumberg
 3. Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals: process and decisions (Study) – needs chair
 4. Review of Open Space Bylaws (Study) – needs chair
 5. Review of Police Details (Study) – needs chair
 6. Sustainability & Natural Resources (Action) – C. Joyce Ringleb
 7. Voter Service (Action) – Diana Walsh
 8. Community Read-Along (Action) – Stefani Goldshein and Sondra Finegold
 9. Know Your Town Fair (Action) – Heather Holman
 10. Community Paths (Monitor) – Michael Frishman
 11. Reproductive Choice (Monitor) – Faith Johnson
12. Report of the Nominating Committee
13. Other Business
14. Directions to the Board
15. Adjourn

Program Planning, cont'd aspects of reproductive choice and support continued protection in this area.

Studies that are completed and will not continue next year:

- **Centers Study (Action)** – Lolli Sumberg
The study has been completed and a new position has been adopted. It will be re-adopted at Annual Meeting.

Suggestions for new studies:

1. **Review of Andover's Town Budget** – Lolli Sumberg
The main focus of this study would be to review what services and programs the town should provide the citizens and how these services and programs should be funded, i.e., through taxes, through fees, or self-supporting. Some possible topics to be considered are the current budget model, costs that determine the budget, Proposition 2½ options, and the public's expectations of the budget and town departments.
2. **Review of Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals process and decisions** - needs a chairperson - This could include variances granted by the ZBA, special permits by the Planning Board, and opportunities for citizen input.
3. **Review of open space, including by-laws, loopholes and uses** – needs a chairperson
4. **A study of the requirements for police details, including comparisons of practices with other communities**

– needs a chair person

Other proposed ideas for League projects for next year include:

- A “Know Your Town” cable television project, to be conducted in both Andover and North Andover, (possibly involving high school students), including filming the activities of town departments on location and editing the results into a show for broadcast on the cable access channels.
- The League could host a large public event on a timely topic, such as the Patriot Act.
- An informal community discussion on the military draft and related issues, to involve high school students.

Centers - New Position

By Lollie Sumberg

The consensus reached by the Centers Study Units in February resulted in the following proposed changes and new positions that were brought to the Board for approval at their March meeting. The Board, at that meeting, approved the changes that follow; the membership will also be asked for its approval at the May 18 annual meeting.

On page 20 of the red Handbook, the **Youth Services and Facilities** section will be re-titled to read: **Community Services and Facilities**.

Section C will be deleted. The existing Section D will become Section C. The existing Section E will become Section D. The following Sections will be added:

- E. The League supports dedicated space, programs and services funded by the Town for seniors. Prior to advocating specific proposals, consideration should be

Missing a Bulletin?

The Bulletin is posted on the LWV-A/NA website: www.lwv-andovers.org

Andover/North Andover League of Women Voters

Officers and Directors

Nominating Committee report for 2005-2006

President Peggy Kruse

Vice-President Program - Stefani Goldshein

Vice President Administration - Diane Hender

Secretary _____

Treasurer - Cynthia Egan

Bulletin - Jenessa Durrani

Handbook - Carole Pelchat

Public Relations - Cynthia Egan

Legislative Action - Carole Pelchat

Meeting Coordinator - Amy Janovsky

Membership - Joan Duff

Nominating Committee

Joan Duff

Tina Girwood

Michael Frishman

Carole Pelchat

Units - Sue Dennett

Finance _____

Voter Service-Andover - Diana Walsh

High School Outreach _____

Voter Service-North Andover _____

Community Read Along - Stefani Goldshein

Know Your Town Fair - Heather Holman

Observer Corps - Jenessa Durrani

Study Chairs

Affordable Housing - Annette Nickerson

Sustainability/Natural Resources - Joyce Ringleb

Community Paths - Michael Frishman

Reproductive Choice - Faith Johnson

given, but not limited, to size, cost, location and transportation services.

F. The League supports dedicated space, programs and services funded by the Town for youth. Prior to advocating specific proposals, consideration should be given, but not limited, to size, cost, location and transportation services.

G. The League supports a multiage community center, as long as it addresses unmet needs for dedicated space for youth and/or seniors. Prior to advocating specific proposals, consideration should be given, but not limited, to size, cost, location, and transportation services.”

Proposed LWVA/NA Bylaw Changes

A bylaw subcommittee of Carole Pelchat, Diane Hender and Peggy Kruse proposed the following changes to the LWVA\NA bylaws. These changes were approved by the board on 2/2/05 and will be brought to the Annual Meeting for final approval. If you have any comments or concerns about the proposed changes, please contact a member of the bylaw subcommittee:

- Bylaw change to household dues – current wording leads to awkward dues of \$77.50– Bylaws, Article VI. Financial Administration, Sec. 2 Dues (p 11 Red Handbook):

Current: “c) If more than one individual of the same family household is a member, they are eligible for household membership dues. One member pays the full amount of annual dues, and each family member after pays half of the determined rate of annual dues.”

Proposed change: “c) If more than one individual of the same household is a member, they are eligible for household dues. One member pays the full amount of annual dues, and each additional member of the household pays approximately half of the determined rate of annual dues, as approved by Annual Meeting.”

- Bylaw change to Sec. 2. Dues (p 11 Red Handbook): The membership counts for the state and national PMP are not submitted until January 31, so we should give members until January 31 to re-register. Also, a new member who joins in March will have a hard-time seeing the need to pay again in July, so we would like to give new members joining after Jan 31 a half-year “free” membership.

Current: “b) New members who join after January 1 will pay half the annual dues.”

Proposed change: “(b) First time members who join after January 31 and before July 1 will be considered as having paid dues for the next fiscal year.”

- Bylaw change to add specificity (p 11 red Handbook)
Current: “Sec. 5 Audit. An annual audit of the financial records is to be completed within four months of the closing of the fiscal year.”

Proposed change: “Sec. 5 Audit. An annual audit of the financial records is to be completed within four months of the closing of the fiscal year by an auditor appointed by the Board.”

- Bylaw change to Article VIII Nominations and Elections (p 12 Red Handbook) – this section discusses Annual Meeting, but does not specify that the elections should be at annual meeting.

Current: “Sec. 3 Elections. The election shall be by ballot, provided that when there is but one nominee for each office, the Secretary may be instructed to cast the ballot for every nominee. A majority of those qualified to vote and voting shall constitute an election. Absentee or proxy vote shall not be permitted.”

Proposed: “Sec. 3 Elections. The election shall be held during Annual Meeting by ballot, provided that when there is but one nominee for each office, the Secretary

may be instructed to cast the ballot for every nominee. A majority of those qualified to vote and voting shall constitute an election. Absentee or proxy vote shall not be permitted.”

Sustainability/Natural Resources

By C. Joyce Ringleb

The sustainability committee would welcome new members for next year. If you are interested in helping to inform and advocate for building sustainable communities based on the Vision 21 from Andover and North Andover’s plan we would like to hear from you.

We will continue to press for pesticide reduction in the Towns and to have healthy fields. We will follow some of the suggestion from Vision 21. We will continue with our education workshops for officials and the public about water quality and conservation. Our partnership with the Towns has been very positive in all the above areas.

We are also working on a few other issues. We are looking into energy sustainability and affordability; in October we will have a speaker on this subject. We are also following very closely the proposed Holt Road trash transfer station in North Andover.

A special note: We now have flags for SAFE LAWNS

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A few good things from the League of Women Voters

LWV Postcards \$5/pkg of 50

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LWV Stickers \$2 for a sheet of 10; 10+ sheets for \$1.50/sheet

LWV color logo on 2”x3” white self-adhesive label with room for name. Identify members, spruce up info packets + plain envelopes.

LWV Tote Bag \$20 each; 2+ bags @ 18.00 each

Red/white Vote design + League of Women Voters on 12”x18” heavy navy canvas with roomy bottom pleat and handles.

NEW! LWV Travel Mug \$18 each (2+ mugs @ \$15/mug)

LWV logo + www.votinginfo.info

Attractive red/white design on blue insulated mug fits car cup holders. Great for informed citizens on the move!

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Attention-getting, fun, political jewelry on clasp pin. Great gift!

for you all to display to let people know your lawn is pesticide free. In fact, we have two signs to help get this message out so please request your signs and we will be happy to get them to you. We have also produced a brochure in cooperation with the Andover Water Department and the Andover Health Department. BEAUTIFUL LAWNS, NATURALLY! is available on request.

The Healthy Lawns and Landscapes workshop was a high success. We had a great rainy day for the workshop and people were getting all excited about what lies ahead for the Spring as they begin to enjoy doing great things to protect their families and the environment.

Our speaker kept everyone excited to learn more, and our vendors answered many questions. As part of our workshop we offered to the “do it yourself gardeners,” the opportunity to purchase a great four step program. The best thing is each purchaser is to receive free soil testing so they will be able to use the proper amounts of lawn products. The product will be delivered by Kevin Berube of Totally Organic. Berube will donate 10 percent of his proceeds to the League. The offer includes any purchases by League members whether they attended the workshop or not. Please read the following and if you have any ques-

tions contact Kevin or me and we will assist you.

Totally Organic Cleanlawn Residential Lawn Program
Step 1: Safe Lawn Preemergent Weed Control - Corn gluten, the active ingredient in Safe Lawn, has long been used to control the germination of annual weeds like crabgrass. Applied at a rate of 20 lbs per thousand square feet when the forsythia blooms, Safe Lawn will work to inhibit weed germination while adding much-needed nitrogen to the soil to help promote the growth of turf grasses. With persistent annual use, results will continue to improve year after year.

Step 2-4: Healthy Turf™ Organic Biofertilizer - Healthy Turf is a natural biofertilizer formulated to provide the proper balance of nutrients to turfgrass as well as improve soil structure and life through the use of kelp, humic acids and sugars. When combined in a program with Safe Lawn, Healthy Turf should be applied at a rate of 6 lbs per thousand square feet three times per year.

When properly maintained, the Cleanlawn program will:

- Reduce the population of crabgrass and other weeds
- Improve soil structure and restore bioactivity
- Add organic matter into the soil
- Improve soil fertility in the root zone
- Promote resistance to heat and drought stress

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Application Schedule:

Step 1: Mid April (When the forsythia blooms) - Apply Safe Lawn at a rate of 20lbs per 1,000 sq ft. using a rotary (broadcast) spreader. Spreader settings will vary but you will likely need to open your spreader all the way.

Step 2: Early June

Step 3: Early August

Step 4: Mid September

For all three steps apply Healthy Turf at a rate of 6lbs per thousand square feet.

Out of respect for our environment, Totally Organic Lawn & Garden was started by Methuen resident Kevin Berube in 2002 to help reduce the effects of one of the biggest polluters to our environment – the overuse of pesticides and synthetic lawn fertilizers.

Berube's brochure says: "At Totally Organic, we believe that your lawn and landscape will never be more important than the health of your family and the world around us. That's why we use only the highest quality natural materials to maintain your landscape, never apply synthetic pesticides or fertilizers, and regularly perform laboratory soil tests to ensure that the correct amounts of each supplement are being used. Kevin is accredited by the Northeast Organic Farming Association in organic land care and is a member of several environmental landscape organizations.

The annual cost for the supplements at the recommended levels ranges from about \$75.00 for 2,500 sq/ft of lawn to \$1,165.00 for an acre.

Reproductive Choice

By Faith Johnson

The Prevention First Act of 2005 (S 20) which was introduced to the U.S. Senate in January offers health care provisions that will improve the health of women and reduce the incidence of unintended pregnancies.

- The bill will increase funding for women's health. Title X funds, a crucial source of funding for women without health insurance, would be increased by \$643 million dollars. It will help many more women to plan their pregnancies and receive needed reproductive health care.
- Simplifying the procedure for states to expand access to Medicaid funding for family planning services will enable more women to obtain contraception services and avoid unintended pregnancies.
- Many private health care plans refuse to cover contraceptives or do not cover them to the same extent as other medications. This provision will establish fair-



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ALERT

Pharmacy chains are discriminating against women!

A report from NARAL In as many as 20 states, pharmacies can refuse to fill women's prescriptions for contraception, including the morning-after pill. When a woman and her doctor decide that a prescription for contraception is in the woman's best interest, a third party has no right to override that decision. Pharmacies must ensure that patients get their doctor-prescribed medication without delay or inconvenience.

Join NARAL Pro-Choice America in telling our nation's biggest pharmacies (Wal-Mart, CVS, Rite Aid, Walgreens, and Eckerd) not to stand between a woman and her physician. For more information and how to take action - <http://prochoiceaction.org>

ness and parity for prescription contraception.

- This bill would require hospitals receiving federal funds to provide medically accurate information about emergency contraception to rape victims and provide emergency contraception promptly on request.
- Ten million dollars would be provided to educate people about emergency contraception.
- Twenty million dollars would be provided annually for competitive grants to public or private entities to establish or expand teen pregnancy prevention programs.
- The bill would assure that medically accurate information about contraception would be provided to young people in federally supported programs.

This is an initiative that needs our support. Watch this column for updates on its progress through the Senate.

Legislative Action

By Carole Pelchat

The following bills, which are supported by the LWVMA, have been referred to:

1. The Committee on Election Laws [Senators Edward Augustus (Worcester), Karen Spilka 2nd Middlesex/Norfolk), Michael Morrissey (Norfolk/Plymouth), Andrea Nuciforo (Berkshire/Hampden/Hampshire/Franklin), **Steven Baddour** (Essex), and Scott Brown (Norfolk/Bristol/Plymouth); Representatives Anthony Petrucci (Boston), Demetrius Atsalis (Barnstable), Paul Kujawski (Webster), Geraldine Creedon (Brockton), James Eldridge (Acton), Steven Walsh (Lynn), Joseph Driscoll (Braintree), Patrick Natale (Woburn), Cleon Turner (Dennis), Paul

Frost (Auburn) and Mary Rogeness (Longmeadow)]

A. Senate #12, presented by Richard Moore and others, proposing a legislative amendment to the Constitution to establish an independent redistricting commission and criteria for redistricting.

B. Senate #444, presented by Senators Cynthia Creem, Jarrett Barrios, Robert O'Leary, Dianne Wilkerson and other members of the General Court, proposing a revision to the General Laws that will allow for election day registration.

2. The Committee on Housing [Senators Mark Montigny (2nd Bristol/Plymouth, Brian Joyce (Norfolk/Bristol/Plymouth, Cynthia Creem (1st Middlesex/Norfolk), Richard Moore (Worcester/Norfolk), Dianne Wilkerson (2nd Suffolk), Michael Knapik (Hampden/Hampshire); Representatives David Flynn (Bridgewater), Benjamin Swan (Springfield), Paul Casey (Winchester), William Galvin (Canton), Stephen Kulik (Worthington), William Straus (Mattapoissett), Kathi-Anne Reinstein (Revere), Garrett Bradley (Hingham), Stephen Cannessa (Lakeville), Susan Pope (Wayland), Karyn Polito (Shrewsbury)] held a public hearing on Senate #791, An Act Relative to Financing the Production of Affordable Housing, on March 29 and reported, recommending its passage, with an amendment substituting a new draft (Senate #2031/House #2610) with the same title.

3. Senate #619, An Act Relative to Equitable Coverage for Annuity Policies, has been referred to the Financial Services Committee [Senators Andrea Nuciforo (Berkshire/Hampden/Hampshire/Franklin), Dianne Wilkerson (2nd Suffolk), Mark Montigny (2nd Bristol/Plymouth), **Susan Tucker** (2nd Essex/Middlesex), Stephen Buoniconti (Hamden), Scott Brown (Norfolk, Bristol, Middlesex); Representatives Ronald Mariano (Quincy), Robert Spellane (Worcester), William Galvin (Canton), Murphy (Weymouth), Peter Kocot (Northampton), Robert Coughlin (Dedham), Joyce Spiliotis (Peabody), Joseph Driscoll (Braintree), James Welch (W. Springfield), Susan Gifford (Wareham), Daniel Webster (Hanson)

Observer Report

Andover Townwide PTO

By Diane Hender

April 8 Healthy & Safe Fields for Kids Joyce Ringleb (LWV Sustainability Committee) presented information on the known and possible human health risks (infertility, neurological impairment, birth defects, cancers, etc.) associ-

ated with the use of pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, and the like, and emphasized the fact that absorption is much faster in smaller humans. She reviewed the Children's Protection Act of 2000, as well as the Town of Andover Board of Health Policy on Pesticide Use, and discussed what individuals can do to reduce involuntary exposure to toxins present at home, on playing fields, in treated buildings, in the air, and as residue on food. Joyce encouraged those present to consider organic lawn care and to ask questions should they have concerns about the environmental safety of facilities used by their children.

Professional Learning Communities Assistant Superintendent Marcia O'Neil introduced the concept of a professional learning community (PLC), a term used to identify almost any imaginable combination of individuals working together to ensure that students learn – grade-level teaching team; intra-disciplinary, multi-site or inter-disciplinary, single-site team; parents as teachers; etc. She listed six common characteristics: shared mission, vision, values and goals; collective inquiry; collaborative teams; action orientation and experimentation; continuous improvement; results orientation

Dr. O'Neil described a PLC as a means of identifying, cultivating and disseminating best practices to create the structure and culture for enhancing student achievement. Meeting last year, the Administrative Council and the curriculum councils sought answers to: How to deprivatize best practices and foster reflective conversation among faculty, within and across sites? How to provide the time, structure and model? How to foster collaboration, even build it in? How to develop shared norms and values? How to institutionalize opportunities for children who are not learning? How best to bring theories into practice, i.e. set SMART (Specific; Measurable; Attainable; Results oriented; Time bound) goals?

Three different models of professional learning communities currently operating in the Andover Public Schools were presented.

Environmental Learning for the Future (ELF), at High Plain Elementary School, was presented by Principal Brenda O'Brien, teacher Linda Breen, and parent Linda Manning. A study group met last summer to enhance parent involvement in the classroom, to make them co-partners in their children's education. Linda Manning had been introduced to ELF, a program designed to excite and stimulate interest and learning via hands-on science curriculum, at her children's school in Vermont. The all-level program,

Lunch & Conversation **Join us at Panera** **Friday, May 13, 11:30 AM**

with developmental modifications and links to math and language arts, is offered in a six-year cycle, so there is no repetition for children in grades K-5. The monthly lessons are taught by parent volunteers who have participated in the four two-hour workshops conducted by the Vermont Institute for Natural Science. The \$2,000 cost for this training was funded by the High Plain PTO. The program has been extremely well-received by staff, parents and students, and is supportive of district and state benchmarks.

Assistant Principal of Wood Hill Middle School Patrick Bucco spoke about *Expeditionary Learning*. An effective middle school concept, the purpose of the model is to meet the needs of all learners (differentiation), to enable students to take responsibility for their own learning, to foster positive risk taking, and to encourage students to compete only with their own personal best. The preparatory work of the WHMS faculty team included research, surveys and a site visit to the King Middle School in Portland, Maine. The pilot was launched with the school's two 8th grade teams and one 6th grade team, with an "expedition" for each group of students. One of these was to work with the Fish Brook Initiative to research and report on salt infiltration. The program was funded privately, and its success was reported with the remark that the participants went in to meet the DPW engineers as students, and came out as members of a scientific research team. Improved student discipline, attendance, and test scores also are indicated. The model will be expanded next year to one six-to eight-week expedition per team, each to incorporate some degree of interdisciplinary involvement.

Humanities Program Advisor Ron Howland and Language Arts teacher Brian Shea explained the *Lesson Study Communities Project* undertaken by two English and two Social Studies teachers at Andover High. Lesson Study is a common form of professional development in Japan, with teachers working in small teams to collaboratively craft lesson plans designed to meet both content and more general learning goals. Simplistically, the team meets first to set goals, then to develop the one lesson that will be taught by one of the group with observation by the others. The

purpose of the observation is not to assess teaching technique but to evaluate the lesson's effectiveness in order to revise and improve. The revised lesson then is taught by another team member and observed for further revision before being shared with other teachers. Benefits of this technique are its direct focus on improving teaching and student learning, mentoring and sharing of expertise, familiarity with curriculum across grades and levels, sustainability without outside support, and effective support of local initiatives.

Professional Development Proposal Following the three presentations summarized above, Dr. O'Neil presented the new proposal for professional development now before the School Committee. Its rationale is to more effectively use PD time and dollars to improve teaching and learning. The tentative school calendar for 2005-2006 for all elementary and middle schools includes a monthly half day release (except December) dedicated to professional development. The time is to be used to assist teachers in learning new curriculum programs and best practices in instruction. The proposed structure is necessary to ensure that time is allotted to build the culture of PDLs in Andover's public schools and to allow for coordination and consistency throughout the six elementary and three middle

schools. Time on Learning is protected, and professional development is job embedded, which is considered the most effective method for cost-effective sustained learning. The small professional development budget proposed for FY06 will be supplemented by grants and creative approaches to teacher training.

Superintendent's Preliminary FY06 Budget Claudia Bach reiterated her conviction that Andover's schools address whole child development, and she reviewed the need to restore certain programs previously cut, to introduce new programs that will qualify students in current disciplines (i.e., engineering), and the importance of respecting the different ways children learn. She expressed her gratitude for the recent efforts of parents to reduce fees without further reductions to the school budget. Moderator Christy Pappas remarked that what now is asked of students is "phenomenally" more than what was expected in their parents' time.

School Committee member Art Barber mentioned the three-year restoration plan being developed by school administrators, which will provide itemization of what, when and how much. Tom Brady requested that the levels of support needed for continued renewal and rebuilding be communicated as well.

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League of Women Voters Andover/North Andover Calendar

MAY

- Sun 1 North Andover Women's Conference – 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Stevens Estate
Wed 4 Board Meeting – 9:15 AM, Cynde Egan, 197 Shawsheen Road, Andover
Mon 9 North Andover Town Meeting – 7:00 PM North Andover High School
Fri 13 Lunch and Conversation – 11:30 AM Panera's (Rte 133 & 125)
FriSat 13-14 LWVM State Convention, Wyndham, Westborough, MA
Wed 18 Potluck & Annual Meeting – 6:00 PM, Marland Place, 15 Stevens Street, Andover
Sun 22 Sheep Shearing Festival, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, North Andover Common

JUNE

- Wed 1 Board Meeting – 9:15 AM, Peggy Kruse, 145 Argilla Road, Andover
Sat 11 Andover Day/Know Your Town Fair 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, The Park-Andover
Tue 14 Lunch and Conversation – 11:30 AM Panera's (Rte 133 & 125)

JULY – Thu 14 Lunch & Conversation **AUGUST** – Fri 12 Lunch & Conversation
September Bulletin Deadline – Friday, August 19 email: jennessa@fourcreations.com

League of Women Voters Andover/North Andover

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