



Bulletin

November 2005

Published Monthly (September-May)
(Vol. 12 No. 111)

P.O. Box 514
Andover, Massachusetts 01810
www.LWV-Andovers.org

President: Peggy Kruse
Membership: Joan Duff
Editor: Jennessa Durrani

League of Women Voters of Andover/North Andover

President's Letter

By Peggy Kruse

Our annual membership social, Chocolate at the Lehman, was a real treat! Many thanks to Joan Duff, our membership chair, for organizing it. Thanks also to Michael McCahill, director of the Lehman Art Center at Brooks School, for wide ranging discussion of the impressive Mountains and Mountaineering photographic exhibit. The chocolates, courtesy of the LWV board members, were delicious! It was nice to see all the members and guests who attended. Our League always welcomes new members, so if you brought a guest to this or any other League event, or know people who would thrive in the League, please remember to invite them to join.

Many thanks go to the panelists in our Patriot Act forum for educating us about the balance between public safety and civil liberties. Our panelists were Bruce Larkin, Professor of Political Science, UC Santa Cruz; Kimberly Lynn, Chair, Intellectual Freedom Committee, MA Library Association; Brian Pattullo, Andover Chief of Police, President of NE MA Law Enforcement Council; Thomas Powers, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, FBI Boston Division; Carol Rose, Executive Director, MA ACLU; and Kimberly West, Assistant US Attorney for MA. Thanks to Madhu Sridhar, president of the LWVM, for her skillful moderating. Thanks also to everyone who helped plan and advertise this event, especially Carole Pelchat and Diane Hender. (As this edition of the Bulletin goes to press prior to the Patriot Act forum, a report of the discussion will appear in the December Bulletin.)

Earlier in October, our Sustainability and Natural Resources group sponsored a lecture by League member Norm Viehmann on "Energy's Future." Norm presented much interesting data, such as whether this year will see the peak of oil production or if we still have a few years before we reach peak.

Discussion also focused on ways to conserve energy, with lots of audience participation. Thanks, Norm!

Looking ahead to November, the LWV is hosting a discussion of the No Child Left Behind Act and its impact on the public schools. Join us for what promises to be a stimulating discussion on Wed, Nov. 9, 7 pm, at Memorial Hall Library.

Nov. 14-18 is the League's Community Read-Along. Planning for this annual match-up of elementary school classes with Andover officials, League members, and involved citizens is well-underway. If anyone would like to read a book or poetry to a class of elementary students, or know someone who would be a good reader, please contact Stefani Goldshein, 978-470-3140.

The LWV's new Invasive Plants group is looking at ways to educate our community about the issue. This group is just getting started and new members are always welcome; please call Amy Janovsky, 978-475-8655, for more information.

Thanks go to Colleen Kiezulas and Coldwell Banker Realtors for again hosting the annual state League Phonathon. Thanks also to all contributors and to those who donated their time to make phone calls.

As a heads up, our Holiday Dinner is Dec. 7. A social hour and potluck dinner at the Andover Historical Society's Amos Blanchard House precedes our biannual review of the national LWV positions (see details inside). All members welcome!

SAVE THE DATE!

Wednesday, November 9th, 7:00 p.m.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT

An informal discussion with:

Claudia Bach, Andover Superintendent and
Dr. Harry Harutunian, North Andover Superintendent

MA Legislative Action Update

By Carol Pelchat

Note: Andover/North Andover Legislators are noted in bold.

The LWWMA supports the following legislation:

Senate # 2034 – A Petition for a legislative amendment to the Constitution to authorize the General Court to provide for absentee voting by any voter has been reported on favorably by the joint committee on Election Laws (Senators Edward Augustus, Karen Spilka, Michael Morrissey, Andrea Nuciforo, **Steven Baddour**, and Scott Brown. Representatives Anthony Petruccelli, Demetrius Atsalis, Paul Kujawski, Geraldine Creedon, James Eldridge, Steven Walsh, Joseph Driscoll, Patrick Natale, Cleon Turner, Paul Frost, and Mary Rogeness). It continues to await review at the next scheduled Joint Session on 5/10/06.

Senate # 12 – A petition for a legislative amendment to the Constitution relative to establishing an independent redistricting commission and criteria for redistricting was referred to the committee on Election Laws (see above). It continues to await review at the next scheduled Joint Session on 5/10/06.

Senate # 444 – A petition for legislation relative to Election Day registration has been referred to the joint committee on Election Laws (see above). A public hearing was held on 7/19/05. It has not as yet been scheduled for Executive Session.

Senate # 465 – A petition for legislation to ensure voting rights in the Commonwealth has been referred to the committee on Election Laws (see above). A public hearing was held on 7/19/05. It has not as yet been scheduled for Executive Session.

Senate # 2089 – House # 4277, a bill relative to financing the production of affordable housing, was passed in the House and superceded the Senate bill. It was signed into law by the governor on 7/28/05.

House # 2144 – A bill relative to responsible welfare reform was passed with amendments in the Senate on 9/20/05. It is currently in joint House and Senate conference committee to determine the final language of the bill prior to being submitted to the governor for signing.

Senate # 929 – A petition for legislation relative to drug mandatory minimum sentences was referred to the committee on the Judiciary (Senators Robert Creedon, **Steven Baddour**, Robert Antonioni, Thomas McGee, Cynthia Creem, and Brian Lees. Representatives Eugene O'Flaherty, Barrett Bradley, Kay Khan, James Murphy, Michael Costello, Alice Peisch, John Keenan, Daniel Webster, and Lewis Evangelidis). It is expected to be scheduled for public hearing this fall.

House # 876 – A petition relative to the administration of the Trial Court with reference to recommendations made by the Monahan Committee was referred to the committee on the Judiciary (see above). A public hearing was held on 6/28/05. It has not been scheduled for Executive Session as of this date.

Senate # 350 – A petition for legislation to simplify and make more equitable the provisions of Chapter 70 relative to distribution of state aid and the requirements for spending by local governments was referred to the committee on Education (Senators Robert Antonioni, Edward Augustus, Dianne Wilkerson, Pamela Resor, Karen Spilka, and Scott Brown. Representatives Patricia Haddad, Geraldine Creedon, Douglas Petersen, Paul Kujawski, Stephen Le Duc, Alice Wolf, Robert Nyman, Matthew Patrick, Martha Walz, Jeffrey Perry, and Richard Ross). A public hearing was held on 6/2/05. It is expected to be scheduled for Executive Session this fall.

Senate # 619 – A petition for legislation relative to equitable coverage for annuity policies was referred to the committee on Financial Services (Senators Andrea Nuciforo, Dianne Wilkerson, Mark Montigny, **Susan Tucker**, Stephen Buoniconti, and Scott Brown. Representatives Ronald Mariano, Robert Spellane, William Galvin, James Murphy, Peter Kocot, Robert Coughlin, Joyce Spiliotis, Joseph Driscoll, James Welch, Susan Gifford, and Daniel Webster). It has not yet been scheduled for a public hearing.

Senate # 755 – A petition for legislation to establish the Massachusetts health care trust was referred to the committee on Health Care Financing (Senators Richard Moore, Steven Tolman, Susan Fargo, Harriette Chandler, Karen Spilka, **Susan Tucker**, and Scott Brown. Representatives Patricia Walrath, James Marzilli, Frank Hynes, James Fagan, Thomas Stanley, Christopher Fallon, James Leary, Robert Coughlin, John Scibak, Robert Hargraves, and Susan Gifford). It has not yet been scheduled for a public hearing.

Continued on page 4

Invasive Plants Study

Invasive Plants

By Amy Janovsky

Why worry about invasive plants? They're green, aren't they? a neighbor asked recently. As a matter of fact, many of the plants now recognized as being invasive were initially regarded as desirable because of their fast and aggressive growth. Areas of recent disturbance, like road borders and medians, new construction, drained wetlands (now prohibited in many cases) were easily transformed through the introduction of plants like barberry, burning bush, purple loostrife, autumn olive or Russian olive, willows, vetch, or black locust. These plants are very attractive, so what's the problem?

This is the topic we're considering. Why should the typical homeowner care about invasive species? Are pesticides the only way to eradicate them, or do we have options more in keeping with our sustainability position? (Imagine trying to hand-pull the masses of bittersweet that are choking our roadsides). Some ideas that we'll be considering include:

- Learn how to use native species to achieve landscaping goals, and why it matters
- Create or seek permission to use publications that specify a control hierarchy: from pesticide-free options to use of "least-toxic" pesticides for each plant
- Conduct walking tours to familiarize residents with plants that are best controlled early, before they are widely established
- Consider becoming a trained IPANE volunteer to assist with mapping invasive plants across New England

The next meeting will be Wednesday, November 9th, at 12:30. If you're interested in joining this study group, please call Amy Janovsky to discuss a possible meeting schedule.

Reproductive Choice

Reproductive Choice

By Faith Johnson

The major news impacting reproductive choice is, again, a Supreme Court nominee. However, since that news has been so thoroughly covered in the newspapers, I will turn my attention to the United Nations Population Fund. While Congress allocates 34 million dollars each year to the Fund, President Bush has refused to allocate the funds. He claims that the Fund has supported the coercive family planning tactics in China. His own commission, led by then Secretary of State, Colin Powell, found the opposite to be true. The commission reported that they had found no evidence that the Fund had knowingly supported or participated in the coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization program in China and recommended that the 34 million dollars be released to the UNFPA.

In fact UNFPA is an advocate for reform in China. It urges the Chinese government to conform to international human rights standards for family planning, to lift its birth limitation policy, and respect the right of women to make their own decisions about contraception and childbearing. UNFPA has also strongly opposed the use of "social compensation fees."

Anika Rahman, President of UNFPA says, "UNFPA programs promote voluntary family planning and demonstrate exactly the kind of success Americans want to see. In fact, in the 32 counties where UNFPA operates in China, women's access to a wide range of contraceptive options has increased, while the abortion rate has decreased. Americans would be horrified to know that the U.S. stands in the way of improving the life and health of women around the world."

In 1968, when UNFPA was founded, 10 percent of women in the world used modern contraception. Today 60 percent do. UNFPA's work on the ground has led to a 30 percent increase in women's access to emergency obstetric care in target areas of Nicaragua, a 30 percent decrease in genital cutting in target areas of Uganda, the integration of voluntary HIV counseling and testing into all family planning services, and changes in the way emergency humanitarian assistance is structured so that women's particular health and safety needs are considered.

Sustainability/Natural Resources Committee Update

By C. Joyce Ringleb

On October 3, 2005, the Sustainability group held a talk lead by Norm Viehmann about Alternative Energy. This was a fun topic to present to the public. Here are my thoughts following this program:

1. Oil and fossil fuel depletion are real and at our doorstep. Many voices have been trying to warn us for years. Now we are at the tipping point.
2. The looming energy crisis is the single most important challenge facing us. There are no other issues more pertinent to our and our children's survival.
3. We should support leaders who recognize our non-renewable energy addiction, will enact appropriate legislation, and educate the public why this is necessary.
4. An immediate move should be to enact energy rationing. Concurrently, massive-education programs are necessary to convince the public why these measures are absolutely necessary for future survival. Market forces and prices alone will not work.
5. Another move should be to begin an immediate transition to the two high tech renewable energies that can be expanded in large scale, specifically solar and wind. Other non-fossil sources are finite (like geothermal and nuclear) or mirages (like hydrogen and bio-fuels).

6. Ideally, we would deglobalize, decentralize, and revert to community solutions with neighborhood economies of approximately a 25 mile radius, the distance of travel by a bike

The next meeting for the Sustainability/Natural Resource Committee is November 21, 2005, at The Savings Bank, 84 Main Street, Andover, at 7:30PM. We will be planning our next educational event on "Green Chemistry" with Dr. John Warner.

To complement Amy Janovsky's Invasive Plant study and because I am moving to New Hampshire, I would like to offer some observations on New Hampshire's ban on invasive plants. The NH Department of Agriculture is further along in banning invasives than Massachusetts; the NH ban began June 1, 2004, with sale of Norway maple, burning bush and Japanese barberry to be banned by 2007. When it was noted that Home Depot was selling invasive tartarian honeysuckles, the NH invasive species coordinator issued a "stop sale" order and contacted the corporate office. When the shrubs were still for sale two weeks later, the department issued fines of \$1,000 for each of the 16 stores that failed to comply.

Among the other New England states, Vermont and Connecticut have a quarantine list, Maine has a list of banned aquatic plants and Rhode Island has a list of invasives, although without regulatory status.

To Be Continued

Legislative Update: Continued from page 2

The LWWMA opposes the following legislation:

Senate # 442 – A bill requiring photo identification for the delivery of a ballot;

House #56 – A bill requiring voters to furnish identification. These bills were referred to the committee on Election Laws (see above). A public hearing on Senate # 442 was held on 6/7/05. Executive Session has not been scheduled.

The LWW ANA's Patriot Act forum will be rebroadcast sometime in November by both the Andover (Ch. 8) and North Andover (Ch 22) cable stations.

Check with the cable station for dates and times.

Community Paths Committee

By Michael Frishman

The Community Paths Committee met at the Andover library October 18 for an update on the proposed pedestrian bridge over the Shawsheen River just north of Washington Park, to report on the new “Share Andover’s Streets” signs that are now in place, and to discuss what other projects or actions the committee might initiate to make Andover’s streets safer and friendlier for non motor vehicle uses.

Margaret Pustell began the meeting remembering that when recycling first came to Andover, Ginny Cole, in addition to her weekly column in the Townsman, at least one year arranged to have a large group dressed as bottle and can recyclables march in the annual Santa Clause parade. She wondered if we might want to seek permission to do the same to promote biking, walking and running under a “Share Andover’s Streets” banner.

Bob Marsh, whose plans for the footbridge itself are still in the drafting stage, reported that the Conservation Commission at a recent meeting approved clearing trails on the Town land that would be accessed by the footbridge. Present access is from Penguin Park and appeared on the ConsCom agenda as trails on assessors map parcels at 104 Burnham Road. The submission to the ConsCom had to go to the state DEP with a copy to the Army Corps of Engineers. DEP signed off on the application and the ConsCom also approved it; work cannot begin until the approved proposal is returned to Marsh with an order of conditions; Alan French, Fred Snell and others will then lay out and clear the paths. Marsh will submit the next round of plans to Tony Komornick, the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, who will then advise about the next steps and suggest possible grant sources. Pustell suggested that the Town might be able to add a few parking places at the bottom of Frye Circle just off Main Street for people using the bridge and trail.

The “Share Andover’s Streets” signs, designed by Joan Ellis and approved by the Town Manager are now in place on a number of the roads near the Town borders. The yellow signs have the logo and four simple graphics of the major road users. Director of Public Works Jack Petkus prepared a list of 18 locations where the signs are to be installed but it isn’t known how many of them are already in place. Committee members have begun to hear favorable comments.

Pustell also suggested a few actions or activities that the Committee might undertake to improve pedestrian and bike safety and make the streets more friendly for those users.

- Home owners should be encouraged to keep clear a 2-3 foot strip of land that walkers and runners can safely step onto if needed to get out of the way of traffic.
- A flyer with rules for bikers could be prepared and give to bike shop owners to give buyers of bicycles.
- The Town safety officer who used to make presentations in the schools about walker safety reportedly now, largely because of time constraints, only discusses bus safety.

Observer Corps

We are still looking for observers for both of the Andover and North Andover Boards of Selectmen, Finance Committees, and School Committees. Becoming an observer is a great way to witness democracy in action. By informing fellow League members about the meetings through your reports, you are providing an invaluable service by helping others become better informed citizens. Your reports also contribute to the research the League conducts prior to the annual Warrant Forum before Andover and North Andover’s Town Meetings. Please consider becoming an observer. You don’t have to commit to an entire year. Contact Jennessa Durrani (978-470-3290) or jennessa@celebratestudio.com for further information.

Town Budget Study Group

By Lolli Sumberg

The committee has been meeting regularly and is beginning get hold of its very large assignment. To look at the budget of Andover is a very complicated and diverse task. We are finding it to have many layers. The deeper we go the more information we get and more questions we have. We continue to gather facts. We had a very good meeting with Tony Torrisi, the Andover’s Business Manager. He was very forthcoming with information and suggestions.

At our next meeting, Joanne Marden, Chair of the Finance Committee and LWV member, will be our guest.

At this time, we are focusing on these questions – What are the essential services the Town of Andover should provide? What are optional services? And how should they be funded?

No Child Left Behind An Informal Discussion

Join the League to learn more about the No Child Left Behind Act on Wednesday, November 9, 7:00 p.m., Memorial Hall Library, 3rd floor. The superintendents of Andover and North Andover, Dr. Claudia Bach and Dr. Harry Harutunian, will participate in this informal discussion of this far-reaching national legislation.

Provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act mandate high-stakes testing and require school districts to narrow the performance gap between advantaged and disadvantaged children. The law also has provisions for, among other things, busing of homeless children to their previous school district and delivering high school student contact information to military recruiters unless the parents opt out.

While there is some federal money to help implement certain parts of NCLB, an oft-heard complaint is that this law is a huge unfunded-mandate on school systems, and it has been referred to, tongue-in-cheek, as "No School Board Left Standing." Join us for what promises to be a stimulating discussion.

This event is free and open to the public.

How to find the LWV group at Panera's

Considering joining the League Lunch & Conversation group at Panera's but not sure you'll recognize anyone? We generally end up with a group of six to ten people, but the table can start out, at 11:30 a.m., with only two or three people. We usually sit at tables against the wall on the right hand side, unless these tables are already occupied. The final clue is: look for the LWV logo on a canvas bag hanging from a chair and on a brochure laying on the table. You are also welcome to call Peggy Kruse, 978-474-0176, or another board member, to let us know you'll be joining us, and we'll look for you.

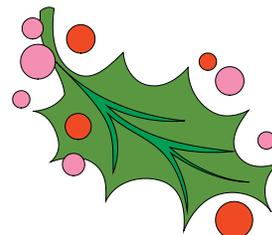
We always welcome new people to join us at lunch! The League Lunch & Conversations are held on the 14th of the month from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Panera's in North Andover. If the 14th falls on a weekend, the lunch is held the Friday before.

Community Read Along

The LWV of A/NA Community Read-Along turns 11!

It's that time of year again when people from our communities take time out of their busy schedules to share their love of reading with Andover schoolchildren. The eleventh annual Community Read-Along takes place November 14 through 18.

If you would like to read or know someone who might enjoy becoming part of our program, please contact Stefani Traina Goldshein at steftraina@comcast.net or 978-470-3140.



Holiday Potluck Dinner

The Holiday Dinner is coming! And we're planning a potluck dinner this year, to be held on Wednesday, December 7th at the Andover Historical Society's Amos Blanchard House, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

We'll mingle over appetizers, enjoy dinner, and then review and discuss the LWVUS Public Policy positions on pages 28-31 of your Member Handbook. This is our League's opportunity to consider and suggest changes to these positions, which will then be reviewed and voted on at the LWVUS Annual Convention in June.

Please start to think about what you'd like to bring to the potluck. It's always a nice opportunity to catch up with other League members, so please Save The Date!

**Wednesday, December 7th
6:30-9:00 p.m.**

Andover Historical Society's Amos Blanchard House

HOLIDAY DINNER

We need all categories of dishes (appetizer, main dish, salad/vegetable, bread, beverages, and dessert). Call Amy Janovsky at 978.475.8655 to confirm your attendance and what you will be bringing. If you are feeling pressed for time, Amy will work with you to find something easy for you to bring!

Letter from the Editor

I would like to thank everyone who has provided such great feedback to the new format of the Bulletin. It has been a pleasure for me to work on this publication, which is only sweetened by the fact that it is appreciated by our membership.

With that said, you will see that we have changed the format once again in an effort to make this the most readable, easy to use publication for the membership.

By formatting the publication in a booklet form, we've been able to provide more continuity in flow and articles with double page spreads and the like. We hope you like it. Again, I'm always curious to know how you feel and would love your feedback as we continually work to improve the Bulletin.

I would also like to encourage the entire membership to take an active role in the Bulletin. We are always looking for submissions in our Observer Corps section. If you find a town committee or board meeting that is of interest to you and plan to attend, write a summary of the meeting and submit it to the Bulletin. You are also encouraged to write other articles that would be of interest to our membership. For reference the Bulletin deadlines for the upcoming publications are:

December Bulletin--Friday, November 18
January Bulletin--Friday, December 16

Please submit all December Bulletin items to Peggy Kruse at arg14502@comcast.net.

Jennessa Durrani, Bulletin Editor

LOCAL LEAGUES ARE FORMING IN:

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Uxbridge

Know any potential members in these towns?
Share the names. Contact the LWVM office at 617-523-2999 or lwwma@lwwma.org.

Membership

Membership Dues Reminder

The 2005/2006 dues are now due. If you have not paid your dues, please send a check to the post office box, with the form below. If you are unsure if you have paid, please check the mailing label of this Bulletin to see your status or call: Joan Duff, Membership Chair at (978) 685-3212.

Chocolate at the Lehman

We would like to thank all of the LWV members who attended our 2nd annual Chocolate tasting event at the Lehman Gallery at Brooks School on October 20th. Check back in the December Bulletin for a full recap of the event. We would also like to thank those members who brought a guest to the event!

LWV Andover/North Andover 2004-2005 MEMBERSHIP

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Name _____ Phone _____

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Thank you! Joan Duff, Membership, 978.685.3212

Interested in affordable housing in Massachusetts?

or

Want to learn more about how the state's fiscal policy affects the funding of your community services?

Join one of the state League committees now being formed to study these important & timely topics!

Affordable Housing Study

- The affordable housing study will evaluate legislation, regulations and programs in Massachusetts to determine their effectiveness in providing affordable housing and propose a new position through consensus or concurrence.

Study may include, but will not be limited to:

- Senior housing
- Effect of Chapter 40B, Massachusetts' Comprehensive Permit statute, on cities and towns
- "Smart growth" concepts
- The fiscal policy update was adopted in response to the strain most communities have felt in funding local services over the last few years, often leading to repeated overrides or cuts in services. The Massachusetts economic downturn of 2001 began the funding difficulties for local communities. The LWVM positions on Fiscal Policy will be reviewed in parallel with the broader question of what can be done to prevent funding problems in the future.

State Fiscal Policy Study

Committee members, meeting once per month, will:

- Gather economic information in the press and elsewhere
- Analyze fiscal data from the Department of Revenue and other sources
- Review current LWV fiscal policy positions
- Design consensus questions and study materials for local Leagues, etc.

To learn more contact Robin Rich at the LWVM League office: 617-523-2999 or rrich@lwvma.org

National Program Planning

By Stefani Traina Goldshein, VP Program/Action

The October National Voter's article on Program planning states 'Program is the League's "reason for being," the basis of both education and action efforts.' With that in mind, I hope you will join us at the holiday potluck dinner on Wednesday, December 7, to review the LWVUS positions that are summarized in your yellow member Handbook on pages 28-31.

I am looking for a small planning group of League members interested in learning more about the LWVUS positions and willing to research them as we prepare for the Program planning discussion.

If learning more about the League interests you, contact Stefani at steftraina@comcast.net or 978-470-3140. The time commitment is flexible.



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Please contact Robin Rich at the LWVM office, 617-523-2999 or rrich@lwvma.org.

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Then and only then, shall we have peace."*

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Calendar of Events

		Time	Type of Meeting	Description	Address
November	2	7:15 p.m.	Board Meeting	November Board Meeting	Peggy Kruse's Home 145 Argilla Road, Andover
	7	7:30 p.m.	Affordable Housing	Monthly Study Group	Barbara Somer's Home 18 Royal Crest, #12, North Andover
	9	12:30 p.m.	Invasive Plants	Monthly Study Group	Amy Janovsky's Home 6 Snowberry Road, Andover
	9	7:00 p.m.	Informal Discussion	No Child Left Behind Act	Memorial Hall Library Elm Square, Andover
	14	11:30 a.m.	Lunch & Conversation	Monthly Lunch Gathering	Panera Bread Rt. 133 and Rt. 114, N. Andover
	18	All Day	Deadline	December Bulletin	Peggy Kruse: arg14502@comcast.net
	14	Week of	Community Read-Along	Community Read-Along	Andover Elementary Schools
	21	7:30 p.m.	Sustainability/Natural Resources	Monthly Study Group	The Savings Bank 84 Main Street, Andover
December	7	9:15 a.m.	Board Meeting	December Board Meeting	Heather Moody Holman's Home 95 Sunset Rock Road
	7	6:30 p.m.	Holiday Dinner	Holiday Potluck Dinner National Program Review	Andover Historical Society's Amos Blanchard House, 97 Main Street, Andover
	14	11:30 a.m.	Lunch & Conversation	Monthly Lunch Gathering	Panera Bread Rt. 133 and Rt. 114, N. Andover
	16	All Day	Deadline	January Bulletin	Jennessa Durrani: jennessa@celebratestudio.com



League of Women Voters Andover/North Andover
P.O. Box 514
Andover, Massachusetts 01810
www.lwv-andovers.org
Published Monthly

Non-Profit Org. U.S. Postage Paid Permit No. 71 Andover, MA 01810
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