



Bulletin

October 2007

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

President: Stefani Traina Goldshein
Membership: Cynthia Barakatt
Editor: Sue Rice

League of Women Voters of Andover/North Andover

President's Letter

By Stefani Traina Goldshein

The League's busy September included staffing booths at the West Parish Earth Expo and the YMCA Healthy Living Expo. The events provided great opportunities to network with others in the community. We sold CFLs and encouraged people to pledge at www.lwv-andovers.org before the Change A Light Campaign contest between Andover and North Andover ends on October 31st. Many thanks to Norm Viehmann and Karen Gately for reaching out to the League for these events, and to Peggy Kruse, Becci Backman, Charissa Rigano, and Candy Dann for their time. Thanks also to Heather Holman for reaching out to nonprofit groups and planning the Know Your Town Fair with flair and enthusiasm. Rain caused Andover Day to be cancelled, unfortunately.

The August 23rd candidates' forum at Cochran Chapel provided a great opportunity for our League to collaborate, not only with other Leagues, but also with Phillips Academy. Many thanks to Susan Stott for her efforts to secure the venue and to Maureen Nunez and the other PA staff members who helped us produce a memorable event. The candidates' forum scheduled for September 27 at the Collins Center has been a collaborative effort of the Leagues in the 5th Congressional District. Peggy Kruse and I enjoyed meeting and working with League members from other towns—it's true that Leaguers know how to get things done! The Special Election is October 16th. If you would like to help precinct at the polls, contact Peggy at arq14502@comcast.net.

October 16th also marks the day that our League will be participating in the regional Affordable Housing Consensus unit at the Hamilton-Wenham Library, 7:00-9:00 p.m. This unit is the culmination of the state League study of affordable housing and promises to be a lively and informative evening.

This month we are proud to feature columns from two Andover officials, Joe Piantedosi, Director of Plant & Facilities, and Steve Bucuzzo, Asst. Town Manager. If you are not

already a subscriber, you may subscribe to receive Andover Town E-news at <http://andoverma.gov/e-services/e-notices.php>, and in North Andover, at <http://www.townofnorthandover.com/subscriber>.

Plan to join us and bring a friend to our chocolate event at Alpers Fine Art in Andover on October 25th. Jennessa Durrani and Heather Belson are organizing an enjoyable evening of delicious treats, socializing, and networking. You can learn about upcoming League projects and there will be a gallery talk, as well.



Bring a friend and join the
LWV of Andover/North Andover for
Chocolate at Alpers Fine Art
an evening of
Chocolate Tasting, Art and Networking.
Thursday, October 25th, 7:30 p.m.
Alpers Fine Art, Two Main Street, Andover
Peter Alpers will provide an informal presentation of the exhibit
The Nature of Light
Featuring work by artists Ellen Granter and Kathleen Speranza
Kindly Respond by October 18th to Heather Belson
978-975-2357 or heatherkbelson@gmail.com
Cost: \$5 suggested donation

President's Letter Continued from Page 1

We'll be hosting the LWVM Phonothon this month, a fund-raising event for both our League and the state League. Contact Gail Mann at gailmann@comcast.net to sign up for a shift. It's a great and painless way to help out the League.

Our Panera lunches are alive and well. We hold the lunch on the 14th of the month, and if the 14th falls on a weekend, the lunch is the Friday before. We hope you'll join us. All are welcome. Panera is newly remodeled and much quieter. Look for the blue League tote bag. We may be towards the back. We gather at 11:30 and people are encouraged to come and go as their schedules permit.

Finally, as many of you know, the LWVUS has been conducting an immigration study since September 2006. The deadline for consensus response forms from local Leagues is February 1, 2008. There is a lot of information about this very complex issue on the LWVUS website (www.lwv.org). If anyone would like to be involved in researching and presenting the information to our members at consensus units, contact me at stefraina@comcast.net. All suggestions and comments are welcome. This would be a great project for anyone who is interested in immigration and in learning more about League process.

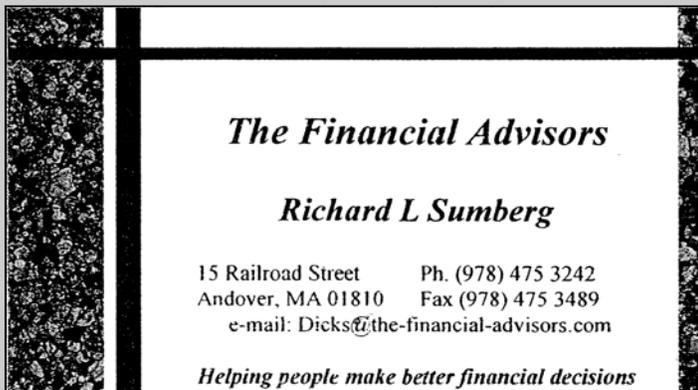
Voter Service—Andover

By Peggy Kruse

Election day for the 5th Congressional District, (which includes Andover but not North Andover), is Tuesday, October 16th. All Andover precincts vote at the Andover High School Field House between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m.

The LWV has a fun volunteer activity to offer – precincting on election day. Guaranteed that you'll be greeting many old and new friends as you help voters figure out what precinct they are in. No experience necessary. Please contact Peggy Kruse, 978-474-0176 or arg14502@comcast.net if you can help out for an hour or two between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. on Election Day.

Thanks to everyone who helped out at the precincting table at the September elections.



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Helping people make better financial decisions

LWVM Phonothon

By Gail Mann, Finance Chair

A Great Opportunity to Connect with League Members Across Massachusetts and Raise Money at the Same Time!

Join us on October 21st for an enjoyable evening of raising money for the League and having the opportunity to talk with other League members about programs and initiatives underway in their chapters. We'll provide you with contact information, training and a supportive environment for raising needed funds for our state and local League. Good food, prizes and lots of cheering help to make this evening fun and rewarding.

Our League gets paid \$20 per caller and receives 10% of the donations received from phone calls made. In 2006 the Phonothon brought in \$61,000, and almost \$6,000 was distributed back to local Leagues.

A/NA League Phonothon

Date: October 21, 2007

Time: 5:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. (A light dinner will be provided)

Place: Coldwell Banker Office, Tactician Corp Building
305 North Main Street, Andover

If you can spare even two hours on October 21st, your time and effort will have an impact on key programs and visibility of the League of Women Voters. If you're not able to participate, be sure to watch for Phonothon letters and mail your donation by October 9th.

Contact Gail Mann (gailmann@comcast.net) to sign up or to get more information on the 2007 LWVM Phonothon.

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cindy.dibenedetto@atriasenioring.com

Town to Conduct Public Opinion Surveys

By Steve Bucuzzo, Assistant Town Manager

Improving communication with the citizens of Andover is one of the Town's top priorities. The Board of Selectmen is pleased to announce that the Town is undertaking an ambitious, multi-faceted plan to improve communications this year and in the years to come. "We will be premiering this initiative during the coming months with some improvements to the Town's website that will feature the introduction of periodic on-line public opinion polls and special issue surveys to solicit broad and timely citizen input and feedback" said selectman Alex Vispoli. Later this year, the Town will also be conducting a comprehensive Andover Citizen's Survey through the mail to measure current levels of satisfaction with Town services, programs, and quality of life issues. "We are very excited about these communication improvement initiatives. We hope residents will participate in them, and let us know what's on their minds regarding our town government and community." said selectman Jerry Stabile.

You may subscribe to the Town's email list at <http://andoverma.gov/e-services/e-notices.php>.

Communication Matters: Enhancing Participation Through Better Communication

A presentation given by Steven S. Bucuzzo, Assistant Town Manager

We are moving away from traditional "representative" forms of democracy to more direct "participatory" forms of democracy. Citizens today expect opportunities to directly weigh in and influence local government decision-making.

A healthy local democracy requires citizen participation as a means of forming better solutions to community issues and problems.

Encouraging greater citizen participation is important because many local policy and regulatory decisions are controversial, and increased public input leads to better understanding of the diverse range of perspectives required for responsible decision-making.

Citizen participation allows local government officials to:

- Increase overall understanding of the issue
- Generate new ideas and perspectives
- Identify possible options and alternatives
- Discover and explore possible compromises
- Gauge public support for various solutions

Conducting a successful citizen participation process requires:

- Sincere desire to engage in a public process to make better decisions
- Clearly defined process that identifies the roles of the participants
- Variety of ways to participate in the process
- Appropriate timing of the process
- Identifying and inviting the people who are affected or interested in the issue
- Open dialog and deliberation
- Listening to all sides and attempting to understand opposing viewpoints

A good citizen participation process should ideally lead to:

- Common understanding of the issues
- Formulation of informed opinions
- Framework for decision-making
- Better overall decisions
- Increased trust in local officials

Some best practices for encouraging greater citizen participation:

- Embrace a consensus-building philosophy for decision-making
- Treat citizens as stakeholders
- Allow direct access to decision-makers
- Make issue related documents publicly accessible
- Actively invite input and feedback
- Seek balanced perspectives

Citizen Communication Methods:

- Meetings & Forums
- Newsletters
- CATV Programs
- Neighborhood Notices
- Mail Surveys
- News Releases
- Municipal Website
- Press Briefings
- Speaking Engagements
- Face-to-face

Best Practices for Public Meetings:

- Advertise meetings well in advance
- Use redundant notices (mail, newspaper, web, CATV)
- Publicize agendas
- Send personal invitations
- Invite the press (and prep them)
- Hold meetings in accessible locations
- Televised meetings
- Explain the purpose and format of the meeting
- Moderate for civil discussion
- Always, always, allow people to have their say
- Thank people for their time and input
- Explain what happens next
- Follow-up on any necessary actions

LWVM Fall Conference



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MASSACHUSETTS Citizen Education Fund

presents

FALL CONFERENCE 2007

“Who Pays for Local Government?”

Why is it my property taxes are so high, and yet funding local services is a struggle?”

Saturday, October 13, 2007

9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Quincy Marriott

Registration and coffee 9:00 a.m.

Luncheon keynote speaker 12:00 p.m.

Morning keynote speaker, John Hamill

Chairman, Municipal Finance Task Force

Panel discussion featuring:

Mayor John Barrett III, North Adams MA

Leslie Kirwan, Sec. Exec. Office Administration and Finance

Geoff Beckwith, Exec. Dir. Ma Municipal Association

Thomas Scott, Exec. Dir. MA Assoc. School Superintendents

Workshops 1:30—3:00 p.m.

Update on the Massachusetts Health Care Reform Law: How Will It Work?

Votinginfo.info: What's the 411?

Membership recruitment: The League's Best Practices

Membership Toolkit: Nuts and Bolts of League Membership

League members and guests are welcome, public is invited

Registration Deadline: October 3, 2007

To register online using VISA, MasterCard or American Express and get directions visit lwvma@lwvma.org

Or call LWVM at 617-523-2999 to make your reservations using a credit card

Fall Conference 2007 Registration Form

Conference fee: \$40 per attendee (includes lunch)

Your Name _____ Local League _____

Additional Attendees _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Payment by check or credit card accepted (Visa, MC, or American Express)

Total enclosed for all attendees if paying by check \$ _____ make checks payable and send to:

LWVM Citizen Education Fund
133 Portland St.
Boston, MA 02114

Name on credit card _____ Expiration date ____/____/____

Card Number _____ Total amount for all attendees \$ _____

Contact the League with any questions: 617-523-2999 or email lwvma@lwvma.org

Andover and Energy Conservation Update

The following are excerpts from an email received by Andover's Director of Plant & Facilities, Joe Piantedosi. Due to pressing deadlines, Joe did not have time to write a column for this month's Bulletin. However, the League was interested in the efforts being made to conserve energy in town buildings. We learned that Joe will be making a presentation about energy conservation to the MA Association of Town Finance Committees in November. He has also started a number of new initiatives, one of them involving switching five schools from oil to natural gas for one year under a fixed-price third party gas contract that the town has. Bay State Gas (Northern Utilities) gave the town \$28,000 for doing this. The funds will be used for some of the new initiatives. On September 12th, the town, in partnership with National Grid, organized a presentation for all school and town department heads. Joe hopes to bring energy conservation to some school classrooms and plans to resurvey five major town and school buildings to identify other opportunities. In the meantime, the federal government has enacted new penalties to promote new generation capacity in this area. The Plant & Facilities department is going to track our energy demand carefully in our major buildings to try and reduce these additional fees. For example, in an account like Andover High School, this new system of fees imposed by the feds could easily add \$45,000 or much more to the annual electricity bill based on what happens on one day a year, (typically a very hot day in August at around 2 p.m. in the afternoon). Joe has also switched our fuel over to 5% biodiesel for all of our trucks and heavy equipment. These changes, in addition to using natural gas in five school buildings, will help reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. The League looks forward to learning more about Andover's efforts to conserve energy and reduce greenhouse gases.

Take the Pledge!

Andover vs. North Andover

Make yours the first town to change

1,000 bulbs to CFLs

Pledge online at

www.lwv-andovers.org

Contest deadline is

October 31, 2007

Keep mercury out of the waste stream. Don't dispose of fluorescent bulbs in the regular trash. Save them for household hazardous waste collections. Used bulbs may now be disposed at Rocky's Ace Hardware, North Andover.

LWVM Affordable Housing Study Consensus Unit

By Joan Duff

Recognizing the pressing need for more affordable housing in Massachusetts, the LWVM Convention, 2005, adopted a study with the following scope.

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

The committee has focused on major Massachusetts legislation that enables development of affordable housing in the state. The presentation, expected to be a little less than one hour, will cover major Massachusetts affordable housing laws, how they work, what they have achieved, and how we might preserve the affordable housing already in place and more. A discussion hour will follow the presentation.

The Affordable Housing Consensus Question is:

What changes to Massachusetts laws are needed to more successfully encourage the production and retention of affordable housing?

In discussing this question please consider the following:

- a. Reasonableness and fairness of current eligibility for purchase or rental of affordable housing in Massachusetts.
- b. Methods of counting affordable housing units under Chapter 40B.
- c. Duration of affordability restrictions on housing units – in perpetuity, in perpetuity with some provision for reversion to market rate, or for a specified time.
- d. Effectiveness of state incentive programs for smart growth, including Chapter 40R and 40S.

The background material is available at www.lwvma.org. Click on Member Resources, then on LWVM Studies, then on Affordable Housing and you will find Affordable Housing Study Articles for Local Leagues. You may want to print the articles for the unit meeting.

The Affordable Housing Consensus Meeting for Region 4 will be held on Tuesday, October 16th from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Hamilton-Wenham Public Library, 14 Union Street, South Hamilton, MA, (978) 468-5577. Car pools will be organized for people who wish to attend. Call Joan Duff at (978) 685-3212 or email her at jandjuff@verizon.net, if you plan to attend.

Note: Those who cannot attend on October 16th are welcome to the November 28th consensus unit at the Chelmsford Police Station Lecture Room. 2 Olde North Road, Chelmsford, MA 01824, 978-256-2521.

Please Welcome New Member:

Denise Perrault, P.O. Box 2075, Methuen, MA 01844
Spiritsoul777@yahoo.com, 978-902-7893

Membership

By Cynthia Barakatt, Membership Chair

Why Join the League?

Affordable housing. Immigration. Health care. Casino gambling. Global climate change. Campaign finance reform.

At the local, state and national levels, the League of Women Voters is working to educate citizens about these and other important issues we face. By joining the League, you can learn about the issues you care about and be prepared to make informed choices at the ballot box or call your local, state or federal legislators and let them know how you feel.

The benefits of membership include:

- Subscriptions to the local League's monthly newsletter, *The Bulletin*, as well as to the state and national League's informative quarterly publications
- Emails letting you know about upcoming League events and "action alerts" on important issues and legislation
- Regular contact with other citizens who are concerned about the issues and want to actively participate in government

If you aren't already a member of the League, join today and encourage your friends to join as well. Because democracy is not a spectator sport.

Handbook Corrections:

- ▶ Steve Cotton is a household member with Rebecca Backman. He was left out of the directory in error.
- ▶ Jennifer Elkin's address is 167 Highland Rd., Andover.
- ▶ Jilla Boulas's address is 2 Garfield Lane, Andover, not North Andover
- ▶ The North Andover Town Officials Page:
 - Delete Alfred M. Perry from the School Committee.
 - Add Christine Allen, 3 Belmont St., 978-689-8689
 - William Kelly is the Chair

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ANTHONY S. CONTE, DIRECTOR

LWV Andover/North Andover Membership

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 \$75 Sustaining
 \$75 Household Dues
 (2+ persons in same household)
 \$100+ Patron
 \$35 Senior Citizen (65 and over)
 \$35 Student (under 24 yrs. old)

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

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

Send checks payable to: **LWV OF ANDOVER/NORTH ANDOVER**, Membership, P.O. Box 514, Andover MA 01810.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ email _____

Thank You! Cynthia Barakatt, Membership, 978.688.3749 / barakatt@comcast.net

LWVUS Immigration Study Update

The following information is excerpted from the LWVUS website to help new and seasoned League members understand League process. To read more about the LWVUS Immigration study, go to www.lwv.org and click on Projects and Immigration Study. There is a study page just for members, as well.

We have now reached the member agreement phase of the LWVUS Immigration Study, when Leagues prepare to take consensus. Grassroots agreement on positions is one of the League's greatest strengths. Preparing for and taking consensus is hard work, but worthwhile. The resulting position will allow the organization to affect national policy for years to come, just as we have been doing in other areas for 87 years – it's part of the organization's history.

Studies are part of League Program, and, in League parlance, League Program includes all of the positions the League uses to affect public policy, as well as the procedure for adopting these positions (see [Impact on Issues](#) for a complete list of LWVUS positions). Program is such an integral part of the League that, according to the League publication, [In League](#), "Program is the League's reason for being."

Program is three tiered and includes (1) selection of an issue, (2) study of that issue and consensus, and (3) use of the resulting position to affect public policy. During studies initiated at the local and state levels, responsibility for writing the scope, providing background information, and creating consensus questions shifts to the local and state Leagues. *But at all levels, the purpose of the study is to educate members so that they can be informed participants in consensus and provide necessary data for formulating the ultimate position.* The process is always a grassroots process, regardless of which level of League initiates the study.

League Program begins with the grassroots process, Program Planning. Every two years, local Leagues participate in LWVUS Program Planning and identify issues of interest for study at the national level - issues on which the LWVUS has *no position*, and, consequently, is unable to take action to affect public policy in that area. *The League cannot take action without a position.*

During 2005-2006 LWVUS Program Planning, local and state Leagues suggested numerous important issues for study. The largest number of Leagues participating in LWVUS Program Planning expressed interest in immigration. The LWVUS Program Planning Committee recommended, and the LWVUS Board approved immigration as a three-year study. Delegates at Convention 2006 in Minneapolis concurred, and for the first time since 1992 (Health Care) a new LWVUS study was underway. (Note: The study was subsequently shortened to two years).

At its October 2006 meeting the LWVUS Board adopted the following scope for the LWVUS 2006-2009 Immigration Study:

- ▶ Underlying values and principles regarding immigration
- ▶ Reasons for migration from other countries, including but not limited to:
 - Effects of global interdependence on migration
 - Motivation of refugees and asylees
 - Motivation of other immigrants
- ▶ Current federal immigration policy, including but not limited to:
 - Overview
 - Effectiveness in uniting families
 - Effectiveness in meeting needs of businesses
 - Effectiveness of enforcement
 - Human rights concerns
- ▶ Impact of immigration, including but not limited to:
 - Economic effects of authorized and unauthorized Immigration
 - Diversity
 - Inclusion of immigrants in American society

What is consensus?

It is easier to say what consensus is not, than what it is. Consensus is not a vote - rather, consensus is mutual agreement of League members arrived at through discussion. During discussion, everyone has the opportunity to express their viewpoints, and the issue is examined from all sides. Consensus questions, created by the appropriate study committee and approved by the Board provide structure for the meeting, as members discuss the pros and cons until it becomes apparent whether or not consensus has been reached on each question. The study committee analyzes the consensus responses and using this information, creates a position statement. Once approved by the Board, the statement immediately becomes the League's position and is the basis for action on the issue. This type of member involvement in the organization and its consensus process tends to ensure member commitment to the resulting positions. In addition, members have the opportunity at each Annual Meeting or Convention to decide whether or not to re-adopt these positions.

We Want YOU!

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN WORKING ON:

Citizen Education Committee

Voter Service - Voter Registration - Empowering Voters Project - Voter Education

Membership & Training Committee

Membership Initiative – Member Education – Local League Development / Support

Program & Action Committee

Identify Legislation / Issues – Develop Programs- Lobby - Issue Specialists

LWVM Projects

New Citizens Education – VOTE! 2008 Campaign – Online Student Essay Contest

OR IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD BE AN ASSET IN THESE AREAS...

Contact Kelly Marcimo, Executive Director at the LWVM office to get involved: 617-523-2999 or kmarcimo@lwvma.org.

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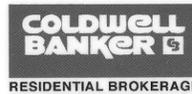
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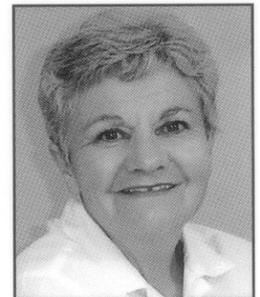
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Schedule of Events

			Time	Description	Address
October	3	W	9:15 am	Board Meeting. Open to all League members.	21 Magnolia Ave., Andover
	4	Th	7:15 pm	Environmental Action Committee meeting	6 Snowberry Rd, Andover
	12	F	11:30 am	Monthly Lunch Gathering (Members & Friends Welcome)	Panera Bread, North Andover
	13	Sat	9:30 am - 3 pm	LWVM Fall Conference 2007	Quincy Marriott, Quincy, MA
	15	M	Noon	Absentee Ballot Deadline	Town Clerk's Office – Town Hall, 36 Bartlet St., Andover
	16	T	7 am - 8 pm	Vote - Andover only	AHS Field House
	16	T	7 pm - 9 pm	LWVM Affordable Housing Consensus Unit	Hamilton-Wenham Library
	19	F	All Day	November Bulletin Deadline. Email articles to <i>stefraina@comcast.net</i>	
	21	Sun	5:30 - 9 pm	LWVM Phonothon	Coldwell Banker 305 N. Main St., Andover
	25	Th	7:30 pm	Chocolate at Alpers - an evening of chocolate, socializing and networking	Alpers Fine Art Main St., Andover
November	7	W	7:15 pm	Board Meeting. Open to all League members.	145 Argilla Rd., Andover
	12-16	M-F	Variable	Community Read-Along	Andover Elementary Schools
	16	F	All Day	December Bulletin Deadline. Email articles to <i>stefraina@comcast.net</i>	
	14	W	11:30 am	Monthly Lunch Gathering (Members & Friends Welcome)	Panera Bread, North Andover
	November 15 to March 1			LWVM Online Student Essay Contest	

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