

Annual Meeting 2013 Year In Review

The local League held its annual meeting at the Andover Historical Society on May 22. Members joined for dinner followed by the business meeting and a Speak Easy presentation by representatives of the Historical Society.

President Ann Cobleigh took a moment to thank the many members who helped on projects throughout the year, with a special thanks to Heather McNeil, Molly Foley, Maureen Sundberg, and Stefani Traina who took on multiple roles throughout the year.

The League managed to complete a very full docket of events and services for the year, and there was a greater sense of stability for the League in both communities as compared with the prior year.

We fulfilled several year-long commitments:

- Published the monthly Bulletin from September through May and featured guest columns by Elizabeth Wilson, Candy Dann, Elaine Clements, and Lois Jeanne Pustell.
- Kept the website up-to-date and migrated over to the new LWVUS format, possible because we subscribe to League Easy Web, a service provided by the LWV of California.
- Oversaw an increase in membership dues, effective for the 2013-2104 year, as directed by last year's annual meeting. The vote was taken at the Winter Dinner in January.
- Continued our engagement with the local Leagues in Region 4. Stefani Traina continued as our League's representative and in the fall will take over for retiring Ruth Race as Region 4 Leader.
- Participated in the LWVUS Membership and Leadership Development coaching program. After a day-long training session, Maureen and Ann attended monthly phone meetings that provided a lot of information and good ideas that we plan to continue to implement.
- Molly Bicking coordinated precincting in Andover for the elections held in Sept, Nov, March and June. Molly's email sign-up system continues to be efficient and effective. Thank you to all of you who volunteer at the League's table.

In addition to our year-long activities, the local League counted the following among its major accomplishments:

August

The League hosted a Pre-Primary Candidates' Forum for the 2nd Essex & Middlesex District State Senate seat and Register of Deeds.

Maureen and Ann met Secretary of the Commonwealth, William Galvin when he visited Andover before the special election.

September

The League hosted a table at Know Your Town Fair on September 15. For the first time, the League shared a table and split the cost. Our tent-mate was the Town Clerk's office which actually worked quite well. We showed *Bad Romance: Woman's Suffrage*, a video remake of the Lady Gaga song. We also collaborated with the Andover Historical Society to outfit several AHS students as Suffragettes who helped give out bookmarks with Presidential debate schedules and League event information. Maureen Sundberg and Heather McNeil represented A/NA as volunteers at a Candidate Forum for the 3rd Congressional District held in Concord, MA.

League members again precincted at the State Primary Election.

October

The League hosted a public viewing of the televised Brown/Warren Debate at Andover's Safety Center followed by a discussion led by Dr. Harry Wessel of Merrimack College.

The League hosted an educational forum entitled "Become an Expert Watcher of Political Debates" with Dr. Harry Wessel, which was held just prior to the first Presidential debate.

We sponsored Candidates' Night for State Senators and Representatives on Oct 17 and a Ballot Question Debate and Discussion, in collaboration with Andover High School students, on Oct 27.

November

On November 6, League volunteers worked the polls for the combined state and national election. Molly Bicking coordinated the schedule of volunteers. We received a lot of positive feedback for our role that day.

Molly Foley, Maureen Sundberg, Stefani Traina, and Ann Cobleigh participated Nov 11 in the LWVMA Phonathon. The team raised close to \$1,600; \$169 was returned to our local League.

North Andover Voter Services provided a series of taped candidate interviews that were available to residents via cable.

On November 13 the League co-sponsored Andover's Mid-Year Review; the main topics were the Town Yard, the Economic Development Council, and Citizens Survey results.

Nov 15 Stefani Traina was co-trainer for Moderator Training in Concord, MA.

November 12-16 was Andover's annual Community Read-Along, held in Andover elementary schools. Thanks go to League event chairs, Maureen Sundberg and Denise Boucher, and to school administrators for their continued support of this event, as well as to the individual school coordinators and our many, many enthusiastic readers.

November 28, the League held a Chocolate at the Addison Gallery membership and opening meeting event again. More than 30 people enjoying the creative chocolate dishes and the terrific gallery talk by the Susan Faxon.

December

The League sent out an appeal letter to Andover officials and the result was \$75 in donations to our Ed Fund and a \$55 donation to our League.

Ann attended an informal coffee for US Representative Tierney, who was meeting with constituents to learn about issues of concern to the League.

January

Heather McNeil and Stefani Traina organized the Running for Office Workshop, which was held in North Andover this year. The two town clerks offered information about paperwork and filing deadlines. Andover Selectman, Dan Kowalski, and North Andover Selectman Richard Vaillancourt, spoke about their experiences as candidates. Michael Sullivan of the Office of Campaign and Political Finance was his usual entertaining and informative self.

January 23 saw the League's Winter Dinner and Business Meeting. The membership approved a motion to raise dues by \$5 at the Standard, Contributing and Senior levels. Invited guests Rev. Jim and Mary Todd spoke about their program working with refugees from Iraq.

The January Bulletin contained a Member Survey. Although response was light, we hope to continue our efforts to elicit membership feedback.

February

March

March 6 North Andover held a Candidates' Forum for those running for local office. March 13 Ann and two new League members attended Day on the Hill. March 16 Andover held a Candidates' Afternoon. Local elections were held on March 26.

April

April 9 saw the second Annual Youth in Town Government Day. Over 20 students participated this year. Students were paired with town officials and participated in a day of activities to help them learn about their town government. The day concluded with a meeting with Town Moderator, Sheila Doherty. Molly Foley coordinated all the details and did an outstanding job again this year.

On April 10th, Bonnie Zahorik organized and moderated Andover's budget forum. It was the best one yet.

April 29, Andover's Town Meeting Preview took place, with various town officials and others presenting information about warrant articles. The evening was informative, thanks to the many town department heads who took the time to share information and respond to questions from residents.

April 30 US Senate Special Primary with League volunteers precincting.

April is also the time for identifying the Andover High School recipient of the Virginia Cole Scholarship. Again this year, Mary Beth Nason publicized the Cole scholarship and organized the reading committee. We had terrific applicants again this year. Thanks to Mary Beth for her support of this program; and many thanks to Molly Foley and Maureen Sundberg for serving on the reading committee this year. Congratulations to our scholarship recipient, Marina Renton.

Ann Cobleigh represented the League for the Cole Community Service Award. Congratulations to member Tina Girdwood for her well-deserved recognition at Andover's Town Meeting.

Maureen registered student voters at Andover High School during a spring voter registration drive that was organized by AHS staff members.

May

Ann spoke on behalf of the League in support of Articles 53 & 54, acquisition of the Reichhold property, at Andover Town Meeting.

Board members Ann Cobleigh, Stefani Traina, and Maureen Sundberg attended the LWVMA Biennial Convention on May 17-18 as voting delegates. In summary, the state League will not be increasing PMP. They are trying hard to increase their support and services to local leagues. The League of Andover/North Andover donated to LWVMA in memory of past member Vicky Johnston who passed this spring.

June

The League presented Book Awards to a Junior at both Andover and North Andover High Schools. This year's book selection was *Mountains Beyond Mountains; The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a Man Who Would Cure the World* by Tracy Kidder.

Four League members received 2013 Citizens Who Care awards from the Andover Rotary. Congratulations to Ellen Marcus, Nancy Mulvey, Susie Novick, and Mary Beth Nason,

Following the summary of the year, Stefani Traina presented the Treasurer's Report & Budget for 2013-2014 and reported on membership. (Details to be found in an accompanying article). The membership voted to approve the 2013-14 Budget and adopted the proposed the proposed slate of officers and the Local Program (described below).

No additional directions were given to the Board.

The Business Meeting was followed by a Speak Easy Presentation by the Andover Historical. Elaine Clements, Jane Cairns, Jim Batchelder, and Don Robb described the Society's mission and vision while treating attendees to some of the many wonderful stories collected and treasured by the Historical Society.