

Newsletter

Voters' Service Time is Here!

By Sharyn Roberts

The candidates for
MAYOR
Listed in the order they will
appear on the ballot are:

- Tom Sheff
- David Cohen,
incumbent
- Mike Striar

The candidates for the
WARD 6 SCHOOL
COMMITTEE POSITION,
Listed in ballot order are:

- Andrew Gottlieb
- Lucia Dolan
- Claire Sokoloff

On August 25th and September 6th, the League and NewTV will host a Candidates Debate in preparation for the Preliminary election to be held on Tuesday, September 20th. There are two contested races for this election, the race for the Mayor and the race for the Ward Six position on the School Committee. All citizens of Newton may vote in each contest. The two candidates receiving the most votes in each contest will appear on the November ballot.

The Candidates Debate will be held in the NewTV studios and cablecast prior to the election. Check

the schedule on www.newtv.org for the times.

While I have organized a fine staff of League volunteers to help on these events, please contact me if you will be willing to help on Voters' Service events that will take place prior to the November election. We will need ushers, timers, question sorters, and League members at the membership table at the debates, Harvest Fest, and poll reporters and drivers to the polls on election days. Contact me at 617-969-9588 or Sharyn@neovana.com. It's enjoyable and it's important!

Informational Meeting Series Begins September 14th

By Pat Acton and Linda Morrison

Take time to learn about an important topic each month by attending our Informational Meetings. Traditional League jargon calls them "Unit Meetings" but Newton is renaming them in the hope of using a name that better describes the meetings.

The topic of the first meeting is the Empowering Voters Project (EVP). Members who attend this first event will meet Bernadette Buck, Vice President, Citizen Education/Voters Service, LWVMA, and Cathy Dowd, Apportionment/Re-districting specialist, LWVMA. They will be answering our questions about how this campaign is going to work. Background information on this campaign is located in this issue.

In addition, our own Beth Lowd will briefly speak on Fair Districts for Fair Elections.

The meeting will be held from 11:30-1:30 p.m. at the home of Ruth Neiberg. Brown bagging is encouraged. Join us!

Think Green... Save Trees!

The Newsletter is a communication tool for our Newton League. Communication needs to be timely and for several years our Newsletter has been arriving at a snail's pace. This edition has been mailed to you First Class. We trust that you are learning about all the activities coming up in the month of September and have time to make plans to participate.

For those of you who live green, we have another option. Join our LWVNSaveTrees listserv and you will receive an electronic message to view the Newsletter as soon as it is posted on our website. It's your choice. Continue to receive a printed copy in the first class mail or send a blank e-mail to:

LWVNSaveTrees-subscribe@yahoogroups.com and
save trees.

LWVN Officers and Directors 2004-2005

STEERING COMMITTEE

Bonnie Carter	617-969-0686
Amelia Koch	617-244-2647
Ann Grantham	617-964-0333
Sharyn Roberts	617-969-9588
Sue Rosenbaum Spokesperson	617-332-0306

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Treasurer	Andrea Kozinetz Holtz	617-964-6490

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Local Action & Newsletter	Andreae Downs	617-969-7123
Study for Concurrence	Priscilla Leith	617-969-6837
Housing	Roberta Leviton	617-965-0016
Fair Districts	Beth Lowd	617-332-1978
Environment	Martha Richmond	617-244-2076

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Jody Klein, Chair	617-244-4767
Members:	Ruby Ajanee Carol Ann Shea

OFF BOARD SPECIALISTS

Handbook	Robin Maltz	617-969-1554
Human Rights	Holly Gunner	617-964-0767
Legislature Roundtable	Ruby Ajanee	617-243-9888
Local Action	Deb Crossley Co-chair	617-244-7597
Membership	Elaine Reisman Co-chair	617-244-6439
Topic Meetings	Pat Acton	617-965-5572
	Linda Morrison	617-332-6539
Recycling	Barbara Herson	617-964-7463
Web Site	Judy Jaffe	617-969-7427

NEWSLETTER

Editor	Ann Grantham	617-964-0333
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The LWVN Newsletter is published nine times per year. The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization open to all citizens of voting age. For more information about the League of Women Voters, call 617-964-0014.

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Newton, MA 02461
617-964-0014

<http://www.lwvn.ma.lwvnet.org>

September

Just begun and already the League calendar is filling up. It still amazes me how each person doing their piece of League work and it all comes together to make a difference. The newly retitled "informational" meetings, the primary debates, and the new members meetings, just to name a few. I'm very excited to have the new member meetings on the calendar. There are so many people out there who have "always meant to join" and so many people who would like to be more involved with their community. If you know such a person please pass their name on to Elaine Reisman or Sharyn Roberts and even better bring them to one of the upcoming meetings.

Think you can't find time for the league? Here's something we can all do, go to the Common cause web site at Commoncause.org, select Massachusetts from the list of states and sign the petition "Fair Districts for Fair Elections." The League is supporting this next step in the process of taking redistricting out of the legislature and into the hands of an independent body. If you have a little more time, help us get to our 1000 signature goal by circulating a petition.

I want to thank Ann Grantham for the wonderful job she is doing with the newsletter. It's never looked better! Hope to see many of you throughout the fall at the many events your League board are planning.



THE NONPARTISAN POLICY

The Policy as it applies to Members

The League prides itself on having a membership composed of diverse, informed women and men. Its individual members are encouraged to participate fully in party politics and governments at all levels. Many League members have strong affiliations with political parties or candidates, or are elected officials themselves.

The Policy as it applies to Board Members

The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Newton has a responsibility to uphold the nonpartisan status of the League as an organization. The Steering Committee members, Voter Service Chair, Education Chair, and Local Action Chair shall not engage in visible support of local political candidates. Other board members may be politically active at all levels. However, they should use discretion to ensure that their own activities are not identified with the League in the public mind. Candidates for local elected office and their campaign managers cannot serve on the Board of Directors. If any questions arise regarding the non-partisan policy, the matter will come before the Board for interpretation and discussion. If a Board member resigns from the Board because of a conflict of this policy, that member shall not return to the Board until after the next Annual Meeting. Final decisions about implementing this nonpartisan policy rest with the Board of Directors.

Adopted by the LWVN Board of Directors June 23, 2005

LWVN Organizational Chart 2005-2006

<p>Bonnie Carter bonniecarter@aol.com 617-969-0686</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •HANDBOOK/DB •UNIT ORGANIZATION •STATE/NATIONAL RELATIONS 	<p>Ann Grantham magrantham@aol.com 617-964-0333</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CALENDAR •CLERK •NEWSLETTER •WEBSITE 	<p>Amelia Koch Akoch-lwvn@rcn.com 617-244-2647</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •LOCAL ACTION •LOCAL STUDY/ CONSENSUS •WOMEN'S ISSUES 	<p>Sharyn Roberts sharyn@neovana.com 617-969-9588</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •ENVIRONMENT •MEMBERSHIP •VOTERS' SERVICE 	<p>Sue Rosenbaum dsr2@rcn.com 617-332-0306</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •SPOKESPERSON/PR •TREASURER •FUNDRAISING •LEGISLATIVE ROUNDTABLE
<p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Fair Districts Beth Lowd blowd@mindspring.com 617-332-1978</p> <p>Housing 40B Roberta Leviton robertaleviton@comcast.net 617-965-0016</p> <p>Education NCLB TBD</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Clerk Allison Stoner Allisonstoner@hotmail.com 617-527-4018</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Local Action Observers Andreae Downs adglickman@rcn.com 617-969-7123</p> <p>Study for Concurrence Priscilla Leith islpris@comcast.net 617-969-6837</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Environment Martha Richmond Martha.richmond@rcn.com 617-244-2076</p> <p>Voters' Service Sharyn Roberts Sharyn@neovana.com 617-969-9588</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Treasurer Andrea Kozinetz Holtz andreaik@comcast.net 617-964-9490</p> <p>Fundraising TBD</p>
<p>LEADERSHIP SCHEDULE</p> <p>August/September – Amelia February/March – Sharyn October/November – Bonnie April/May – Sue December/January – Ann</p>				

Welcome New Member!

STEPHEN M. LINSKY
 9 Simpson Terrace
 Newtonville, MA 02460
 617 244-4549 617 906-5412
 SMLINSKY@RCN.COM

*You are invited to
 Join us for a social informational gathering*

THURSDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 22
 OR
 TUESDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 27

See calendar page for details
 RSVP and more information:
 Elaine 617-244-6439

Do Come To:
 Meet others in
 the community
 Satisfy your curiosity
 about the League
 Discuss current issues
 of interest

Advocacy Agenda to Empower Voters



The Empowering Voters Project is a strategic, comprehensive project to ensure that voting in Massachusetts is easy and fair and that voters are informed and engaged. The Project will focus on those constituencies that are under represented in the electoral process and are the most vulnerable to voting problems. The Project will advocate for reform to voting laws and procedures to ensure that all voters in Massachusetts can register and vote without complication or discrimination.

This Project is being conducted by the League of Women Voters, the most trusted name in nonpartisan voter services and voter information. Founded in 1920, the League encourages the active and informed participation of all citizens in the electoral process.

ISSUES AND ADVOCACY OBJECTIVES

Promote Reforms for Easier and More Accessible Registration & Voting

Reform absentee voting

- Permit unconditional absentee voting by amending the Massachusetts Constitution
- Allow early absentee voting at municipal election offices before an election

Allow Election Day registration

- Increase turnout by allowing voter registration at polling places
- Lessen the need for confusing and time-consuming provisional ballots

Increase accessibility of voter registration forms

- Allow downloading and photocopying of forms
- Promote changes to make the forms more user-friendly

Establish online access to voting lists

- Allow voters across the state to check their voter registration status online
- Ensure that online voter registration records are kept accurate and up-to-date

Expand right to leave work to vote

- Amend existing law to allow all workers to take a two-hour leave to vote if they do not have three consecutive hours away from work when polls are open

Ensure that Voting is Equitable and Efficient

- Oppose restrictive identification requirements
- Ensure that requirements for presenting IDs, which can be discriminatory, are not expanded

Expand recruitment of poll workers

- Allow municipalities to hire poll workers residing in other towns and cities, including college students, and to reassign public employees to serve as poll workers
- Permit hiring high school students to serve as poll workers

Mandate display of Voters' Bill of Rights in every polling place

- Voters should have easy access to the Voters' Bill of Rights so they can protect their rights at the polls.

Boost Voter Confidence in Electoral System and Elected Officials

Propose measures to ensure unbiased elections administration

- File legislation to ensure that election administrators are impartial by barring them from holding responsible, fiduciary positions in political campaigns other than their own

IN SUPPORT OF S.466 and H.128 Relating to Election Officers

Testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Election Laws

July 19, 2005

By Madhu Sridhar, President

The 2004 elections showed the nation that many of our polling places do not function as well as they should. On our TV screens, we saw that in some areas, polling places were understaffed, and long lines at the polls discouraged people from voting. Although Massachusetts did not experience the gravity of problems we saw in other states, some areas here still have trouble recruiting enough poll workers, which can lead to unnecessarily long waits to vote. Voter turnout and participation is greatly affected by the efficiency and quality of polling practices, workers and facilities.

Administering elections is a difficult and detailed process. This is made even more difficult when precinct suffer from a lack of poll workers. In Massachusetts, with more than 2,000 precincts, more than 12,000 workers need to be recruited for each statewide election.¹ Recruiting enough poll workers is a continuing issue in election administration. Expanding the pool of competent and diverse potential Election Day workers will improve this situation and will increase the efficiency and equitability of polling places. Both of the bills before you, S.466 and H.128, would accomplish this important task of increasing the number of potential poll workers by allowing the recruitment of qualified poll workers registered to vote in other cities and towns and to recruit high school students as poll workers.

Massachusetts, like many other states, is in need of a larger pool of competent poll workers. According to the Help America Vote Act of 2002 Policy Brief, there is a need for improved communication with voters and among precincts in Massachusetts municipalities. One recommendation is to provide additional staff on election days. Moreover, according to the Elections Assistance Commission, the average age of a poll worker today is 72. Not only is the number of poll workers decreasing, but the available pool of poll workers is composed of older generations that might be unfamiliar with

new technology required at polling places. Allowing clerks to recruit registered voters from other cities and towns and to recruit high school students would increase the number of poll workers that are familiar with newer technology.

Additionally, having high school students serve as poll workers will instill in them a sense of civic responsibility and commitment to the electoral process. This increases the likelihood that they will vote at a later date, educates them about the electoral process, and provides polling places with younger, reliable, interested poll workers. This initiative is also supported by the Help America Vote Act, which established a foundation to encourage high school students to assist at polling places.

The League supports the intent of both S.466 and H.128 although some of the details require revision. For example, a minimum grade point average should not be required of high school students. There is no such requirement, or even a basic educational requirement, for other poll workers. High school students should not be required to meet stricter educational standards than any other candidate for poll worker. The high school students must obtain a recommendation from his or her school principal before even applying to become a poll worker. This is certainly an adequate screening process, especially since clerks are not required to hire high school students as poll workers. It is merely a beneficial option available to them to increase the pool of available, competent poll workers.

**The League of Women Voters
urges you to support S.466 and H.128
with revisions as suggested above.**

¹ MIT-Caltech "Voting in Massachusetts" 2004

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

- I would like to join the League of Women voters of Newton. Enclosed is my check for \$55 payable to LWVN.
- Lifetime membership \$1000**
- I would like to receive materials about the League.
- I would like to be contacted by a League member to talk about LWVN.

My Email address may be shared with State and National LWV

**Mail this form (and your check, if joining) to:
Andrea Kozinetz Holtz at 8 Stoney Brae Road,
Newton Highlands, MA 02461**



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Committees - in - Action

Local Action

Contact: Andreae Downs, Chair 617-969-7123

Observers

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Andreae Downs Amelia Koch
Andrea Kelley Priscilla Leith

ELECTION COMMISSION

Nancy Criscitiello

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Martha Richmond

FINANCE COMMITTEE, BOARD OF ALDERMAN

Ruby Ajanee Amelia Koch

NEWTON FREE LIBRARY BOARD

Mary Adelstein

NEWTON PARKS AND RECREATION

Priscilla Leith

Representatives

NEWTON CITIZEN COMMISSION ON ENERGY

Deb Crossley, LWVN Representative

SUSTAINABLE NEWTON COMMITTEE

Sharyn Roberts, LWVN Representative

Committees

CPC LEAGUE REVIEW COMMITTEE

*Focus To follow the process of the granting of
Community Preservations funds.*

Members

Anna Maria Abernathy Jody Klein
Barbara Bix Myra Tattenbaum
Deb Crossley

Contact Andreae Downs, Chair 617-969-7123

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

*Focus Promoting source reduction and
recycling programs in municipal
offices and public schools*

Members

Deb Crossley Robin Maltz
Katherine Gekas Sharyn Roberts
Barbara Herson Heather Tausig
Beth Lowd Linda Walden

Contact Martha Richmond 617-244-2076

Feel free to call committee contacts
or a Board officer or director to learn more.

Election Dates

City Preliminary Election Day
Tuesday, September 20, 2005

Municipal Election Day
Tuesday, November 8, 2005

LWVN CALENDAR

August

- 24 Wednesday, 6:30 p.m., **Working Board/ Potluck meeting**, at the home of Ann Grantham, 46 East Side Pkwy., Newtonville, 617-964-0333. Chair, Amelia Koch.
- 25 Thursday, **Candidate's Night** for the School Committee preliminary election at the NewTV Studio, 90 Lincoln St., Newton Highlands. Contact Sharyn Roberts, 617-969-9588.

September

- 6 Tuesday, **Candidate's Night** for the Mayoral preliminary election at the NewTV Studio, 90 Lincoln St., Newton Highlands, Contact Sharyn Roberts, 617-969-9588.
- 9 Friday, 9 a.m., **Environmental Issues Committee** at the home of Deb Crossley, 28 Circuit Ave, Newton Highlands, 617-244-7597.
- 12 1 p.m. **Local Action Committee** meeting at the home of Jody Klein, 15 Newell Rd., Auburndale, 617-244-4767

13 7:30p.m., **Presentation/Discussion of Green Issues** in the draft Comprehensive Plan for Newton. Senior Center, 345 Walnut St., Newtonville. Deb Crossley, 617-244-7597

14 Wednesday, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., **Informational Meeting/ aka Unit Meeting**, Empowering Voters Project, at the home of Ruth Neiberg, 72 Dalton Rd., Newton Centre, 617-969-9329.

7:15 p.m. **Board Meeting** at the home of Andreae Downs, 854 Chestnut St., Waban, 617-969-7123. Chair, Amelia Koch

20 Tuesday, **City Preliminary Election Day**, Polls Open 7a.m. – 8 p.m.

22 Thursday, 9:30 a.m. **Meet the League Coffee** at the home of Elaine Reisman, 28 Fairway Dr., West Newton, 617-244-6439.

24 Saturday, **Petition Drive** for Fair Districts Begins

27 Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. **Meet the League Evening** at the home of Beth Lowd, 38 Hobart Rd. (north side on Commonwealth,) Newton Centre. For more information contact Elaine Reisman, 617-244-6439.

29 Thursday, 6:30 p.m. **Working Board /Potluck** at the home of Ann Grantham, 46 East Side Pkwy., Newtonville, 617-964-0333. Chair, Bonnie Carter

October

12 Wednesday, 11:30a.m.-1:30 p.m. **Informational Meeting / aka Unit Meeting**, Newton North, at the home of Pat Acton, 617-965-5572.

16 Sunday, **Harvest Fest**, Noon -5pm Newton Center Green. (Rain Date, Sunday October 23rd.)

19 Wednesday. 12 – 1p.m., **Local Action Committee** meeting, at the home of Priscilla Leith, 162 Islington Rd., Auburndale, 617-969-6837.

19 7:15 p.m. **Board Meeting**, at the home of Sue Rosenbaum, 121 Winslow Rd., Waban, 617-332-0306, Chair- Bonnie Carter

19 8:00 p.m. **Last hour and day to register to vote** for the Nov. 8, 2005 Municipal Election.

22 Saturday, **LWVMA Fall Conference**, 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 pm, Burlington Marriott

24 Monday, 5:30 – 9:00 p.m., **Phonothon**, Thanks to Coldwell Banker for the use of their office. Contact Bonnie Carter, 617-969-0686, training and supper provided.

25 Tuesday, 5:30-9:00 p.m., **Phonothon**, Thanks to Coldwell Banker for the use of their office. Contact Bonnie Carter, 617-969-0686, training and supper provided.

26 Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. **Working Board /Potluck** at the home of Ann Grantham, 46 East Side Pkwy., Newtonville, 617-964-0333. Chair Bonnie Carter.

Legislative Roundtable



For current schedule log on to www.newtv.org

League of Women Voters of Newton



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