

Newsletter

A Salute to Local Action

Local Action is the heart of LWV Newton. We depend on our Observers. Serving as the "eyes and ears of the League," they keep us up to date on what is going on. They keep track of the issues the League has studied and adopted positions for. The Action Committee proposes what action to take (writing a letter or making a statement at a hearing) to the LWVN Board members, who make the ultimate decision.

You have seen Observer Reports in our Newsletter. This past year, the CPC Committee and the Newton Parks and Recreation Commission have been of prime interest. In this issue you will read further Observer Notes as well as a current letter written to the CPC. Look for a list of these valuable people on Page 4.

Become an Observer!

Want to be in the middle of things? Know what is happening before the newspaper gets out? Have a positive impact on city governance? The League Observer Corps is for you!

We have several opportunities in the middle of the hottest issues before the city, including the Newton North construction planning! You will be supported by a strong team of fellow-observers, who fill in for each other, share notes and discuss any needed action. Training and guidelines are provided. Qualifications include ability to take good notes during meetings without expressing opinions (perhaps the hardest part?), and time and ability to attend evening meetings every month or so.

Contact Andreae Downs,
andreaedowns@yahoo.com or
969-7123 to sign up or find out more!

Observer Reports

THE ELECTION COMMISSION

By Nancy Criscitiello, Observer

The Election Commission, chaired by David Mofenson, continues to meet on a quarterly basis. (March, June, September, December). Kenneth Hartford joined the Commission in September 2005, as one of the two Republicans, replacing Steven Smith who resigned due to a conflict of interest.

The meetings are usually short and to the point. Peter Karg reports on upcoming elections, perennial problems with getting good election workers, and results of recent elections. He and his deputy, Dede Forgione, have streamlined the required forms and have instituted a number of changes to simplify record keeping for Wardens and Clerks.

The Election Commission also is in charge of the annual City Census, receiving returns and tabulating the results. In order to comply with the Mayoral request to cut all city department budgets by 5%, the Election Commission will no longer prepay postage for the return of the City Census. It remains to be seen if there will be a difference in the rate of return of the Census.

Most election workers are now trained in the new machines. The "check-out table", which was new to Newton when the new machines were instituted, is required by the state for communities using these machines. It has been a source of irritation for voters (and because 2 extra workers are required, a cost not incurred before). There is a bill pending in the Legislature to do away with the check-out table, also to allow for non-residents and some qualified high-school students to be Election Workers.

The challenge in the next election will be training for the new electronic machines for both the visually and hearing-impaired. There will be one machine in every voting site (even if there are two precincts in one physical place). As of the last meeting, March 14, 2006, the state had not chosen the vendors for these new machines, but it was ascertained that there will be a paper trail.

Continued on page 4

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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.

PO Box 610207
Newton, MA 02461
617-964-0014

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

News and Views

Day on the Hill

Dorothy Litt, who joined the Newton League after observing the LWVMA action at the state house, attended her first "Day on the Hill," March 15, 2006. She commented that hundreds attended and that it was a "marvelous show of strength for the League."

Presentations in Gardner Auditorium included Senate President Robert Travaglini and House Speaker Salavatore DiMasi. Both leaders addressed the vision for the current Health Care Plan. Claire Higgins, Massachusetts Municipal Association President and Mayor of Northampton, gave an informative presentation about what state policies and funding mean to local politics and budgets.

Dorothy was happy to see the young people in attendance. The Arlington League brought high school students from an AP American History Class, along with their teacher. This is something we will consider for next year. And speaking of next year, Dorothy Litt is planning to attend!

Champagne and Chocolate

On Sunday afternoon, March 26, 2006, we held our Fifth Champagne and Chocolate Reception fundraising event. Laurie and Paul Gershkowitz hosted this event in their beautiful home at 50 Green Park, Newton Corner. Dr. Arnold Offner, our guest speaker, is the Cornelia F. Hugel Professor of History at Lafayette College, and is also a past president of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. He is author of many scholarly books and articles on U.S. foreign policy. The title of his talk was "President Bush, National Security, and the Perils of Regime Change," in which he traced the origins and consequences of the war in Iraq from the first Gulf War in 1991 through the 9/11 attacks, Bush's National Security Statement of September 2002, to the present. His talk was so fascinating that our audience didn't want him to stop.

Many people were involved in making this event a success. Heartfelt thanks go to Ruby Ajanee, Sandy Butzel, Bonnie Carter, Deb Crossley, Nancy Crowley, Andreae Downs, Laurie and Paul Gershkowitz, Kathy Glick-Weil, Paul Glickman, Fred Guzzi, Susie Heyman, Helen Jordan, Andrea Kelley, Debby Knight, Amelia Koch, Andrea Kozinetz, Jane Leighton, Peter Meyer, Mary Morgan, Linda Morrison, Arnold and Ellen Offner, Tami Roberts, Sue Rosenbaum, Allison Stoner, Jennifer Stoner, Jim Stoner, Sharon Stout, Phil Vance, and Ben Weisbuch.

Sharyn Roberts

Sign Up to Take Action

Visit the websites at state and national and signup to receive action alerts. www.lwvma.org and www.lwvus.org ■



Champagne and Chocolate

RECEPTION



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Sharyn Roberts

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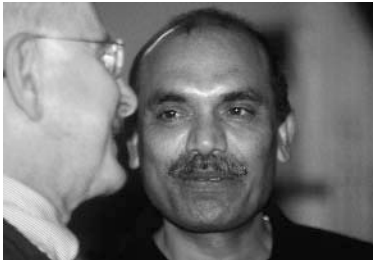
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Sharon Stout
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Committees - in - Action

Local Action

Contact: Andreae Downs, Chair 617-969-7123

Observers

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
NEWTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE	Jody Klein

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 Preservation funds by studying proposals and observing meetings.*

Members

Anna Maria Abernathy	Priscilla Leith
Deb Crossley	Robertta Leviton
Andrea Kelley	Jennifer Stoner
Amelia Koch	Myra Tattenbaum
Jody Klein	

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

LWVN MASTER PLAN

CONCURRENCE COMMITTEE

Focus *A study to support a Master Plan for all public open spaces, parks and recreational facilities in the City of Newton.*

Members

Carol Bock	Andreae Downs
Sheila Butts	Andrea Kelley
Doug Dickson	

Contact Priscilla Leith, Chair 617-969-6837

...

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

Continued from page one

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

By Priscilla Leith, Observer

This report covers items discussed at the December 2005, January, February and March Commission meetings, and a Crystal Lake neighborhood meeting held in early April, 2006.

Strategic Planning for Parks

A "Park Assessment and Development Plan & Evaluation" was completed on Jan 1, 2006 and was used to set priorities for Community Preservation Act proposals. The Commission submitted a joint \$107,100 proposal for "strategic design funding" for the Newton Highlands Playground (including the Whitmore Tot Lot) and the Newton Upper Falls Playground, which were its two top priorities. The Community Preservation Committee held a hearing in early March, and a working session on April 4.

Status of CPA Proposals

Many 2004 and 2005 CPA projects co-sponsored by Parks and Rec have completed the approval process and are now underway: Washington Park design plan; Gath Pool improvements; City Hall landscaping; Newton Centre Playground design plan; Newton Senior Center Park; Farlow-Chaffin Preservation design plan; Bowen Playfield/Park.

A \$753,700 proposal for Stearns-Pellegrini Park, the \$32,000 Albemarle Central Corridor Design Plan, and the Cheesecake Brook Greenway Concept Plan for \$24,000 are pending before the Board of Aldermen, as of mid-April. The Cheesecake Brook proposal would link a DPW project (already underway with Community Development Block Grant funds) to the Albemarle/Russell Halloran complex and then north to the Charles River Pathway. DPW Commissioner Bob Rooney supports it and would implement construction if the funds are approved.

CPA Applications for 2006

June 1 is the deadline for any proposals or ideas that require co-sponsorship of the Parks and Recreation Commission, to allow staff to review them and the Commission to avoid a logjam at its September meeting.

NSHS Synthetic Turf Proposal

In December, the Commission was asked informally whether it would approve a proposal to put synthetic turf on the baseball diamond and other land under the jurisdiction of the Commission which is adjacent to School Department property. The commission was not sympathetic to the idea for a number of reasons. As of mid-April this proposal is still before the Community Preservation Committee.

Crystal Lake

Crystal Lake will re-open for public use on June 12. In December, the regulations for Crystal Lake were amended to prohibit all-terrain vehicles (ATV's), snowmobiles or hovercraft (except for emergency vehicles) on or in the water of Crystal Lake. Water skis, jet skis, and other similar motorized vehicles are already banned. State authorities have pledged assistance in dealing with any future violations of these regulations. Efforts to repair the retaining wall between the public beach and the abutter at 20 Rogers St. rest with the Law Department. A management consultant was hired to help address the needs for sand, the wall, etc. A request for an Order of Conditions from the Conservation Commission and a joint waiver from the State regarding some alleged violations by the Commission have been approved.

Continued on page 8

Local Action

The Community Preservation Committee
1000 Commonwealth Ave.
Newton, MA
March 21, 2006



Dear CPC Members:

The League of Women Voters of Newton remains concerned about many of the issues raised at the initial hearing of the artificial turf proposal. As we have heard and considered discussions unfolding in the community, we are further questioning the wisdom and appropriateness of using CPA money to fund rebuilding of these fields.

We question the proposed large commitment of CPA funds for this type of project. The NSHS fields are important to community athletics and need maintenance. A capital project to restructure the fields may be wise for the city to undertake as it plans ahead for several years of NNHS construction that will take those fields out of play. However, although a tenuous legal argument may be made to justify this as a CPA project on the basis of 'expanding recreational opportunity,' we do not believe this project meets the intent of the CPA law.

We also question the priority status implied by dedicating such a large share of the fund to this project. The CPC's obligation under the statute is to recommend funds according to a community-wide needs assessment. Can we honestly say that this project represents a need commensurate with our insufficient affordable housing, acquisition/protection of open space, and protection of deteriorating historic properties?

Further, attending to water issues is of paramount importance. South Meadow Brook, which runs under the fields, regularly floods downstream areas. Flooding is an immense potential liability for the city and could ultimately cost more than this proposal. Therefore, flood control should be coordinated with the Conservation Commission and with other projects in this watershed area.

We also fear that a strong advocacy campaign may lead to hasty approval of this project. Using this material in this location, requires vetting thoroughly and realistically of both first and long term maintenance and replacement costs. *

We urge you to proceed with the utmost scrutiny as you assess this large request for CPA funds and thank you for your thorough and thoughtful deliberations.

Yours truly,
Susan Rosenbaum
Steering Committee Spokesperson

**(<http://www.brooklinegreenspace.org/PDF/Artificial%20Turf.pdf>), research by the Brookline Green Space Alliance, indicates that artificial turf is not without maintenance costs. For example, it can become overheated and need to be watered before team play. It also does not allow for decomposition of spilled bodily fluids or trash.*

"Don't Just Bite Your Tongue:

Create Healthy Relationships with Your Adult Children"

Dr. Ruth Nemzoff to speak at our
Annual Meeting Dinner,
THURSDAY, MAY 25TH.

Currently an adjunct associate professor at Bentley College and resident scholar at Brandeis University Women's Studies Research Center where she is working on a book about parenting adult off-spring, she speaks from experience as she and her husband, Harris Berman, have four adult children.

Dr. Nemzoff is the former assistant minority leader of the New Hampshire State Legislature, the first female Deputy Commissioner of Health and Welfare in New Hampshire, and the first female Bank of New Hampshire Board Member. Dr. Nemzoff was a pioneer in developing programs for persons with disabilities and started the equal opportunity office in the New Hampshire State Department of Education. In addition, she was a consultant to schools on gender equity.

She is currently the chair of the advisory committee of the University of Massachusetts Center for Women and Politics, as well as a member of LWVN.

Dr. Nemzoff holds a Doctorate in Administration, Planning, and Social Policy from Harvard University, a Master's degree in Counseling from Columbia University, and a Bachelor's degree in American Studies from Barnard College. ■

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.

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

My email address may be shared with State and National LWV



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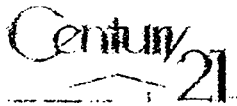
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but our work...NEVER!*

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Welcome New Members!

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WENDY GILMAN
11 Sylvan Ave, W. Newton, MA 02465
617 527-1380
wgilmanhome@aol.com

Joined Nationally

The following members joined at the national level. We hope that they will renew at the local level.

WILLIAM BEARDSLEE
27 Shepard St, Cambridge 02138
617-868-9666

DAVI-ELLEN CHABNER
29 Beacon Hts. Drive, Newton 02459
617-969-2386

SUZANNE COHEN
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617-332-2937
suzannecohen@rcn.com

DR. JEAN DOELLING
65 Agawam, Newton 02468
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161 Allerton Road, Newton 02461
617-965-1623
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GLORIA TOFIAS
104 Fernwood, Chestnut Hill 02467
617-964-1840

CORNELIA VAN DER ZIEL
100 Wolcott Road, Chestnut Hill 02467
617-277-3476

REBECCA WARNER
11 Crown Street, Newton 02466

Correction to LWVNewton Handbook

JENNIFER STONER'S PHONE NUMBER IS
617-283-5687

LWVN CALENDAR

MAY

- 4 Thursday, 6:30 p.m., **Working Board/Potluck** at the home of Ann Grantham, 46 Eastside Parkway, 617-964-0333. Chair-Sue.
- 9 Tuesday, 7:30pm **Local Action Committee**, at the home of Andreae Downs, 854 Chestnut St., 617-969-7123.
- 20 Saturday, **State Council, It's Your Environment: Take Charge!** Quincy Marriott, Keynote Speaker: Douglas Foy, Former Secretary of the Office of Commonwealth Development and distinguished panelists. Contact: Sue Rosenbaum, 617-332-0306.
- 25 Thursday, 6:30-9:30 p.m., **Annual Meeting/ Dinner** at "The Neighborhood Club", 27 Berkeley St., West Newton. 6:30 - Social Hour and Dinner, 7:15 Guest Speaker, 7:45 Business Meeting. \$25 per person. Please make your dinner reservations with Andrea Kozinetz-Holtz @ andreaik@comcast.net or 617-964-6490.
- 26 **LWVN Annual Meeting**, 6:30-9:00 p.m., "The Neighborhood Club" at 24 Berkeley Street in West Newton. 6:30 - Social Hour and Dinner, 7:15-Guest Speaker 7:45 Business Meeting, \$25 per person. Contact: Please make your dinner reservation with Andrea Kozinetz- Holtz @ 617-964-6490 or andreaik@comcast.net.

JUNE

- 10-13 Saturday-Tuesday, **LWVUS Convention**, Minneapolis, MN
- 13 Tuesday, 7:30 pm, **Local Action Committee** at the home of Deb Crossley, 26 Circuit Ave., Newton Highlands, 617-244-7597

Legislative Roundtable



For current schedule log on to
www.newtv.org

Continued from page one.

Parks and Recreation Commission Report

A Crystal Lake neighborhood meeting was held on Saturday, April 8 at the Newton Free Library at the request of the Newton Highlands Neighborhood Area Council. Residents discussed numerous problems regarding use of Crystal Lake: illegal swimming in off-season, at night, and in areas away from the public beach; litter, illegal parking, people changing clothes in and next to cars, public nudity, loose dogs, and groups of people who 'hang out' all day long at the east end of Crystal Lake. Carol Stapleton of the P&R Department, and Officer David Schaeffer of the Police Department addressed efforts to deal with these issues. The NHNAC is forming a Crystal Lake Task Force. Contact person is Janice Bourque.

Miscellaneous Business

WEBSITE. The Parks and Rec Department has a new website linked to the City of Newton website. Permit applications, program information and more can be obtained there.

PERMIT POLICY. Staff and Commission members are drafting a policy for granting permits, which may require deposits and/or insurance coverage by groups requesting to use P & R land. Final version should be on the Commission's April agenda.

ANGINO FARM. Commissioner Myra Tattenbaum (W8) is now the Parks and Rec representative on the Angino Farm Commission. ■

League of Women Voters of Newton

PO Box 610207
Newton, MA 02461
617-964-0014
www.lwvn.ma.lwvnet.org

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