

Newsletter

All You Ever Wanted to Know About Newton's Election Department

- What is the Election Commission?
- Who heads it?
- How does one join it?
- Is the Election Commission the same as the Election Department?
- How are Election Office workers trained?
- Is there a term of office for Poll Workers?
- What is my political address?

Come join us on Wednesday, September 12, and bring your questions. Learn about what's been happening with the Election Commission over the past year. Our resource people will be Nancy Criscitiello and Myra Tattenbaum. For several years Nancy has been the LWVN Election Commission observer. Nancy and Myra were mayoral appointees to the search committee for the current Executive Secretary. Both have served as wardens in their respective precincts.

From these varied vantage points they will be able to answer questions about the responsibilities and duties of the Election Commission and its Executive Secretary, and explain why the Election Commission is unique in its mission in the city.

WHEN: Wednesday, September 12

PLACE: Conference Room NewTV Studio

CONTACT: Anne Borg

From Our President



Annual Meeting Speech

I want to begin by thanking this year's Officers and Board of Directors. **Bonnie Carter** and **Ann Grantham** have been dedicated League leaders for more years than they probably care to admit, and **Andrea Downs** (before her career took her away from our executive board) worked tirelessly on local action this year.

Andrea Kozinetz has been a meticulous and reliable treasurer for the past several years. Thank you for compiling and mailing the 2007 workbook. It's not easy to collect reports from so many people. Thank you also to **Allison Stover** for taking on the job of clerk; it is one of the more difficult jobs but also one of the most important. **Andrea Kelley** and **Deb Crossley**: You have kept us on track this year and I appreciate all your perspective and wisdom. You both wear so many hats in the community, we are never in the dark regarding local issues.

Speaking of wearing many hats and uniforms, I want to thank **Sharyn Roberts** for always saying yes, even when you have three other events to attend. I don't know

Continued on page two

LWVN Officers and Directors 2006-2007

OFFICERS

President	Sue Rosenbaum	617-332-0306
Vice President	Ann Grantham	617-964-0333
Vice President	Allison Stoner	617- 527-4018
Vice President	Terry Yoffee	617-965-1796
Clerk	Sue Flicop	617-232-2310
Treasurer	Andrea Kozinetz	617-964-6490

DIRECTORS

Anne Borg	Topic Meetings	617- 244-6366
Bonnie Carter	Voter Education	617- 969-0686
Deb Crossley	Local Action	617- 244-7597
George Foord	Municipal Finance	617-332-1654
Andrea Kelley	Observer Corps	617- 964-4609
Priscilla Leith	Local Action	617-969-6837
Robin Maltz	Membership	617-969-1554
Lisa Mirable	Webmaster	617- 332-5374
Sharyn Roberts	Voter Service	617- 969-9588
Sharon Stout	Fundraising	781-856-0004

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Andrea Kelley
Andrea Kozinetz
Myra Tattenbaum

OFF BOARD SPECIALISTS

Housing	Roberta Leviton	617-965-0016
Human Rights	Holly Gunner	617-964-0767
Legislative Roundtable	Lucia Dolan	617-332-1893
Membership	Elaine Reisman Co-chair	617-244-6439
Recycling	Barbara Herson	617-964-7463

NEWSLETTER

Editor Ann Grantham 617-964-0333

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>

Annual Meeting Speech

Continued from page one

where you get your energy from. You will need lots of it for the upcoming election season.

And another woman on the go is **Sharon Stout**: You seem to have many connections and we are thrilled to have you on our Board. Your fundraising skills will be seriously tested during the upcoming year. **Terry Yoffee** you came on board and hit the ground running. The two forums were a great success thanks to you and your dedicated colleagues and I know there is more on the horizon.

Greer Swiston I wish I had the computer skills that you possess. Thank you for updating our website and ensuring that our busy group of men and women could connect at all hours of the day and night. I thought I was the only one that answered emails at 2:00am. We will miss your insight at Board meetings next year.

Roberta Leviton, our housing specialist, continues to keep us informed as an off board specialist. **Jennifer Stoner**, thank you for helping to bridge the generation gap and bringing your younger perspective to our local action group. **Carol Bock** began the year with lots of enthusiasm as our membership chair but unfortunately had to resign due to health concerns. We will gladly welcome her back when she is able. **Lucia Dolan** did a great job organizing Legislative Roundtable. Thank you for your continuing dedication to the League and organizing a great Day on the Hill. Last but not least, thank you to **Robin Maltz** for all of your work behind the scenes and for organizing this meeting. Our honors don't come without a price!

Although I have mentioned only the Board members there are many other people that have contributed a lot to the League this year and I am sure they will continue to be valuable members of this great organization. It is truly an honor to be associated with such a competent group of women and men. At the risk of omitting some off board specialists, I would like to acknowledge **Linda Morrison** and **Pat Acton** for organizing the monthly Topic Meetings, and **Jody Klein** for chairing the Nominating Committee. Every member should congratulate themselves for being part of an organization that is so well respected both here in Newton and nationwide.

When Governor Patrick spoke at the League's Day on the Hill, he invited the League members to come to the State house on days other than Day on the Hill, and be proactive on a daily basis. Our president, **Madhu Shridhar** replied, "We do come often, we just don't always invite you to join us! On the state level, we have passed into law the Voters Bill of Rights and we are very close to passing legislation to allow Election Day Voter Registration.

On the local level we have organized informative forums on the site plan and cost of a new high school in an effort to inform our citizens and unify the community. We have also been a supporter of the CPA and a watchdog over the ways the city spends this pot of money. In all, we should be proud of all of our actions and I look forward to another year of dispensing information and taking action with all of you.

Last year's recommended local program included a focus on environmental issues and we visibly supported the installation of new, energy efficient and safer street lamps throughout the city, urged the CPA to include language encouraging durability and energy conservation in CPA-funded capital projects. They subsequently incorporated this language into their revised CPC Plan and began an initiative to reinstate a residential sidewalk snow-clearing ordinance. Thank you to all the members of local action and the CPC readers. Your efforts were truly heroic.

Each of you are amazing individuals, and as a group, you are astonishing. I am proud to spend another year working with all of you to promote democracy in our town.

Sue Rosenbaum, Annual Meeting

Rail Service to the Cape?

M B T A P u b l i c W o r k s h o p

On June 21, 2007, I attended the MBTA Public Workshop held at the Newton City Hall War Memorial. This workshop consisted of two sections; the first was a presentation which was followed by small group discussions. The presentation consisted of a discussion of the MBTA service plan with an evaluation of how bus and subway service met standards. They garnered information by data collection, service requests, and input from public workshops like the one I was attending. They have developed a long range vision for their program for mass transportation (PMT) which includes system preservation, enhancements, and expansion. In this vision the MBTA is trying to increase reliability, convenience, accessibility, safety, and security. The MBTA is constantly reviewing its services and capital assets. For example, the average vehicle age used to be 13 years old. This has now been upgraded to 5 years. The demographics of the MBTA service area were discussed. I found the most interesting trend from 1970-2000 to be our population growth has been 2%, while our employment growth has increased by 53%, and our vehicle miles traveled (VMT) on the highways has grown 175%. We have all experienced the rapid increase of VMT even within Newton. There was an overview of the eight mobility corridor demographics and services. The MBTA is currently working on a 25 year needs assessment which includes vehicles, track right of way, signals, communications, power, maintenance facilities, stations, bridges and tunnels, and fare equipment. The small group discussions were a very frank about what the MBTA needs to do better to serve this fifth largest transit system.

The following improvements were requested:

- increased availability of “Charlie” cards
- additional parking capacity
- increased number of train cars during peak travel hours
- similar rates for same routes traveled by different vehicles (buses more expensive than trains on some routes, and trains more expensive than buses on other routes)
- need for improved connections between the travel route “spokes”
- better coordination for “The Ride” (some passengers are taken many miles and minutes out of their way when there are multiple passengers on the same vehicle)
- concern over the pesticides used to kill overgrowth and a need to generally minimize impact on the environment
- request to have weatherproofed enclosed waiting areas at each station wherever possible
- better fare collection (at peak hours, travelers entering rear cars unable to push their way to the front to pay their fare)
- need to provide tracks to support new community multi-housing complexes (the Avalons, etc.)
- revival of the unused rail paralleling Needham Street and connecting it all the way into Needham
- new buses have smaller center aisle making it difficult for wheelchair and baby carriage mobility
- rail service to Cape Cod (my favorite). ■

Sharyn Roberts

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

My email address may be shared with State and National LWV

- 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**

LWVM Affordable Housing Study Consensus Meeting

Tuesday, October 2

Hold the Date!

The Affordable Housing Consensus Meeting for Region 5
Tuesday, October 2 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Estabrook Hall, Lexington Town Hall, 1605 Massachusetts Avenue

This will be an excellent opportunity to learn from League members in our region, which, besides Lexington and Newton, includes Arlington, Belmont, Brookline, Melrose, Stoneham, Watertown and Winchester.

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 AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONSENSUS QUESTION 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:

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

The LWVM Affordable Housing Study Committee has assembled material on these topics from a wide range of sources and posted it in concise easy-to-read articles on the state league website www.lwvma.org. (Click Member Resources on the left, then LWVM Studies.) The articles all include reference links. The articles are valuable preparation for the consensus meeting. They are titled:

- “Why Affordable Housing?”
- “Where It All Began: Some Historical Perspective”
- “Massachusetts Legislation To Develop Affordable Housing – Chapter 40B”
- “Financial Incentives To Develop Affordable Housing – Chapters 40R and 40S”
- “The Role of Local Housing Authorities in Massachusetts”
- The Citizens Housing and Planning Association website www.chapa.org is another important resource for reports and research relating to the affordable housing consensus question.

**Contact Roberta Leviton 617-965-0016, robertalevito@comcast.net
with questions about the October 2 meeting. ■**

Concerns Underlying a Playing Fields Solution

By Priscilla Leith

Many voices have added to the cacophony in the debate over what should be done to “fix” the playfields adjacent to Newton South High School and two other schools nearby, where school children and extra-curricular sports leagues are often unable to play because the fields are wet.

Proponents of installing artificial turf justify the need for the lingering NewTurf proposal by repeating the complaint that the fields are not useable for many days of the year. This is absolutely true. However, proponents seem to be proposing a “solution” before the problem has been properly diagnosed by the right professional people. The wet fields are due to the geographic location of the playfields, which sit within a bowl-shaped depression that is a low point in a complex network of brooks. The history of this area as a swamp goes back more than 100 years. Under today’s state wetland protection laws, it could never have been filled in.

These playfields are part of the South Meadow Brook Watershed and drainage area which comprises 1,867 acres. South Meadow Brook begins at Lost Pond in Brookline, meanders through Ward 8 of Newton, is joined by Hahn Brook, Paul Brook, Stearns Brook, Dickerman Brook and a series of storms drains before flowing into the Charles River near the intersection of Oak and Needham Streets. The archives at the Newton History Museum have numerous newspaper articles, maps, and reports from city agencies that reveal serious flooding on Oak St. in Newton Upper Falls, and along Parker Street and Dedham Street in the past. There have been flooded homes and backyards across Ward 8. Most of South Meadow Brook is now in a culvert that runs below the NSHS playfields and under Parker Street. One map shows a junction, presumably within culverts, of So. Meadow Brook with Hahn Brook below the open area right next to Newton South High School.

Engineers have worked on the brooks and the “problems” of flooding in this watershed for almost 100 years. In January, 1985 the Newton Conservation Commission issued a 4-page memorandum on the Oak Hill Playground Land and the South Meadow Brook Watershed area. Elected officials should all read this, digest it and ask questions before they vote on any proposal that alleges to “fix” the wet playfields.

Political pressure from athletic interests, parents, and devotees of organized sports is not in the best interest of the City, nor is it in the best long range interest of property owners downstream in Ward 8 and Ward 5 who might be subjected to flooding in the future if this project is built.

Newton residents and taxpayers are entitled to a public, transparent study and report that provides:

- An understandable analysis of why the fields are wet so often
- Recommendations as to what could be done to remedy the situation
- A list of all the options to make the fields useable for sports
- The estimated costs for each option
- Alternative methods of paying for each options, such as long term bonding or within a capital improvements program.
- And, finally, whether the cost should be handled by the School Department or the City side of the budget ■

Committees - in - Action

Observers

Coordinator: Andrea Kelley
617-964-4609

ELECTION COMMISSION Nancy Criscitiello

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES Deb Crossley

NEWTON FREE LIBRARY BOARD Mary Adelstein

Committees

LOCAL ACTION

Contact Deborah Crossley,
Co-Chair 617-244-7597
Priscilla Leith,
Co-Chair 617-969-6837

Focus *Community Preservation Act*

Members

Anna Maria Abernathy Andrea Kelley
Carol Bock Jody Klein
Nancy Criscitiello Amelia Koch
Lucia Dolan Rosemarie Mullin
Andreae Downs Myra Tattenbaum
George Foord Terry Yoffie

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

This committee is in the process of being formed. Contact Lucia Dolan, 617-332-1893.

...

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

American Heritage Dictionary

Moderator (mɒd'ə-rā'tər)

1. One that moderates, as:

n. We all know what the moderator does.....

a. One that arbitrates or mediates.

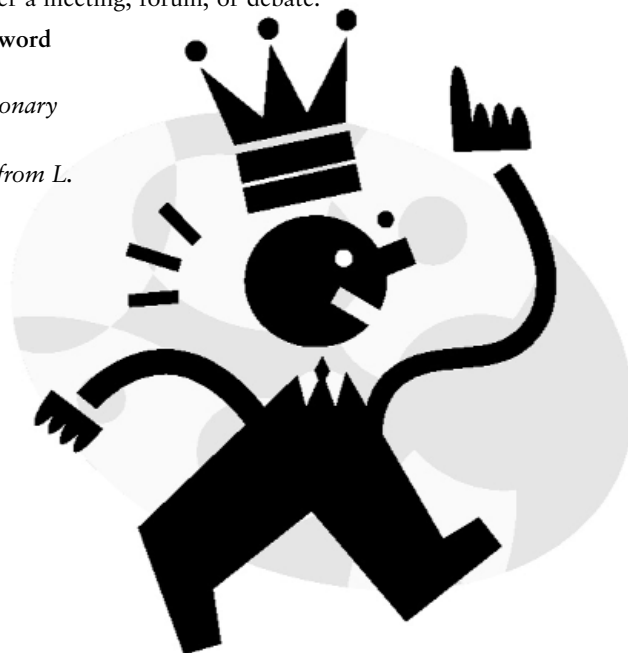
b. One who presides over a meeting, forum, or debate.

Did you know that the word comes from RULER???

Online Etymology Dictionary

moderator:

1398, "ruler, governor," from L.



EARN MONEY FOR YOUR LEAGUE WHEN YOU MODERATE FOR CANDIDATES DEBATES AND FORUMS.

The state League is offering a pass through grant of \$75 for members who complete the Moderator Training program every time they moderate an approved event.

Opportunity awaits, following the President's Breakfast on Saturday, September 29 at the Newton Marriott we will hold a moderator training workshop for all interested League members. A two-part workshop from 12:00-3:00 with a quick lunch (provided) break between session 1 and 2. There is limited space so reserve your spot now! RSVP to the State League office at lwwma@lwwma.org ■

Think Green... Save Trees!

Join our LWVNSaveTrees listserv and you will receive an electronic message to view the Newsletter.

Send a blank e-mail to:


LWVNSaveTrees-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

and save trees! ■



Newsletter Sponsors

BYGGMEISTER, INC.
 KITCHENS • BATHS • ADDITIONS • DECKS



Paul Eldrenkamp
 617 527-7871

*Our politics may lean to the left,
 but our work...NEVER!*

Local & Proud of It



Auburndale • Newton Highlands • Newtonville • Nonantum • Waban • Wayland
 (617) 527-6090 • www.village-bank.com

Member FDIC
 Member SIF

VETERANS TAXI
 TRANSPORTATION
 Everywhere You Want To Be.
 Now Accepting



So... Don't Leave Home Without Us.
 Call
527-0300

OPEN 24 HOURS



Stephen P. DesRoche, P.L.S.
 President

NEPONSET VALLEY SURVEY ASSOCIATES, INC.
 Land Surveyors & Civil Engineers

Phone: 617-472-4867 Beeper: 781-649-0664
 Fax: 617-472-2682 95 White Street
 Quincy, MA 02169



VANTAGE GRAPHICS

Commercial Printing
 Direct Mail • Brochures • Newsletters • Publications

sales@vangraph.com 617.796.9900



PierceConway **DESIGN**
 visual communications
508.651.7902
 design@pierceconway.com



JOHN T. BURNS
 INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.

Auto - Home - Business - Life
 803 Washington Street Newtonville 617-332-1840




Garden City Homes, Inc
 324 Walnut St.
 Newton, Massachusetts
 Business (617) 969-2121
 Fax (617) 527-2973

Carol Ann Shea
 Owner Broker

Each Office Is Independently Owned And Operated

LWVN CALENDAR

August

- 7 Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. **Working Board/Potluck** at the home of Terry Yoffie, 393 Waverly Ave, 617-965-1796
- 23 Thursday, 6:45 p.m. **Candidate's Forum for Preliminary Election** taping, NewTV, Contact Sharyn Roberts, 617-969-9588
- 24 Friday, 9:00 a.m. **Local Action Committee** at the home of Nancy Criscitiello, 2 Raeburn Ter., 617-244-6397
- 24 Friday, **Newsletter Deadline**
- 28 Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., **LWVN Board Meeting** at the home of Sharon Stout, 95 Pearl St., 81-856-0004

September

- 4 Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. **Working Board/Potluck** at the home of Sue Flicop, 163 Suffolk Rd., Chestnut Hill, 617-232-2310
- 12 Wednesday, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., **Topic Meeting Newton's Election Department**, NewTV Conference Room, Contact: Anne Borg 617-244-6366, Brown Bagging Encouraged
- 25 **Newsletter Deadline**
- 25 Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., **LWVN Board Meeting** at the home of Lisa Mirabile, 12 Scribner Pk., 617-332-2310
- 29 Saturday, 9:00-11:30a.m. **League Presidents Breakfast**, Newton Marriott
- 29 Saturday, 12:00-3:00p.m. **Moderators Workshop**. Learn an important skill! Limited space. RSVP to LWVMA@lwvma.org

League of Women Voters of Newton

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

What's Inside

Newton Election Department1
Annual Meeting1
MBTA Workshop3
Affordable Housing Study4
Playing Fields Debate5
Become a Moderator6