
League of Women Voters of Newton

Newsletter

Volume 16, Issue 1

visit us online at www.lwvnewton.org

January/February 2010

LWVN Program Planning, Part 1: National Program 2010-2012

by Anne Borg

League program is a core component of the League's mission: it is a three-part process comprised of program planning, study and consensus, and advocacy. Because the League of Women Voters is a grassroots organization, its positions at *all* levels are based on members' study and consensus.

It is important to review our positions on a regular basis. Each year, Newton members review our local positions and provide direction to the Board for recommendations for annual meeting. Our local program planning will take place in mid-March; the March newsletter will have information about our local process.

Every two years, local and state leagues are invited to participate in the LWVUS program planning process by reviewing existing LWVUS positions and making recommendations for LWVUS program for the next two years. The LWVUS will adopt national program for 2010-2012 at its biennial convention that will take place June 11 - 15, 2010, in Atlanta.

LWVUS' current positions can be found in *Impact on Issues 2008-2010*; a pdf version is available online. We have a limited number of print copies for use by members (please email: program@lwvnewton.org if you would like to borrow one).

LWVUS sponsored a webinar on national program planning, and the PowerPoint presentation and recording from this webinar can be found online. Additional information about this year's convention and program planning, including a list serve that you can join, is available on LWVUS' website. To access all

of the online information, go to: www.lwv.org, then go to the pull-down menu under "Members" and click on "Council and Convention."

This year's national program planning process differs slightly from that of past years. Each local League can make **one** choice from the following:

1. *Review of existing position;*
2. *New study or program item;*
3. *Concurrence (agreeing with a position or statement; e.g., in 2006, LWVUS convention voted to concur with the LWV Illinois' Death Penalty Position); or*
4. *No recommendation (LWVUS would like Leagues to choose this if not recommending review, new study, or concurrence so they know how many Leagues actually did program planning).*

Several local or state Leagues are proposing new national studies and/or advocacy. The LWV of Kansas is recommending a study update on civic literacy in students and adults. The LWV Columbia/Boone County, MO is proposing the adoption of a national study to consider the establishment of a federal cabinet-level Department of Peace. The Leagues of Concord-Carlisle, MA, Boulder, CO and Mesa County, CO, are recommending advocacy for the "The Fair Elections Now Act" (H.R.1826, S. 752). (See www.campaignmoney.org/campaigns/main/fair-elections). This is especially timely considering the recent

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Help Make Walking a Year-Round Activity in Newton

Walking is good for our health and our environment. Help make walking a year round activity in Newton. Please contact your Aldermen and Mayor Warren and let them know that you support a sidewalk snow removal ordinance and enforcement of the current ordinance which prohibits anyone from shoveling or plowing snow from their property onto the sidewalks.

- **Mayor Warren:** swarren@newtonma.gov or 617-796-1100
- **Aldermen:** dolson@newtonma.gov (City Clerk's e-mail, he will forward to all the Aldermen) or find your Alderman at www.newtonma.gov

For questions, please contact us at SafSidewalks@gmail.com (a coalition of Newton organizations, including LWVN, working together on pedestrian safety).

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DIRECTORS
2009-2010

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To receive an **audio version** of this Newsletter, call Terry Yoffie at 617-965-1796.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization. Regular membership is open to all citizens (men and women) of voting age; associate membership is open to young people and noncitizens. Your annual dues give you membership in local, state and national leagues.

For more information about the League of Women Voters, including information on joining us, call 617-964-0014 or visit www.lwvnewton.org.

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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Lynne Sullivan

CPC Readers

open

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Gail Glick

Election Commission

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Newsletter & Website

Lisa Mirabile

Topic Meetings

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Linda Morrison
Carol Ann Shea

Voter Service/Citizen Education

Bonnie Carter
Sharyn Roberts
Barbara Sydney

Welcome & Thank-You Party Jan. 28

Please join us for a special Open House **ON JANUARY 28 AT 7 PM.** The LWVN has invited elected officials — incoming, outgoing and re-elected — for an evening of appreciation and welcome at Terry Yoffie's home. Light refreshments (potluck--finger food please).

RSVP to info@lwvnewton.org

Save the Date!

This year's Annual Meeting will be on Thursday, May 27, at the Newton Senior Center, 345 Walnut St., Newtonville. Please note that this is a change from the previously announced date of May 25.

Fantastic Phonathon News

Congratulations again to this year's phonathon volunteers: when the final results were tallied, Newton had raised not \$4,000 for the state league, as we thought, but actually more than \$10,000! That means good news for LWVN, too: instead of \$600, our 15% share will total more than \$1,500! This year's volunteers were: Pat Acton, Maryan Amaral, Anne Borg, Bonnie Carter, Shirley Farnham, Joan Portnoy, Sharyn Roberts, Tami Roberts, and Terry Yoffie. Bravo!

From the President

January 2010

Dear League Members,

Happy holidays and a healthy and happy new year! Thanks to all who were able to join us at our holiday party at Joe and Ruthanne Fuller's home. It was a lovely event and many attended. On behalf of all of us, I extend our thanks to the Fullers for sharing their beautiful home with us.

We hope all members will attend our upcoming events. This month, our board meeting will be on January 26 at 7:00pm, at Pat Acton's home. On January 28, we will honor outgoing elected officials and our community partners and welcome new and returning elected officials. Please RSVP at info@lwvnnewton.org.

The Education Committee is reconvening on February 3, 7:30pm at Gail Glick's home. Annual national program planning for 2010-2012 begins on February 9. You can attend either of the two meeting times scheduled that day at 4:30pm or at 7:00pm. Come to Anne Borg's home and let her know what you would like the national League to work on over the next two years. The League uses the word "program" in a very specific way. According to League *Lingo*, "program" consists of "selected governmental issues chosen by members at the local, state and national levels for study and action." Attendance at the national convention in June will allow you to watch and participate in League democracy as you support or oppose the program platforms. If you cannot attend the meeting at Anne Borg's on February 9, you are welcome to email your suggestions for national program to program@lwvnnewton.org.

Our Continued Commitment to the Environment

On January 6, the League's Environmental Issues Committee and its subcommittee on Snow attended the Public Safety Committee meeting, chaired by Allan Ciccone, Jr (ward 1). Other committee members, include Marcia Johnson (ward 2), Greer Swiston (ward 3), Jay Harney (ward 4), Brian Yates (ward 5), Charlie Shapiro (ward 6), Ruthanne Fuller (ward 7) and John Freedman (ward 8). Aldermen Vicki Danberg (ward 6) briefed the committee on the history of work done by the Board of Aldermen. She was one of three aldermen who formed the snow subcommittee in 2008. Scott Lennon and Bill Brandel were the other members of the subcommittee and they worked to identify weaknesses in city plowing efforts and develop solutions. No recommendations were made during that time to introduce a residential sidewalk snow clearing ordinance.

As many members know, the League has supported on ordinance for snow clearing for **all sidewalks** as one of

our Environmental positions for almost twenty years. We have set as a goal to move a residential sidewalk snow clearing ordinance through the Board this year. We believe that all Newton citizens should be able to walk safely on our city's sidewalks twelve months a year whether for work, school, pleasure, religious observance or health. Even our mayor must walk on the street on Beaumont Street to get to/from work because the sidewalks have not been shoveled by every resident. Thanks to the research efforts of our coalition "Safe Sidewalks," we understand that 18 of the 35 communities surrounding Newton have a residential sidewalk snow clearing ordinance. These communities are proving to be a rich resource for ideas and experiences that will be represented to the Public Safety Committee.

I am pleased to inform you that the snow committee that Alderman Danberg sat on is now chaired by her. She has invited me and Alicia Bowman (Safe Routes to School) to join the committee along with Aldermen Crossley and Swiston. Also, the League is focusing on snow in its January and February television shows on NewTV. You can see the first of the series on the government channel at 6am, 2:30pm and 7:30pm. Look for the "Newton Legislative Roundtable" show. I also encourage you to contact your aldermen about your interest in their passing a residential sidewalk snow clearing ordinance and attend aldermanic hearings on the matter when you are notified.

Nominations for Next Year's Board

The Nominating Committee has begun its work to draft a slate for next year's board. If you are interested in serving on the board or would like to support someone who is interested, please contact the chair, Andrea Kozinetz at info@lwvnnewton.org.

Haiti

Finally, our thoughts are with the people of Haiti as they recover from this month's devastating earthquake. For those who would like to donate goods to Haiti, there is an opportunity through the Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries (www.coopmet.org) to deliver food, health and personal care products to Haiti. Several of our pastors from area churches and synagogues will be visiting Haiti and taking loads of food, health and personal care products to the churches where they will be distributed to those in need in their communities. I hope you will consider helping Haiti in this way. You can visit CMM's web site to learn what is needed, when to deliver it and where.

Respectfully,

Terry Yoffie

President, League of Women Voters Newton

Topic Meeting Updates

February: Election Commission

The smooth operation of elections in Newton is overseen by the Election Department, along with the four-member Election Commission. Heading up the department, and reporting to the Mayor, is Craig Manseau, Secretary of the Election Commission. Come Feb. 10 with your questions and your bag lunch. 11:30 - 1:30 at New TV.

January: Charter Study

On January 13, the LWVN held a very successful topic meeting giving an update on the progress of the Charter Study committee. An audience of 28 listened, and asked many questions, as Rhanna Kidwell described the project's broad outlines (notes available online at www.lwvnewton.org/charter), and as the various subcommittees reported on their work. In the spring, members will consider the final findings of the committee and come to consensus about what action, if any, the LWVN should take concerning the charter.

The League of Women Voters was founded on February 14, 1920, by Carrie Chapman Catt. Six months later, the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, giving women the right to vote.

LWVN Celebration

**90th Birthday of
LWVUS
&
Welcome New and
Prospective Members**
Sunday, February 28, 4:00pm-6:00pm
at Anne Borg's house

Please join us for a festive wine, beer, and cake party to celebrate 90 years of Making Democracy Work and to welcome our new members.

Bring a friend/prospective member!
RSVP: info@lwvnewton.org

Welcome New Members

Margaret Albright, Newtonville

Gail Deegan, Newtonville

Terrence and Kristin Finn, West Newton

Joanne Gatnik, Newtonville

Cheryl Lappin, Chestnut Hill

Emily Norton, Newtonville

Marcia Tabenken, Newtonville

Sarai Zitter, Newtonville

2010-2012 Member Handbook Coming Soon: Sponsors Wanted!

Handbook sponsorships will be our main fundraiser for 2010. If you know a business that might like to be a sponsor, please let them know about the opportunity! A solicitation letter and form are available on our website, at www.lwvnewton.org.

Program Planning, continued from page 1

US Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*.

The proposal that is the most complete is a proposal from several Leagues in California: Palo Alto, Los Altos/Mountain View, Berkeley/Albany, and Santa Monica. Their proposal is for a "Study of the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education." The LWVUS does not have a position on public education; traditionally, education has been a local and state issue. But, in the past few years, the federal government has had increased involvement in local education.

The purpose of the proposal is: "To establish national League positions that would enable the League of Women Voters to:

- Review, consider, evaluate and advocate for or against federal education legislation;
- Advocate on issues related to what the federal role in public education should be;
- "Join in coalition with other national organizations that speak out on issues of public education."

Please check the LWVNewton website (www.lwvnewton.org) for the program planning page with links to other League websites that include more information about these proposals.

LWV Newton will be having two national program planning meetings. Both will take place on Tuesday, February 9, 2010, at two different times: the first from 4:30-6:00pm and the second from 7:00-8:30pm (members are welcome to stay for both!). The meetings will be held at Anne Borg's house (there will be refreshments). RSVP if you will be attending to: program@lwvnewton.org.

If you cannot attend either meeting, you can email your recommendation to program@lwvnewton.org, or use the tear-off below and mail to LWVNewton, PO Box 610207, Newton, MA 02461. Please respond by Monday, February 8. The Board will be considering member input and voting on a recommendation to LWVUS at its meeting on Tuesday, February 23 (all are welcome - the meeting will be held at Bonnie Carter's house). LWVNewton must submit its recommendation to LWVUS via the internet by March 1, 2010.

If you have questions or would like more information, please email: program@lwvnewton.org.

LWVUS 2010-2012 Program Planning Report Form

Please email your response to program@lwvnewton.org

or

Circle and fill out ONE option below and mail to LWVN, PO Box 610207, Newton, MA 02461

1. Recommend a review/update of a current program position

Name of program position:

Scope or areas to be considered:

Reasons for recommendation:

2. Recommend a new study

Focus:

Scope:

Reasons for recommendation:

3. Recommend a concurrence with another League position

Position:

Scope:

Name of League holding position:

Reasons for recommendation:

4. No Recommendation

LWVN CALENDAR

→ **NOTE: Annual Meeting this year will be on Thursday, May 27, not Tuesday, May 25, as previously announced.**

JANUARY

- 26th Tue, 7:00pm LWVN Board Meeting, at Pat Acton's house
- 28th Thurs., 7:00pm, **LWVN Open House for Current and Former Elected Officials**, at Terry Yoffie's house.

FEBRUARY

- 3rd Wed., 7:30pm, **LWVN Education Committee meeting** at Gail Glick's house
- 9th Tue., 4:30pm, **LWVN National Program Planning Meeting**, at Anne Borg's house
- 7:00pm, **LWVN National Program Planning Meeting**, at Anne Borg's house

- 10th Wed., 11:30am, **LWVN Topic Meeting** - Conversation with Craig Manseau, at NewTV, 23 Needham St.
- 12th Fri., 8:45am, **LWVN Environmental Issues Committee Meeting** at Lucia Dolan's house
- 14th Sun., **LWVUS 90th Birthday!**
- 17th Wed., 4:30, **LWVN Working Board / Program & Action Meeting**, location TBA.
- 23rd Tue., 7:00pm, **LWVN Board Meeting**, at Bonnie Carter's house
- 28th Sun., 4pm – 6pm, **LWVN Celebration of 90th birthday of LWVUS/Welcome New and Prospective Members**, at Anne Borg's house

→ *Don't forget to check our online calendar for any late-breaking changes!*
www.lwvnewton.org

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