



League of Women Voters – Brookline

www.lwvbrookline.org

Bulletin for May 2010 Volume 69 Number 4



Call to the 2010 Annual Meeting
At the direction of the Officers and Board of Directors of the
League of Women Voters of Brookline
shall be convened on

Thursday, June 24, 2010



Khayyam Restaurant, 404 Harvard St.,
Brookline

Social half hour:	6:00 p.m.
Keynote Speaker:	6:30 p.m.
Dinner:	7:00 p.m.
Remembering Cesia Swartz	7:30 p.m.
Special Awards	7:50 p.m.
Business Meeting:	8:00 p.m.

Keynote Speaker: Casey Hatchett, Contact Officer, Community Emergency Response Team

Return to Zippy Ostroy, 1111 Beacon Street, #18, Brookline 02446. Please mail by **June 18**

Name _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

I will attend: speaker only speaker and meeting only meeting

The cost of our dinner buffet is \$45.00 per person Number of persons _____

Please make check payable to LWV Brookline

If you need a ride, please call the League phone: 617-566-3238.

Why Join the League of Women Voters?

Established in 1920, the League is a highly respected citizens' organization that researches issues from many points of view and takes action on issues affecting our families and communities. Our members are men and women who want to make a difference.

- The League is nonpartisan; we do not support or oppose candidates.
- The League does take a stand on critical issues.
- The League mobilizes people to vote and to take action.

Sign up a friend today – www.lwvbrookline.org



Memorial Day

LWV BROOKLINE OFFICERS

President

Phyllis Campana

Secretary

Marianne Boxenhorn (2010)

Treasurer

Zippy Ostroy

Directors, Sara K. Wallace Fund

Mary Dunlap
Bonnie Frankel

Bulletin editors

Pat Johnson (2010)
Marta Pardee-King (2010)

Directors-at-Large

Lee Cooke Childs (2011)
Susan Donahue (2011)
Sheila Hussey (2011)
Betsy Munzer (2011)
Risa Nyman (2011)
Pat Johnson (2010)
Janice Kahn (2010)
Shaari Mittel (2010)
Marta Pardee-King (2010)
Mona Schwartz (2010)

Chair – Sara K. Wallace Education Fund

Mary Dunlap

Bulletin

A Publication of the
League of Women Voters of Brookline
P.O. Box 67056
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467-9998

The League of Women Voters of Brookline is a Brookline and Chestnut Hill-based, grassroots, non-partisan, political organization. Membership in the League of Women Voters of Brookline is

\$50.00 per year, per individual;
\$75.00 per year, household; and
\$25.00 per year, per student,

but we have a "more if you can, less if you can't" policy. No one is ever turned away. Membership dues, are not tax deductible.

Message From The President
- Phyllis Campana



A Bouquet of Thank You's to:

Mary Dunlap who threw a fabulous party to raise funds for the SKW Ed Fund. As always Mary's graciousness and charm made her the perfect hostess. Thank you Mary.

Christina Lehrich, Editor in Chief of the **VOTERS GUIDE**, who produced a flawless publication. Thank you Christina and staff.

Amelia Koch who moderated Candidates Night. She was effective and efficient, the two qualities you really want for this event. Thank you, Amelia.

Lee Cooke-Childs who made all the arrangements for the lecture by Michael Dukakis and even got us a write up in the *Globe*. It was a marvelous evening and many compliments were flying around afterwards. Thank you Lee.

VOTERS SERVICE

The **VOTERS GUIDE** appeared in the *Brookline TAB* of April 29th and was a great success. This year we added color to the front page to ensure that it would not be missed. In addition **Erin Clossey**, editor of the *Brookline TAB* gave the **VOTERS GUIDE** a front page masthead announcement—in today's economic climate for newspapers this was truly generous and we are grateful. Moreover, **Conor Plunkett** of Community Newspaper Corporation somehow wrangled the placement of the **VOTERS GUIDE** so that it was not buried in the glossy circulars.

But without **Christina Lehrich's** efficient, organized leadership none of this might have happened. Her commitment to excellence and attention to detail have given us a pattern for the future. She was assisted by Marta Pardee-King who prepared the material for the typesetter and Candidate Coordinators, Margaret Bush, Carol Caro, Sheila Hussey, Zippy and Sandy Ostroy. As always, **Pat Ward** and his staff were very cooperative. When we requested that candidates be asked to provide their email addresses, it happened. He also told us that his **Advisory Committee** recommended putting the candidates for office on the Town's web site. This made a world of difference.

Candidates Night was broadcast by BATV and most candidates for town-wide office came to speak and answer questions. Amelia Koch was the moderator again this year and Marianne Boxenhorn and Hattie McGraw were timekeepers. Also assisting the production were Susan Donahue, Anna Koch, Harriet Koch, Shaari Mittel, and Ann Murphy.

Candidates Afternoon was great fun. Phyllis Campana moderated the event at the Senior Center on Winchester Street. She was assisted by Judy Chernoff, Marianne Boxenhorn, Shirley Partoll, and Sheila Hussey. The group was lively making for an interesting afternoon. We are especially thankful to the staff at the Senior Center and in particular, Charlotte Millman whose hospitality was wonderful.

SARA K. WALLACE FUND RAISER

As always when League members and guests get together, we have a wonderful time and the event on March 28th was no exception. The entertainment, a parlor meeting with impersonators of the abolitionists, Sarah and Angelina Grimke, was excellent. The library at Newbury College was an ideal stage setting for this 19th century tableau. Chris Hussey and Betsy Munzer helped out the "Grimke sisters" with bit parts. The Newbury kitchen prepared wonderful hors d'oeuvres and the wine complimented the food nicely.

Mary Dunlap, who organized the event from top to bottom, was assisted by Phyllis Campana who designed and printed the programs, Janice Kahn who signed in our guests and Hugh Dunlap and Chris Hussey who kept the wine flowing.

Join us in applauding Mary and her crew through whose efforts we continue to make educational events of the League possible. At last counting we raised over \$800.00 after expenses.

Tell Us Your Story

How has being a member of the League of Women Voters shaped your life? There is no better way to explain the benefits of membership than to share stories from current LWV members. As a component to the new LWV membership recruitment initiative, a collection of League stories will be compiled and showcased in the LWV Storybank.



Building The League Storybank: Emilie Drooker

The League of Women Voters came to my attention when I was a high school nerd in Cincinnati, Ohio sometime in the late '30s, a grown-up club with a wonderful name. The local League had an office and a paid executive secretary; only decades later did I realize what a high-powered League this must have been. At the time I only thought that in some faraway future, I too would be a "woman voter."

Time passed, events happened, and in 1946, I arrived in Brookline, Mass, a newly-wed with much to learn. I knew almost no one, nothing about the town, not even where to buy groceries. Into this sea of ignorance floated a bottle with a message --- an invitation to a Candidates Night sponsored by the League of Women Voters, WOW! In short order I became not just a Board member but the secretary of the Brookline League. For the next forty years, second only to my family, the League was the most important part of my life. At my first LWVUS convention, the National president, Percy Lee, spoke of what she had learned from Carrie Chapman Catt, the women's suffrage leader, and noted that the LWV was on the brink of organizing in many of the States (maybe half of all) in which there were no Leagues. In Massachusetts, we were working hard to convince the Legislature (and the citizens) that women should have the right to serve on juries. In Brookline, we envisioned a "modern" Town Planning Department with its own staff, including a Town Planner. These stories had happy endings, more commonly the good battles went on. As we educated ourselves and voters, the goal posts shifted, and the objectives became differently defined.

Always the LWV provided the framework to shape long-term thinking and the tools to organize the campaigns. League training gave me the knowledge and confidence to pursue other town activities such as being on the Library Board and the Town Finance Committee, and to seventeen rewarding years as a part-time staff person in the State League office.

Paid or volunteer, win the cause or stay to fight another day, there is always an extra dimension to League work. The friends found along the way are the special prize you always win - - - sisters as good companions through the ups and downs of politics and life. In such great company, what a blast to be part of it all!

How can you submit a story?

LWVUS has created a user friendly online submission form. (Note: Submission of a story does not guarantee that it will be published.) For additional information about the LWV Storybank email storybank@lww.org.



DAY ON THE HILL

Report by Susan Donahue and Shaari Mittel

On April 28, 2010, Brookline League of Women Voters members Shaari Mittel, Sandy Spingarn, Marianne Boxenhorn, Joel Shoner, Zippy Ostroy and Susan Donahue attended the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts Day on the Hill at the Massachusetts State House in Boston.



The theme was Transportation Policy, Operations and Legislation and speakers included Representative Carl Sciortino, Jr., a Vice Chair of the Joint Transportation Committee, Rachel Kaprielian, the Registrar of the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles, and Stephanie Pollack, the Associate Director of the Dukakis Center at Northeastern University.

The audience was informed that the Massachusetts Department of Transportation was created 6 months ago and brings all transportation-related departments under the jurisdiction of the Department of Transportation with customer service and safety as focus points. The event speakers emphasized the importance of establishing new revenue sources to fund innovative transportation projects that will emphasize public transportation and alternatives that encourage biking and walking, and the importance of developing housing around commercial uses in order to reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

Comments by Rachel Kaprielian: The DOT must reduce costs by restructuring existing debt at lower interest rates, improve customer service and earn employee respect. The Department of Motor Vehicles is pleased with its roll out of an on-line registration process. The DOT will focus on the needs of the entire state, and the neglect of roadways and rails and installation of bicycle and pedestrian pathways must be encouraged.

Comments by Stephanie Pollack: Transportation is the fastest growing source of greenhouse gases and increases in transportation will offset any improvements resulting from green initiatives like recycling and solar energy. It is important to find ways to increase consumer use of public transportation, bicycling and walking in order to reduce greenhouse gases. Although homeownership costs are higher in urban areas, the savings in transportation compensate for the increased housing costs. Gas tax revenue has already been allocated to earlier transportation projects. Transportation alternatives are needed for suburban areas. Seniors need more accessibility options.

Comments by Rep. Sciortino: We need to encourage better policy outcomes. There is a \$15 Billion to \$19 Billion shortfall to maintain existing transportation services in the next 20 years and new revenue sources must be established in order to construct infrastructure improvements (the possibility of increasing sales tax and gas tax and parking costs was mentioned; New York has 11 different revenue sources; Massachusetts last raised the gas tax in 1990). An increase in the sales tax to prevent a reduction in services and added toll charges are being considered.

Audience members questioned whether the costs of new transportation required to accommodate casinos and other gambling initiatives are being considered in the gambling debate; suggested that communities permit commercial use in residential areas in order to encourage transportation on foot or by bike; learned that 80% of transportation is repeat routes that could be reduced by using smaller vehicles or shuttle buses; discussed the need for greater transparency regarding the Metropolitan Planning Organization's determinations of the use of federal transportation funds for Massachusetts projects.



After the presentation, the Brookline League of Women Voters hosted a lunch at the State House for Brookline's state Senate and House representatives. We were delighted to be joined by Senator Cynthia Creem and her staff, and staff members from Representative Frank Smizik's office.

Here are State League priority bills discussed by State League specialists and later at our LWVB lunch. The League urges Favorable Action on the following unless otherwise noted:

BASIC HUMAN NEEDS

S. 38 – removes barriers to financial stability and asset development for low to moderate -income families ; it increases the Transitional Assistance to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) asset to \$5,000 from \$2,500 so families may receive assistance without first becoming destitute; not count one car (up to \$5,000 value) per licensed driver in a household as an asset for TAFDC and EAEDC (Emergency Assistance to Elders, Disabled and Children) to get to work, school, or training; increase TAFDC work expense deduction for costs such as payroll deductions, transportation and clothing to \$250 per month; treat state educational grants and state or private work study the same as federal payments and not count them as income for EAEDC and TAFDC; allow TAFDC and EAEDC recipients to save up to \$10,000 received from personal injury settlements or other 3rd party sources in an Individual Asset Account to be used for debt reduction, job training, transportation, housing, and other expenditures consistent with asset development; allow TAFDC recipients to use vocational education to meet their work requirements throughout their period of time-limited assistance and to obtain time limit extensions to complete such programs.

CHILDHOOD ISSUES

S. 2257 - regulates the use of off-highway and recreation vehicles; it prohibits children under the age of 14 from operating an all-terrain vehicle and those between 14 and 16 from operating an ATV with an engine displacement greater than 90cc; children between 14 and 18 must successfully complete a recreational vehicle safety course and also requires the registration of ATVs and the wearing of helmets by operators.

ELECTIONS AND VOTING RIGHTS

H.561 – Drafted by LWVMA, is a Constitutional Amendment allowing easy, accessible and unconditional absentee voting .

H.6499 – An Act to Ensure Secure Voting Equipment requires an official paper ballot as the sole record.

H.576/S.341 – relative to Election Day Registration. Senator Creem is the lead Senate sponsor. Currently working in 9 states, this would allow any eligible voters to register and vote in an election at their local polls.

H.651/S.348 – is a comprehensive bill, “An Act Securing the Freedom to Vote in the Commonwealth” requiring or providing for: paper ballots, return to an individual’s prior MA community to vote in state & national elections for 6 months after moving, election day registration, pre-registration beginning at 16-1/2 years of age, early voting on specified elections, logging of issues at polling places, random audits, penalties for deceptive election practices, closed captioning for campaign advertisements, two-hour excused absence from work to vote.

The League OPPOSES H. 558, H564, H. 565, H569, H578, H.581, H.583, H. 587, H.668, H. 670, H. 660, D. 335, & S. 360 . These bills would expand the requirements for identification when checking in at the polls for the purpose of voting. These requirements include presentation of various forms of photo identification. (A dozen elderly nuns were turned away at the polls because they didn’t have photo I.D.s.)

ENVIRONMENT/NATURAL RESOURCES

H. 757/S. 442 , “An Act for a Competitive Economy Through Safer Alternatives to Toxic Chemicals”, would expand the Toxic Use Reduction Act (TURA) to include consumer products such as toys, cosmetics, electronics and cookware. (It would extend to shower curtains which can produce toxic fumes.)

S.3515/S. 1480 An Act to Improve Recycling Rates in the Commonwealth. Sponsored by Senator Creem, this expands the 1982 Bottle Bill to include bottled water, soft drinks, flavored teas, juices and other “on the go” beverages. Sen. Creem told us that it was defeated as an amendment but that consideration of the bill has been extended to July 14th. (She informed us that she would be willing to pass it without inclusion of bottled fruit juices.)

H. 4374 – called the “E-Waste Bill”, shifts the responsibility for collection and safe disposal of discarded electronics from local governments to producers. This is one of Rep. Smizik’s top five priorities.

EQUAL RIGHTS/REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

H. 402 is An Act Establishing a Health Education Program in Schools. It directs the Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Education to conduct a statewide study and report on the provision of medically -adequate and age-appropriate health education by each MA school district and each private school.

H. 3447 – An Act Providing for Equitable Coverage in Disability Policies. This would prevent discrimination in the amount or payment of premiums, rates charged, benefits payable for any group or individual disability, accident, or sickness insurance contract. It includes discrimination based on the gender of the applicant and conditions unique to one sex. While Social Security disability benefits and Workers Compensation Insurance benefits are gender-neutral, disability insurance is currently classified by sex so if women have a non-job-related disability, they pay more than men for the same benefits and sometimes with other terms and conditions attached, such as pregnancy.

H. 1728/S.1687 adds the category “gender identity or expression” to MA hate crime laws and employment, housing, credit, public accommodations, and public education non-discrimination laws. Sen. Creem was the first Senate sponsor to sign on. There is widespread misunderstanding of and discrimination and violence against

transgender people and this bill is intended to make a clear statement of statewide policy regarding an individual's gender identity or expression. Our legislators and staff tell us that this is a controversial bill which was filed as an amendment to the House budget.

HEALTH CARE

S. 585 is an "Act to Reduce Health Care Costs and Improve Patient Care". It establishes a commission to determine and implement a practical premium-to-claims payment to minimize administrative expenses and maximize funds expended on health care in the Commonwealth.

S. 324 establishes a special commission to study methods through which the Commonwealth can reduce the cost of prescription drugs for public and private payers.

H. 3912 is "The Patient Safety Act: A Reasonable Solution to the Nursing Crisis" requires the MA .Dept. of Public Health to set and implement a safe limit on the number of patients a registered nurse is assigned at one time, adjusts staff levels according to patient needs, assigns nurses according to their expertise, protects against reduction of other members of the health care team and provides patients with the right and ability to know and demand safe limits.

S. 316 – an "Act to Protect Against Unfair Drug Practices" regulates the trade practices of pharmacy benefit managers (PBNs) and provides more transparency in the purchase of pharmaceuticals in the Commonwealth.

H. 2127 – establishes the MA Health Care Trust, a single-payer system creating sufficient economies to provide quality health care for all MA residents at far less than the Commonwealth, businesses and families are currently paying.

S. 845 establishes an advisory council to investigate and study the duty hours and working conditions of resident-physicians in the Commonwealth with the goal of writing and adopting rules and regulations relative to safe work hours and quality and safety of patient care.

S. 315 – would restore "A Prescription Drug Safety Net for Seniors and the Disabled. It would bring back protections provided to individuals with Medicare prescription coverage established in 2005, such as the availability of a one-time 30-day supply of prescription medications under MassHealth and PrescriptionAdvantage and an annual one-time , 72-hour supply of medications when the 30-day supply benefit has been utilized.

S. 475 sets a minimum care ratio - percentage of premium dollars used by insurance Day on the Hill – continued

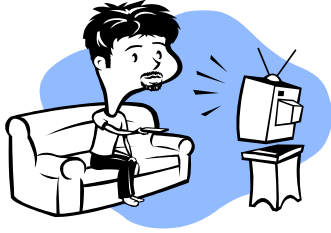
Here are State League priority bills discussed by State League specialists and later at our LWVB lunch. The League urges Favorable Action on the following unless otherwise noted:

LEGALIZED CASINO GAMBLING

H. 4591. The League OPPOSES the establishment of so-called "Category 3 gaming" in Massachusetts, believing that it is no substitute for a reasonable tax policy nor would it alleviate the need to increase taxes. The bill would establish two resort-style casinos and placement of 750 slot machines at four race tracks. The League has concerns about the social and economic problems to communities where they will be sited as well as surrounding communities, including stresses on local businesses, housing, schools, law enforcement, due to the increased incidence of crime, infrastructure and social services required.

TRANSPORTATION

H. 3643 – this bill establishes a speed limit of 25 miles per hour in an urban district, which is defined as an area where businesses or residences are less than 100 feet apart for more than 1/8th of a mile.



A Different Viewpoint

In the last two weeks I have attended Candidates Night and Michael Dukakis' "Investing in the Future, Public Transportation" in a dissimilar way than most of you. I was there by setting my TV to Channel 15 BATV, other than this I would not have been able to see them, as I can not get into a car.

The Candidates Night was clear, well moderated by Amelia Koch and well spoken by Library, School Committee, and Constable Candidates. I took notes and questions I would like to have answered. This was the only shortcoming that I felt. Another time perhaps one could call in to Shaari with questions, she could appraise it before passing it on to a candidate.

The other function I attended was Michael Dukakis. Background reading gave good information for questions about the railroad as passenger trains rather than or along with freight trains.

Questions from the floor were clear and concise; too bad they were all from male attendees!

I would also recommend the article in Erickson Tribune, April 10, 2010 about third class transportation. Ref: James McCommons, Waiting on a train; The Embattled Future of Passenger Rail Service.

I learned from both these activities without leaving my TV set. Let's have BATV included more in our activities. Thank you LWVB committees!
Pat Johnson

IN MEMORY OF CESIA SWARTZ

The Brookline League lost a treasure when Cesia Swartz died on May 7th. Remembering Cesia, one sees a welcoming smile, a sweet personality, and a formidable dedication to the League of Women Voters and to community. Cesia's career WAS the League of Women Voters, and she became the "go to" gal when things needed to be done. She deftly handled large meetings and found places for more intimate meetings in a home, all while being vigilant about seeking out new members to fill the ranks.

Cesia represented all that we hope for in a League member; cheerful enthusiasm, keen intelligence, a deeply held commitment to ideals, and, most of all, enviable people skills. She was a wonderful resource, and any task she was asked to do, she did willingly, with great care and unfailing reliability. While we have lost a perfect helpmate, what we have really lost is an irreplaceable and most wonderful friend.



Calendar

May

14, Friday

2nd Friday at Panera's
9:30 - bring a friend

15, Sunday

LWVMA Council

June

7, Monday

LWVB Board Meeting
7:00pm Goddard House
165 Chestnut St
All are welcome

11, Friday

2nd Friday at Panera's
9:30 - bring a friend

June 11--June 15

National Convention

24, Thursday

Annual Meeting
Keynote Speaker:
Casey Hatchett
Brookline Commission for
Women

If you need a ride or can offer a ride to a meeting, please call the League's phone line at 617-566-3238 or email us at league@lwvbrookline.org