



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEXINGTON

LWVL NEWS AND INFORMATION

January 7th First Friday Forum – Affordable Housing Opportunities in Lexington

The First Friday League of Women Voters is showcasing the issue of affordable housing for its meeting on Friday, January 7, 2011, at 9:30 am in the Community Meeting Room at Cary Memorial Library.

The Housing and Planning Consultant, Karen Sunnarborg, will provide a presentation on work that the Lexington Housing Partnership has been pursuing during the past year on how Lexington might make more affordable housing opportunities available. The work included a survey of how other communities are helping young families purchase their first homes, particularly those who were raised in the communities and have been priced out of the housing market. The meeting will include a discussion on how Lexington might adapt these programs to suit local needs and priorities.

This is the fourth in a series of 2010-2011 First Friday Forums hosted by the League of Women Voters of Lexington to promote awareness and understanding of public policy issues. Coffee will be available at 9:30 a.m. and presentations will begin at 9:45 in the Community Meeting Room on the lower level of Cary Memorial Library, 1874 Massachusetts Avenue. The library is easily accessible by Lexpress and from the Minuteman Bikeway. For more information or to carpool, contact the League at 781-862-6435. All League forums are open to the public at no charge.

Membership Renewal Reminder

Renewal letters and forms were sent to League members in September and the response has been great. There is still time to send in your dues. If you've misplaced the form, you can download another from our website at www.lwvlexington.org or call 781-862-6435 and we'll be happy to send you another.

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Question & Answer Evening with Lexington's State Legislators

Lexington's representatives to the State Legislature, Senators Susan Fargo and Ken Donnelly and Representatives Jay Kaufman and Thomas Stanley, will be answering your questions at a Q&A forum on Wednesday, February 9 at Cary Hall, 1605 Massachusetts Avenue. The snow date is February 10. The forum is scheduled to start at 7:30 p.m.

Sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Lexington, the Lexington Town Meeting Members Association, The Lexington Minuteman and The Colonial Times, and moderated by Lexington Town Meeting Moderator Deborah Brown, this will be an opportunity for citizens to directly ask questions of their representatives.

There is no admission charge and the public is encouraged to attend. For further information, call the League of Women Voters at 781-862-6435.

We Remember

We are sorry to note the passing of a long time League member, Howard Cravis. The husband of our former Board member Helen Cravis, Howard remained an active member and supporter of the League after Helen's death, serving most recently on the Senior Issues Committee. We will miss him.

OBSERVER CORPS INVITATION

League Volunteer Opportunity

The League always needs people to observe local town board and committee meetings. If you'd like to learn more about how Lexington operates, volunteer to be a League observer. You can either attend meetings in person or watch from home and write up a brief summary of the proceedings for the Bulletin. It's okay if you can't cover every meeting. We welcome occasional reports, as well.

We currently need observers for the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, and School Committee. If you have a particular area of interest, or can recommend someone, contact Pat Costello at patcostello@rcn.com.

These reports are crucial to keeping League members informed. Please consider volunteering your time.

LWVMA NEWS AND INFORMATION

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts wants to hear from you! This past election season underscored for all of us how much our communities need the League. The Strategic Planning Committee and the state board of directors are working to serve members and communities better and your feedback is essential. Please join us to share what you believe

are the key areas the League should work on, what you like and want continued, and what you feel needs improving.

We will be holding a series of “town hall” meetings across Massachusetts to hear directly from members about the issues they are concerned about. There are two formats we will use, an online option and a face-to-face option. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the state Office at 617-523-2999 or Terry Yoffie at lwvmasp@yahoo.com

Town Hall Meeting Dates and Locations are as follows:

Date & Times	Location	Leagues
January 11 4pm to 5:30pm 6pm to 7:30pm	Natick	Metro Boston Leagues
January 10 4pm to 5:30pm 6pm to 7:30pm	Northampton	Western Leagues
January 4 2pm to 3:30pm 5:30 pm to 7pm	Plymouth	Southern Leagues and eastern/southern coastal Leagues
January 10 4pm to 5:30pm 6pm to 7:30pm	Topsfield	Northern Leagues
January 5 7pm to 8:30pm	Online	All Leagues
January 6 7pm to 8:30pm	Online	All Leagues
January 13 7pm to 8:30pm	Online	All Leagues

Watch for an email soon with information about how to sign up for the Town Hall Meetings.

LWVUS PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I couldn't be prouder of the League this election season. During my pre-election travel to nine states, I saw firsthand the incredible work by our grassroots — registering tens of thousands of new voters, providing nonpartisan candidate information through millions of printed and online voters' guides, and holding hundreds of candidate debates seen and heard by thousands. Click [here](#) to browse some highlights of our election year news coverage, including voter registration, VOTE411.org, election protection efforts and my travel.

Post-election, two major election players demand our immediate attention: secret money and incivility. This year voters were overwhelmed by millions of dollars in negative ads, but didn't know who paid for many of them. League members nationwide have been calling on their elected officials to support the DISCLOSE Act, which would require corporations and unions to disclose the dollars they spend influencing our elections.

The League will continue to address the other major issue— incivility. The tone of the 2010 campaign exhibited a disturbing new low in American politics. Not only was this evident in the costly advertising; we also saw it in candidate debates and forums and in the public discourse.

- ELECTION 2010 AND BEYOND
- STOP SECRET MONEY
- PROTECT AND STRENGTHEN THE CONGRESSIONAL ETHICS OFFICE
- PASS THE NEW START TREATY
- QUEST FOR A MORE DIVERSE JUDICIARY
- GLOBAL DEMOCRACY

Election 2010 is behind us, but more important work is ahead of us! As 2011 approaches, do stay in touch with the League and me through my blog and Facebook.

Elisabeth MacNamara
President, LWVUS
www.lwv.org

[Election 2010 and Beyond](#)

[Election Year Visibility](#)

Visit our website to browse some highlights of our election year news coverage, including voter registration, VOTE411.org, protection efforts and my travel. This visibility resulted in thousands more voters turning to the League for help! In addition to intensive attention from political news sources, we are particularly proud to have been covered by outlets such as The New York Times, The Washington Post, MSNBC and CNN.

[National Voter Registration Act Victory in Arizona](#)

In a major decision the week before Election Day, a federal appeals court invalidated Arizona's requirement for proof-of-citizenship in order to register to vote. The three-judge panel, with

Sandra Day O'Connor "sitting by designation," agreed with the League's amicus brief that the requirement violates the National Voter Registration Act.

[Beyond Election Day: Young People Getting Involved in Democracy](#)

Just days before Election Day, the League hosted a forum to discuss the trends that impact youth civic participation. League members, leaders in civic engagement and young people turned out to participate in this discussion. Post election reports indicate young people turned out to vote in numbers comparable to past midterm elections. Much more needs to be done to empower youth, especially the underrepresented, so our October 28 conversation is a helpful springboard for broader youth engagement activities.

[Stop Secret Money](#)

In this year's elections, secret money ran rampant. If we're going to cleanse our democracy with a strong dose of transparency that eliminates this kind of election spending, we need action before Congress calls it quits for 2010. The League's concerns were highlighted in a November 4th Bloomberg Businessweek article. At its November 18 press conference on Capitol Hill, the League again strongly urged the Senate to pass the DISCLOSE Act during this "lame duck" session.

[Protect and Strengthen the Congressional Ethics Office](#)

With unprecedented levels of secret money spent in our elections this year, now is not the time to weaken oversight of congressional ethics. Yet the Office of Congressional Ethics (OCE) is under attack. ABC News cites the League's call to Congress not to shut down the OCE in "Are GOP Leaders Quietly Trying to Axe Office of Congressional Ethics?"

[Pass the New START Treaty](#)

Urge Your Senators to Ratify START!

Read League President MacNamara's letter to the editor in the New York Times regarding its Nov. 7 editorial, "Plenty of Work for the Lame Duck: And Other Urgent Business." See an earlier League statement urging passage of the New START Treaty.

[Quest for a More Diverse Judiciary Success in Kansas](#)

The League and its "Safeguarding U.S. Democracy: A Quest for a More Diverse Judiciary" program applaud Kansas Governor Mark Parkinson for further increasing the diversity of the Kansas Supreme Court with his recent appointment of Judge Nancy Moritz Caplinger on November 1. The League has been working since October 2009 for increased gender diversity on the Kansas judiciary.

[Global Democracy](#)

In early November, the League's two Brazilian and 11 Colombian Fellows participated in the 2010 Legislative Fellows Congress in Washington, DC. They joined Fellows from Africa, Eastern Europe, Russia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan for U.S. State Department hosted meetings and activities.

We welcome Bulletin articles from members. If you'd like to submit an article for the January 2011 Bulletin, please send it to *Nancy Corcoran-Ronchetti* at *Nancor1106@gmail.com* by December 22.

Dates to Save:

January 7 LWVL First Friday Forum

February 9 Question & Answer Evening with Lexington's State Legislators

March 2 Candidates Night



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