



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEXINGTON

Box 233 Lexington, Massachusetts 02420

LWVL NEWS AND INFORMATION RECENT EVENTS RECAP

LWVL OCTOBER FIRST FRIDAY FORUM HELD ON OCTOBER 2, 2015 “A CONVERSATION WITH SENATOR MIKE BARRETT: “CURRENT LEGISLATIVE AGENDA”

Michael J. Barrett is the first State Senator from Lexington in almost a century. He was elected in November, 2012, in the Third Middlesex District, which stretches from Chelmsford to Weston, after a spirited campaign. Mike arrived at the State House with wide experiences, first as a state senator from Cambridge (1987-1994), and then as an information technologist specializing in health care in the private sector. At our First Friday on October 2, 2015, at Cary Memorial Library, he was ready to explain the organization of the Massachusetts state legislature, the House and the Senate, with a focus on the current legislative agenda and the current leadership at the State House. He also spoke about his personal legislative initiatives, including carbon pricing.

This was the first in our series of 2015-2016 season of monthly First Friday Forums hosted by the League of Women Voters of Lexington to promote awareness and understanding of public policy issues. The next forum, on November 6, 2015 will be on the reconfiguration of Cary Memorial Library to support modern library use.



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LWVLEXINGTON'S 2015 – 2016 KICK-OFF EVENT WELCOMED NEW SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS DR. MARY CZAJKOWSKI TO LEXINGTON

The Lexington League of Women Voters opened its 2015 – 2016 year with an evening presentation at the new Community Center on Marrett Road on September 17. We were proud to use our kick-off event to help introduce Lexington's new Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Mary Czajkowski, to League members and Town Residents.

Dr. Czajkowski, who comes to us from administrative positions in the Agawam and Barnstable school systems, spoke about her career as a teacher, coach and administrator, and the development of her philosophy as an educator.

It is impossible not to be engaged by Dr. Mary's warm and informal manner, and her evident dedication to students. She shared a video clip of a TED talk presentation in which a long time teacher stressed the importance of encouragement and respect for students, whatever their starting point. Dealing with an inadequately prepared class, the teacher found their initial test scores very low, but noted that on a 20-question quiz, a teacher comment of "Plus 2!" was more likely to be encouraging to the student than a "Minus 18."



Dr. Czajkowski acknowledged that Lexington is a new experience for her and that she is becoming familiar with the acronym "OIL" – "only in Lexington." She sees the position of Superintendent as a kind of hub of the school system, which involves listening and

observing as well as taking an active role in the shaping of policy and programs. She also noted the importance of responding to the needs and concerns of teachers, those on the front lines of the educational enterprise, and cited a book given to her in a previous position which suggested that she must “feed the teachers or they will eat the students.”

Those in attendance had a number of questions and some suggestions for the new Superintendent. In addition to the active outreach Dr. Czajkowski is making to parent and community groups, it was suggested that she meet with student groups who can give her a reading on how individual teachers and classes are experienced by the kids.

LWVLEXINGTON - LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP Renewal Forms Have Been Mailed!

Thank you to members who've renewed their memberships. If you haven't renewed your membership for 2015-2016, please use the form that you received earlier or the one on our website at www.lwvlexington.org

If you have a friend or neighbor who may be interested in joining the League as a new member, please encourage them to do so at this time.

Thank you!

Watch the League's Forums on Demand

If there is a League of Women Voters of Lexington's First Friday Forum that you've missed or would like to see again, log onto <http://www.lexmedia.org/ondemand.html> and scroll down to "League of Women Voters" under Categories.

The League is Looking for Volunteers

The League is looking for volunteers to fill position openings it has. If interested, contact the League at 781-307-3116 for more information.

LWVMA

Massachusetts Leagues Participate in Two LWVUS Studies

Leagues in Massachusetts are working together to participate in two LWVUS studies. This process began at National League convention where the body adopted a study on the **Constitutional Amendment Process** and an Update to our **Campaign Finance** positions, under the umbrella topic “Structures of Democracy”.

Why do Leagues do studies? It is a process unique to LWV. We consider all sides of an issue, then reach member consensus leading to the development of a position(s) on issues. This thoughtfulness sets us apart and helps us retain our respected reputation.

Local Leagues across the country are forming committees to review the study materials and put together programs and consensus meetings.

What is consensus? Participating members discuss both pros and cons of an issue and arrive at a mutual agreement within the consensus group, often termed a “sense of the members” or member understanding. It is not a vote!

After the consensus meeting, the team working on each meeting will make a written recommendation summarizing the result of the consensus meeting to the local League Board/Steering Committee. The Board/Steering Committee will review the outcome, vote approval, and submit the report to the National League study team (LWVUS).

How is a new or updated position reached? All the responses from local Leagues across the nation are reviewed by the National League study team. The National League study team develops a proposed position for the National LWV Board to review and adopt. Once adopted, it becomes the position of the League of Women Voters and becomes the basis for action.

About the two studies

1 Constitutional Amendment Process

The League has no position on the Constitutional Amendment process, as delineated in Article V of the US Constitution. This study will seek to develop guidelines for evaluating constitutional amendment proposals, various aspects of an Article V constitutional convention, and how the League should balance process and positions in evaluating amendment proposals.

2 Money in Politics/ Campaign Finance

3 Recent Supreme Court decisions have raised questions about the flow of corporate and large donor contributions into political campaigns that finance are not fully addressed by the current National League (LWVUS) position on Campaign Finance, which states: *The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably, allow maximum citizen participation in the political process (1974, 1982).* This study will examine the current state of campaign finance and determine how the League position should be modified or expanded

Want to join the conversation? Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to all men and women of any age. [Click here to join!](#)

For more information on the studies [click here](#).

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact the Steering Committee at lwwus.studies@lwwma.org.

YOU can do something about climate change -- right now.

S.1747, *An Act Combatting Climate Change*, the bill in the Massachusetts legislature to reform how we price carbon, will have a hearing next week.

Come to the hearing Tuesday, Oct. 27, to demonstrate your support for this carbon pricing bill. It's at 1 p.m. in Hearing Room B-1 at the State House. If you plan to attend the hearing, please send your name and email to [Launa Zimmaro](#), LWVMA legislative specialist on the environment, who will be testifying at the hearing, so she can update you if necessary.

Whether you can make it to the hearing or not, now is the time to let your legislators know that you support changing the way we price carbon as part of the critical fight against the impact of climate change on our planet. **Please call or email your state Senator and state Representative now.** You can find their names and contact information [here](#).

You do not have to explain the bill when you contact your legislators. What is important is that they know their constituents care about this bill and this urgent problem. Please

tell them in your call or email that you are concerned about the impact of climate change and that you support the carbon pricing bill, S.1747, as an important step in dealing with this issue. Information on carbon pricing is on the [LWVMA website](#), and click Climate Change and the Environment.

If you want to do more, send an email as well to the chairs of the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy, the committee considering this bill: [Senator Ben Downing](#) and [Representative Thomas Golden](#).

LWVUS

Voter Registration Deadlines for Election Day 2015 Are Near

By: Jeanette Senecal

[Last week's National Voter Registration Day was a huge success!](#) Together, over 1,600 organizations, including over 260 state and local Leagues, registered thousands of new voters!

But, we know there are still potential voters who need to register. Help us reach unregistered voters before their [state's voter registration deadline](#) passes – [send our eCard to people you know who have moved, turned 18, changed their name or recently became a citizen!](#)

There are thousands of important offices at stake across the country on Election Day 2015 – November 3 – that impact our lives every day, not to mention the upcoming presidential primaries in early 2016. The people we choose to represent us will have an enormous impact on our lives, so registering to vote and participating in our democracy remains as crucial as ever.

Voter registration is *the key* to ensuring that all Americans can engage in our political process. [Share our eCard with your friends and family and remind them about the importance of weighing in on the issues that matter most to them.](#)

We're all equal on Election Day, and every one of us has the chance to stand up for the issues that matter most to our families, our communities and our country. [Voter registration deadlines vary by state](#) and for some states, the deadlines to register to vote on Election Day 2015 are quickly approaching. [Help us make sure no one is left out.](#)

Don't forget, if you have moved or changed your name since the last time you registered to vote, you will likely need to update your voter registration information. [Check your current registration status.](#)

Together, through our votes, we can take control.



Thank you for making democracy work.

In League,

Elizabeth McNamara, President

We welcome Bulletin articles from members. If you'd like to submit an article for the November 2015 Bulletin, please send it to *Nancy Corcoran-Ronchetti* at Nancor1106@gmail.com by October 28, 2015.

Dates to Save:

- October 24 Fall 2015 Open Space Open House, Lexington's Conservation Stewards, Cary Memorial Library, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m., Cary Memorial Library Meeting Room
- October 27 Legislative Hearing, S. 1747, An Act Combatting Climate Change, Room B-1, State House, 1:00 p.m.
- October 29 Democracy Under Siege, A Scholars Strategy Network Forum, 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., Tsai Auditorium, Harvard University, CGIS South, 1739 Cambridge Street, Cambridge
- November 6 LWVL First Friday, Transformative Spaces: A Plan to Update Cary Library, 9:30 a.m., Cary Memorial Library Meeting Room



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