



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEXINGTON

Box 233 Lexington, Massachusetts 02420

LWVL NEWS AND INFORMATION

LWVL DECEMBER FIRST FRIDAY December 5, 2014

The Digital Age Community Bulletin Board

Lexington is a town of engaged citizens who want to be "in the know". The technology of our digital age makes rapid dissemination of information possible as it never was before, but the existence of so many information pathways also complicates the process in unexpected ways. Towns must now grapple with multiple options for data sharing among departments, critical updates in emergencies, and general information distribution to voters and citizens on a day to day basis. It's complicated!

Lexington is responding to the all of this with the creation of a new Information Services Division, headed up by our long time Town Clerk, Donna Hooper. In her new position as Chief Information Officer, Ms. Hooper will oversee the operations of the Town Clerk's Office, the town's Information Technology Division (hardware, software and networks) and the town's Information Services, including our Webmaster and information project managers.

Please join us on Friday, December 5, 2014 in the Cary Memorial Library Community Meeting Room as we welcome Donna Hooper to explain the town's new approach to information services. She will introduce our new Town Clerk and give us an overview of Lexington's operations in the digital age. Questions are sure to follow.

This is the third in our 2014-2015 First Friday series serving to promote awareness and understanding of public policy issues. Coffee will be available at 9:15 a.m. Presentations begin at 9:30 a.m. For more information or to carpool, contact the League of Women Voters of Lexington at lwv.lexington@gmail.com. All League forums are free and open to the public.

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RIDES TO THE POLLS

Thank you to Liz Andrews for volunteering to coordinate requests for rides to the Polls on November 4, 2014. We had 8 requests for rides and 7 drivers. The League thanks all those who voted.

LWVMA

LWVMA Plans January Forum on Inequality

Please mark your calendars for a panel discussion on the “Politics of Economic Inequality,” co-sponsored by LWVMA and Bentley University’s Valente Center for the Arts and Sciences on Wednesday, January 28, 2015, from 7 to 9 p.m. at Bentley University in Waltham.

This forum, which will be open to the general public, is designed to explore the relationship between growing economic inequality and political power in the United States. Our speakers will examine the question of what rising economic inequality means for political and civic participation-not only for the current generation, but for future generations as well. More details will be coming soon.

LWVMA’s October 2014 Awards to Five Local Leagues

Congratulations to the five Leagues awarded Daniel Scharfman Citizen Education Grants. The total amount dispersed in this cycle for the four grants was \$1246. For information on the grant program [click here](#).

The grant program offers funds to help Leagues carry out events and projects in the areas of citizen education and voter service. Generous contributions to the Lotte E. Scharfman Education Fund have made this successful grant program possible. Please consider donating to the fund. Donations can be made through the website, lwwma.org, and a big thank you to those of you who have donated in the past, making this grant program possible.

LWV Arlington Candidates’ Night and Voters’ Guide

Candidates’ Night, held in Arlington Town Hall, covers local positions such as Selectmen, School Committee, Housing Authority, Town Clerk, etc. LWV Arlington

(LWVA) prepares the Voters' Guide for Candidates' Night, a printed pamphlet that contains a picture, brief biography and response to questions posed by LWVA for each candidate. LWVA also mails a postcard to all Town Meeting candidates inviting them to Candidates' Night.

LWV Plymouth Area Civics Bee

The Plymouth Area League is planning a Civics Bee in March 2015. As one of the League's missions is to promote community involvement and understanding of local, state and national government, this event will enliven our communities' interests in these areas.

The Plymouth Area League plans to invite ten local schools with students from Plymouth, Kingston, Carver, Marshfield, Duxbury and Pembroke. The League hopes to make this an annual event and move it around among the communities included in the Plymouth Area League.

LWV Sudbury Historic Scavenger Hunt

As part of Sudbury's 375th Anniversary celebration, the LWV Historic Scavenger Hunt encouraged families to visit numerous historic locations to gather stamps on a game board and discover the answer to site related questions. The Scavenger Hunt promoted civic pride through knowledge of Sudbury's rich history. The hunt was a cooperative endeavor in which the Sudbury Historical Society, the Wayside Inn Foundation, the Goodnow Library, and Town government participated. The Nixon Elementary School plans to use the Scavenger Hunt as a unit in their social studies curriculum in the spring.

LWV Westford Town Meeting Signs

To encourage greater participation at Westford's Annual and Special Town Meetings, the Westford League will print a set of coroplast signs reminding voters of upcoming Town Meetings. We currently post "Vote!" signs prior to elections, and this would be a similar program. The signs would be posted 3-4 days prior to a town meeting and include the day, time, and location of the meeting. Signs will be designed so they can be used year after year. LWV Westford plans to print 30 signs and have them posted throughout town.

LWV Westwood-Walpole Representative Town Meeting Handbook

LWV Westwood-Walpole will develop and produce a handbook for use by Walpole Representative Town Meeting Members (150) and Town Boards actively involved in Town Meetings (25 copies) on the functioning and rules of Town Meetings (and Robert's Rules of Order) to help members function more effectively.

LWVUS

On November 24th, President Obama announced an executive order limiting the deportation of many undocumented immigrants, based in large part on familial relationships to U.S. citizens.

As you know, the League has studied the immigration issue and developed a position on deportation of unauthorized Immigrants already in the United States. The League supports a system for such immigrants to earn legal status, and the League does not support deporting such immigrants with no history of criminal activity until such a path to legal status is achieved. The President's executive order is an exercise of discretion that the League position clearly anticipates.

The exercise of such discretion is often overlooked as a means to achieving desired ends. Discretion in the execution of the law, often referred to as prosecutorial discretion, is essential to the just and efficient allocation of scarce resources at every level of government. In the area of immigration, federal authorities must constantly choose which cases to pursue; in addition they rely on local law enforcement authorities to arrest and house undocumented immigrants. Those local authorities have discretion as well. Often those local authorities are elected officials whose decisions reflect the culture and needs of their communities. For example, this morning [in my local newspaper there is article about a local sheriff who has declined to hold detainees in the local jail for deportation.](#) This sheriff is not alone, either here in Georgia or elsewhere in the country.

Elected officials depend on input from the community to inform the exercise of their discretion in determining where to focus public resources. In the area of immigration, the League believes that law enforcement resources should not be wasted on deporting law-abiding immigrants regardless of their legal status. We can make that position known in Washington and in our state and local communities as well. Prosecutorial discretion offers the community an opportunity to shape sensible policies that reflect our values and promote the interests of justice.

In League,
Elizabeth McNamara, President

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL!

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 of Women Voters of Lexington is on Facebook!

"Like" us at

<https://www.facebook.com/LWVLexington>

The League is Looking for Volunteers

The League of Women Voters of Lexington is looking for volunteers to fill board and off-board positions for the coming year. Contact the League at 781-307-3116 for more information.

We welcome Bulletin articles from members. If you would like to submit an article for the January 2015 Bulletin, please send it to Nancy Corcoran Ronchetti at Nancor1106@gmail.com by December 23, 2014.

Dates to Save:

December 5 First Friday- The Digital Age Community Bulletin Board



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