



## ***LWVL INFORMATION AND NEWS***

### **NEW MANAGEMENT TEAM**

The Nominating Committee recommended that the Lexington League structure our Board as a “Management Team” for the coming year. This is an alternative model of Board organization suggested by LWVMA for more streamlined management of local Leagues.

Under the Management Team model, there are six key functions:

- Spokesperson - Acts as the public representative of the local League and must be non-partisan
- Convener - Schedules and notices meetings, maintains the local League calendar and keeps members up to date on LWVMA and LWVUS calendars and events
- Treasurer - Keeps the local League books, deposits income, makes payments, assists in preparing annual budgets
- Web Page/Bulletin Editor - Maintains the local League web page, produces periodic Bulletins on line and/or in hard copy
- Membership Coordinator - Coordinates membership recruiting efforts, maintains membership lists; sends out annual membership reminders
- Voter Service - Coordinates Candidates’ Night and any other candidate panels or debates, coordinates voter registration effort, coordinates rides to the polls. This core League function is the only position other than Spokesperson that must remain non-partisan.

Other functions may be performed by on-Board or off-Board members, individually, in teams, or as committees, as the Board deems appropriate. For example: fund-raising and membership recruitment are considered responsibilities of the Board generally, but will be spearheaded by various members as the need arises.

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## **ANNUAL MEETING – May 19, 2010**

The guest speaker, Mary Jo Bohart, Executive Director of the Lexington Chamber of Commerce talked about the role of League members as ambassadors of the town to and for businesses in Lexington.

The 2010-2011 budget, local study and action priorities were approved as printed in the Annual Workbook.

The Nominating Committee presented the slate and the new management team was approved:

Spokesperson/Voter Service, Peg Bradley; Calendar/Communications, Pat Costello; Treasurer, Seta Olson; Secretary, Jinx Couch; Web Page, Gretchen Reisig; Bulletin Editor, Nancy Corcoran-Ronchetti; Membership Coordinators, Wendy Manz and Melinda Walker. Members-at-large with portfolios: Nancy Adler, First Fridays and Senior Issues; Peggy Enders, Community Development; Jean Krieger, Eco/Sustainability Issues; Barbara Manfredi, Jessie Steigerwald and Mary Ann Stewart, Schools/Youth.

Thanks again to Jessie Steigerwald for the use of her home and to Jessie and Nancy Adler for hosting the meeting.

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## **LOCAL STUDY UPDATE**

Education Portfolio Co-Chairs Barbara Manfredi and Jessie Steigerwald have successfully written a Lexington Education Foundation (LEF) grant entitled, "Lexington...Then and Now", which will help the students of Lexington understand their town's history and development.

Lexington will celebrate its tri-centennial in 2013. In order to help students be better informed and understand the 300 years that Lexington has contributed to our state and country, the committee will be working with 13 elementary teachers this summer to create a new curriculum. An orientation will be held on June 23rd for teachers followed by a three day workshop in August. The teachers will work with various department heads and specialists. They will create and sustain a website that will contain curriculum themes and ideas for all elementary classrooms, the arts, library and physical education teachers to enjoy and in turn enrich their classrooms.

## SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORT

by Anne Frymer

**05/25/10 Attendance:** Superintendent Paul Ash; Members: Margaret Coppe, chair; Jessie Steigerwald, Mary Ann Stewart, Alessandro Alessandrini; absent: Rod Cole

Location: Selectmen's Meeting Room, 7:30 p.m.

**Member's Reports:** Ms. Coppe listed upcoming events of interest to the school community: On Thursday evening May 27, the annual Pops concert at the LHS gym. On Saturday, May 29, 10-3, the Discovery Day celebration in the parking lot between Muzzy and Waltham streets. On Sunday, June 6, high school graduation at the Tsongas Arena in Lowell.

**Discussion Items:** The main focus of this meeting was a Report of the English Language Arts (ELA) Curriculum Review Committee. This report was presented by Kathleen McCarthy, Literacy Department Head, K-5, and other English teaching staff from the middle and high schools.

Ms. McCarthy summarized the work that the 44 member review committee did since it convened last August. "The committee members focused their reading on the knowledge and skills that students will need across multiple areas that should be achieved at each grade. " This comprehensive review included a look at the Scott-Foresman reading program currently in use in the elementary grades; MCAS tests; MA English Language Arts Frameworks; the achievement gap in reading and writing at each grade level ; the SPED program; and necessary professional development.

One conclusion was that expectations around reading and writing skills were the most cohesive at the elementary level, less so in middle and high school. One recommendation was that in elementary grades that the hour or so a day devoted to in-class reading needs to be less teacher orientated, more student focused.

From the Middle School survey done for this report, the committee recommends that there be "focus....on reading non-fiction text; focus....on strategies to improve formal/expository writing; and teach reading and writing across the curriculum."

From the High School review, the committee's several recommendations included "efforts to clearly articulate horizontal & vertical alignment to students and community."

This report reflected the work of Year 1 (of 3) of the Curriculum Review of ELA. Year 2, starting in August, 2010, will focus on recommendations for updating the curriculum, developing interdisciplinary projects, and the use of technology inside and outside the classroom.

**Next School Committee Meeting:** Tues, June 8, 7:30 p.m. Selectmen's Meeting Room

## Day on the Hill

### Getting Around in Massachusetts: Transportation Policy, Operations & Legislation

**April 28, 2010**

By Stefani Traina and Jo-Ann Berry of the LWVMA Board

#### **Moderator**

Anne Paulsen, former State Representative 24th Middlesex District

#### **Panelists**

Rep. Carl Sciortino, Jr., V. Chair, Joint Committee on Transportation

Stephanie Pollack, Associate Director, Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Design at Northeastern University

Rachel Kaprielian, Registrar, MA Registry of Motor Vehicles

Day on the Hill began with an impressive panel discussion that covered a variety of issues related to transportation in the Commonwealth. Rachel Kaprielian gave an overview of the newly formed Department of Transportation (DOT) and what has been accomplished during the first six months of its existence. She stressed that the new structure will succeed if the DOT can prove that it is a good steward in four key areas: saving money, improving customer service, respect for the workers, and focus on the Commonwealth as a whole. Thus far, debt has been restructured and the practice of leasing private space is changing to leasing public space or using free space for various functions, resulting in significant savings. Kaprielian emphasized how many Registry of Motor Vehicles transactions can now be done online and encouraged everyone to use the new services to save time and money. More services are being added all the time. The DOT is actively engaging workers in reform efforts, a change from the past. Finally she discussed how the Department is expanding its thinking beyond Rt. 128 to include all areas of Massachusetts in efforts toward transportation equity.

Click on <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/main/main.aspx> for the Mass Department of Transportation website.

Stephanie Pollack provided a big picture overview of how transportation affects each and every one of us every day and emphasized that there are initiatives that can be pursued at all levels of government. Our focus on transportation as a society is based on our need to connect to places and things – it is a means to an end. A comprehensive transportation policy would include addressing how we zone our cities and towns to allow residential and commercial areas to be accessible to each other, and to allow options that are beyond just a system to move cars. Transit systems in other areas are adapting by using smaller buses and relying on existent GPS technology to map efficient routes. She indicated that the vision of transportation set forth by Governor Sargent in 1970 has dictated much of what has been accomplished in Massachusetts since then. However, there has been no comprehensive vision or plan put forth to take up where that left off.

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Another issue Pollack raised was the regional bodies that deploy federal money for transportation projects. Every state is mandated to have Metropolitan Planning Organizations MPO's, but their configuration is a state option. Massachusetts has eleven of these authorities that make their decisions with little or no transparency. Following the money through those organizations will lead to a much greater understanding of the direction of current transportation planning and how it could be changed.

Click on <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/planning/> and then click on the link Learn about the Role of Planning in MassDOT to learn more about the MPO system.

There's a printable map of the MPO districts posted at <http://www.eot.state.ma.us/default.asp?pgid=content/mpodistrictmap&sid=about>

Rep. Sciortino emphasized that additional sources of revenue have to be part of any discussion about improving transportation in Massachusetts and so far there has not been an honest discussion about the true costs of maintaining and improving our transportation infrastructure. He encouraged League members to make sure that discussion takes place. Despite the unpopularity of having to pay more for services, there is no getting around the issue. He also pointed out that transportation policy is also a public health issue including concerns such as obesity, asthma and other respiratory illnesses, and ability to access health care.

A lively question and answer period followed the panelists' presentations. The LWVMA Program and Action specialists then reviewed the bills that they are following, urging members to discuss with their legislators. To review the Day on the Hill packet click here.

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## **LWVMA NEWS AND INFORMATION**

From the Board of Directors

Dear Members:

Please know that Zaxaro Bennett has submitted her resignation from the presidency of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts "for personal reasons and with deep regret." Zaxaro expressed appreciation to all "for your consideration and understanding." We are deeply grateful for her leadership and devotion and service to the League, both as president of our board and in her prior capacities within the Marblehead LWV.

Pursuant to Bylaws Article IV, first vice president Marcia Hirshberg will serve as acting president until Convention 2011, "possess[ing] all the powers and perform[ing] all the duties of" the office of president until then. Marcia has been a LWV member for 36 years, working in many capacities in her local leagues and at the state level . Recently she served as a LWVUS Shur Fellow. We appreciate Marcia's willingness to serve at this time, and know you will join us in supporting her work.

Thank you for your hard work and continuing support of the League of Women Voters in this, our 90th anniversary year!

Sincerely,

LWVMA Board of Directors:

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### ***LWVMA Opportunities***

#### **Administration:**

Help Wanted - New Citizens Voter Information Project

The LWVMA office needs help in putting together New Citizen Packets and delivering them to Faneuil Hall Boston for new citizen swearing-in ceremonies. About 450 packets are delivered to each ceremony which are every other Thursday. About two hours of distribution time is required.

Each packet contains a letter from the LWVMA President, FAQs about voting, a voter registration form and the Massachusetts Voter Bill of Rights. If you are interested in taking on this very important League project, please contact Shawna Reid at sreid@lwwma.org or 617.523.2999.

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### ***LWVMA Program and Action***

#### **League Testifies Against Casinos at Senate Hearing:**

On Tuesday June 8 the Massachusetts Senate is holding their promised hearing on the casino gambling bill. The Senate version proposes three casinos, one of which would be reserved for an Indian tribe. The Senate version does not recommend slot machines at race tracks. Since the Senate and House bills do not agree, be prepared for much discussion and action alerts before the end of this legislative session.

Go to [www.lwwma.org](http://www.lwwma.org) for more information.

League Urges State Representatives to Support S.2257:

"An Act to Regulate the Use of Off-Highway and Recreational Vehicles

This bill prohibits children under the age of 14 from operating an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) or similar recreational vehicle, prohibits children between 14 and 16 from operating an ATV with an engine displacement greater than 90 cc., and requires that all children between the ages of 14 and 18 successfully complete a recreational vehicle safety and responsibility course before operating these vehicles. It also requires the registration of ATVs and the wearing of helmets by individuals operating these vehicles.

Go to [www.lwvma.org](http://www.lwvma.org) for more information.

League Positions that support S.2257:

The LWVUS position on Social Policy states in part, "Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.

"The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that early intervention and prevention measures are effective in helping children reach their full potential. The League supports policies and programs at all levels of the community and government that promote the well-being, encourage the full development and ensure the safety of all children."

The LWVUS position on Natural Resources promotes an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest. The LWVUS believes that natural resources should be managed as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems. Resources should be conserved and protected to assure their future availability. Pollution of these resources should be controlled in order to preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of ecosystems and to protect public health.

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## ***Membership and Training***

Regional Workshops being offered by the Membership and Training Committee this fall will be part of the LWVMA "Membership Plus" program designed to boost communication and membership across the state. More than membership, we will be talking about communication, and some programming ideas.

Plymouth - Saturday, September 9 - 10:30am

Worcester - Saturday, October 2 - 10:30am

Haverhill - Sunday, October 3 - 1:30pm

More information and materials will be available later in the summer and will be posted in the Members section on the website. LWVL Note: Please let Wendy Manz ([wendy-manz@yahoo.com](mailto:wendy-manz@yahoo.com)) know if you are interested in representing Lexington.

# HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!



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