



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEXINGTON

Box 233 Lexington, Massachusetts 02420

LWVL NEWS AND INFORMATION

LWVL MAY FIRST FRIDAY FORUM: Who Keeps Lexington Running?

Why do most Lexington citizens consider our community very well-run? The answer to this question should be revealed when key municipal departments and their functions are explored in the May 4 First Friday Forum sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Lexington. The program will feature a brief presentation entitled, "A Day in the Life of Lexington – Who Keeps Lexington Running?" The photo and video presentation will demonstrate the services and activities of such municipal departments as Fire, Recreation, Community Development, Police, Public Works and the Town Clerk.

Town Manager Carl Valente will lead a panel discussion following the video, with department heads to include: Karen Mullins, Conservation; Fire Chief Keith Hoyle; Police Chief Mark Corr; Bill Hadley, Public Works; Town Clerk Donna Hooper; and Karen Simmons, Recreation.

This is the eighth and the last in the series of 2011-2012 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 9:15 a.m. and presentations will begin at 9:30 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.

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SAVE THE DATE:

The LWVL's will hold its Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 7, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. at Brookhaven. The theme of this year's meeting is Lexington's 300th Celebration and our guest speaker is Susan Rockwell, Chair of the Celebrations Committee. Please plan to attend.

LWVL ON FACEBOOK!

Thanks to Peggy Enders, you can "Like" us at <https://www.facebook.com/LWVLexington>

AND LEXMEDIA!

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. There are 17 First Friday tapes to choose from.

The April 13 Forum on transportation is listed as "League of Women Voters – Getting Around Town."

LWVMA

LWVMA Multi-League Candidates Night

With the 2012 election season in full swing, LWVMA encourages local Leagues to band together to explore organizing a LWVMA-sponsored candidates' event in each newly redrawn congressional district. It's a great opportunity to present the candidates to the voters. The key is getting started early. Our Council 2012 workshop on Multi-League Candidate Forums will cover the basics and will provide time for League members to connect and start planning their event. Extensive handouts will cover how to get started and how to keep things moving.

Nancy Corcoran-Ronchetti has been meeting with members of the Concord-Carlisle League to plan an event in August.

League Serenades Speaker at Day on the Hill

In a bit of spontaneous lobbying, League members attending Day on the Hill trooped up to Speaker Robert DeLeo's office after the morning's presentations to urge the Speaker to bring the updated bottle bill to the floor of the House for a vote. With a crowd of women singing "100 Bottles of Water on the Wall" outside the office, the Speaker's staff agreed to hear arguments in favor of the bill from LWVMA environmental specialists Launa Zimmaro and Lynn Wolbarst and president Eva Valentine.

The visit to the Speaker captured the essence of the call to action from Rep. Jay Kaufman of Lexington and Common Cause executive director Pam Wilmot, as well as the League's legislative specialists, at the annual Beacon Hill lobbying event.

Rep. Kaufman reminded League members of the importance of lobbying for citizen interests. "If you don't do this, all we (as legislators) hear are the other voices" from industries and special interests.

Wilmot urged League members to join the fight to overturn the Citizens United Supreme Court ruling and to become even more involved in government. "Our biggest problem is apathy and cynicism. People don't believe they can make a difference."

If you would like to add your voice in support of the updated bottle bill, SB1650/HB890, to require deposits on non-carbonated beverage containers such as bottled water and tea, call or email Speaker DeLeo and ask that the bill be brought to the House floor for a vote Robert.DeLeo@mahouse.gov 617-722-2500.

And check out photos of the event on the LWVMA Facebook page.

The Updated Bottle Bill: HB 890; SB1650

On March 20, the Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy Committee decided to extend it rather than report it favorably out of committee. An extension is better than an unfavorable report or 'study status.' It gives advocates more time to push for a vote during this legislative session. However, this is a repeat of what happened last session, leaving one to wonder just what isn't understood about this bill after over 15 years of consideration.

Public Forum: Pushing Back on Money Politics, May 17, 2012

Concerned about the big spending in the 2012 political campaigns? Is money putting our democracy at risk?

Hear a panel of experts on this issue: Lawrence Lessig, Roy L. Furman Professor of Law and Leadership, Harvard Law School, and Director of the Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics at Harvard University; Jeff Clements, attorney and author of *Corporations Are Not People*; and Mimi Marziani, Counsel for the Democracy Program at the Brennan Center for Justice, New York University School of Law.

They will be speaking at a public forum, *Pushing Back on Money Politics, 2012* on Thursday, May 17, 7:30-9:30 p.m., at the Concord-Carlisle High School, 500 Walden Street, Concord.

Moderating the conversation will be Tom Ashbrook, host of *On Point*, a production of 90.9 WBUR, Boston's NPR news station. The forum is free and open to the public, with doors opening at 7:00 p.m. No reserved seating.

Questions from the audience will be taken after the panel discussion.

Pushing Back on Money Politics, 2012 is co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Concord-Carlisle (LWVCC), the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, and 90.9 WBUR. It is part of a LWVCC project, *Democracy in the Balance: Money, Speech & Power*. For more information about the May 17 public forum, contact Pushingback@lwwcc.org or 978-254-1598.

If you are interested in carpooling, please call Pat Costello at 781-862-6435.

LWVMA Council 2012: Challenges to Democracy: Protecting Voter Rights and the Influence of Money

The LWVMA Council 2012 is May 5th at Lasell College in Newton, MA.

This year's theme was chosen by a survey in November's League Leader Update, and survey respondents also indicated their preferences for workshop topics. The most popular workshop choices were "Multi-League Candidate Nights (Congressional Races)," "How to work with your legislator and LWVMA's current issues," and "Share the success--membership and leadership."

Nancy Corcoran-Ronchetti and Pat Costello will be the Lexington delegates to the Council.

LWVUS

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear League Leader:

The Daily Show came to Atlanta yesterday (April 26)! Interestingly, The Show came to Georgia in pursuit of a spoof on Florida's new election law, which makes it prohibitively dangerous for groups like the LWV to register voters. Kudos to Deirdre Macnab (LWVFL) and Elizabeth Poythress (LWVGA) for collaborating to help The Daily Show demonstrate that, while the LWV in Florida has shut down its voter registration efforts after 72 years, in Georgia (a state not noted recently for being friendly to voters) the League can easily, and literally at the drop of a hat, set up a registration table and register voters without fear.

The filming took place at the Georgia State University campus in downtown Atlanta. It featured a diverse group of students registering to vote with assistance from Deirdre, Elizabeth, and wonderful Leaguers from the Atlanta/Fulton County LWV and the LWVGA board. Not only were many students registered, but many were interviewed about their experience. While the piece is a spoof (so the students were asked how many times they just registered to vote), it was also poignant because every interviewed student volunteered that without the League table, they would not have known how to get registered.

The situation in Florida is shameful, and it is even more shameful that other states are following Florida's lead. While it was tremendous fun yesterday seeing the filming and watching the interview that John Oliver conducted with Deirdre McNabb, I was reminded of the key role that humor plays in informing and shaping public opinion. So watch for The Show and share the laughs. The media spotlight on Florida can only help to shine the light on all the fearless Leaguers working tirelessly at the grassroots to protect our democracy.

Proudly in League,
Elisabeth MacNamara

We welcome Bulletin articles from members. If you'd like to submit an article for the May 2012 Bulletin, please send it to *Nancy Corcoran-Ronchetti* at Nancor1106@gmail.com by May 25th.

Dates to Save:

May 5 LWVMA Council
May 17 Public Forum: Pushing Back on Money Politics, 2012
June 7 LWVL's Annual Meeting at 7:30 p.m. at Brookhaven



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