

League of Women Voters of Newton

Newsletter

Volume 9 Issue 9

November 2003

LWVMA Speaks Out

HAVA Presents Sweeping Changes But Is No Panacea

The most significant and broad changes in voting procedures will take place after January 2004 as a result of the passage of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) in 2002. Without more education of voters, better training of poll workers, and legislative changes to remove further obstacles to voter registration, HAVA reforms will be ineffective and incomplete.

“This is an opportunity for change in the most fundamental aspect of our democracy – voting,” according to Madhu Sridhar, president of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts. “Many reforms of HAVA will encourage people to come to the polls, such as the opportunity to cast a provisional ballot, but other changes such as new identification requirements, may suppress turnout especially in underrepresented communities.”

“HAVA is a promise to the citizens of the United States that every voter is valued and each vote will be counted,” stated Ms. Sridhar. “The League will monitor its implementation to make sure that HAVA fulfills that promise.”

For over 80 years, the mission of the League of Women Voters has been to encourage the informed participation of citizens in the electoral process. This is the cornerstone of a healthy democracy. The League has highlighted seven strategic issues that will insure HAVA fulfills its goal. These seven issues include a Voter’s Bill of Rights, Election Day voter registration, and modern tools for poll workers.

The League of Women Voters applauds the extraordinary effort put forward by the Secretary of the Commonwealth’s office to develop comprehensive plans to implement new procedures in Massachusetts to be in compliance with HAVA.

Ms. Sridhar said, “I believe that HAVA’s sweeping changes reflect the beginning of a new respect for the principal right of citizens in a free society – the right to vote. As a newly naturalized citizen, I am acutely aware of the awesome feeling of going to the polls and making a ballot in privacy and freedom. It is a right all citizens should cherish.”

The text of this article was released to the Press by the LWVMA, 9/15/03.

To read more about the LWVMA position, go to <http://www.lwvma.org> ■

November Units

Update on Implementation of Community Preservation Act

By Ruth Neiberg

What has the CPA done for us lately?

Find out about the projects that have been funded during the past year and get a glimpse of what is being considered for the coming year. The November Unit Meetings are designed to bring League members an update on the work of the Community Preservation Committee. You can choose which meeting to attend.

- On **Wednesday, November 12**, committee members Charles McMillan and Claudia Wu will serve as resource people at a daytime meeting at the home of Andrea Kelley.
- On **Thursday evening, November 13**, Doug Dickson and Andy Stern will make the presentation at the meeting at the home of Rose Davis.

A special thanks goes to Deb Crossley for her willingness to be topic coordinator. We look forward to informative discussions. Check our calendar for the times and locations and join in on learning about the work of this committee. ■

LWVN Officers and Directors 2003-2004

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Vice President	Deborah Crossley	617 244-7597
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Unit Organization	Ruth Neiberg	617 969-9329
Voter Service	Sue Rosenbaum	617 332-0306
Legislation/ Roundtable	Janet Stearns	617 559-9987
Environmental Issues	Linda Walden	617 559-9987

Newsletter

President	Amelia Koch	617 244-2647
Editor	Ann Grantham	617 964-0333

Committee Members

Pat Acton	617 965-5572
Liz Lieberman	617 244-4402
Linda Morrison	617 332-6539

The LWVN Newsletter is published nine times per year. The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization open to all citizens of voting age. For more information about the League of Women Voters, call 617-964-0014.

PO Box 610207
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617-964-0014

www.newtoncitizens.com/LWV

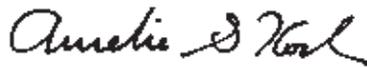
Ought To Be Used To It!

After a number of years on the board I ought to be used to it, but October always catches me by surprise. It's so busy. League volunteers seem to be everywhere doing everything. The Voter's Service effort this year has been amazing. With so many candidates Sue Rosenbaum and Bonnie Carter have been really hopping. Thank you both and thanks to the many other League volunteers who have helped out. Thanks to Andrea Kelley who is using her timing skills honed at her daughters swim meets to keep the candidates on time. Thanks to Pat Acton and Beth Lowd for making sure that the events ran smoothly, questions were sorted and passed on.

But, that's just the beginning: because the League also has members like Deb Crossley, Priscilla Leith and AnnaMaria Abernathy diligently observing the CPA, following some very complex issues, and drafting appropriate League statements; members like Ruth Neiberg who set up an exciting series of unit meetings (see the calendar for upcoming units), members like Linda Walden, Robin Maltz, Barbara Herson and others who are working on environmental issues. As a Board we have also arranged to have volunteers who worked at the Volunteer Fair, the Harvest Fair, and the State League phonathon.

And that's not all by a long shot because of course Ann Grantham has been putting out the Newsletter with style and Janet Stearns has been arranging Legislative Roundtable with Beth Wilkinson and Deborah Atwood has begun to work with a group to plan Champagne and Chocolate. What an amazing group of volunteers!

Thank you all!



How Will You Appear?

L W V N H A N D B O O K

Following the November election, we will be publishing a new handbook containing our membership list. Please check your listing in the current handbook. If there are corrections or E-mail address additions, please send them to robinm@comcast.net.

Let Robin know "Yes" or "No" if you wish your E-mail address to be shared with State and National listings. ■

Welcome New Members

ESTHER BACKER
5 Irving Road, Waban 02468
617-244-7276

CAROL BOCK
20 River Street, South Natick 01760
508-545-1540
Carol_Bock@newton.mec.edu

MARCELLA BOELHOUWER
125 Dane Hill Rd., Newton 02461
617-332-3402 • magb@rcn.com

THERESA FITZPATRICK
1935 Beacon St., Waban 02468
617-332-1654 • tabilel@yahoo.com

TONI HICKS & KEVIN DUTT
10 Norwood Ave., Newton Center 02459
617-916-1020

JEANNETTE HIMMELFARB
117 Beaumont Avenue, Newtonville 02460
617-969-3823

MARIANNE M. HUDEC
48 Druid Hill Road, Newton 02461
617-527-4276 • mhudec@aol.com

JOYCE MOSS
229 Franklin Street, Newton Corner 02458
617-969-1074

In Memory of Marsha Freed

By Bonnie Carter

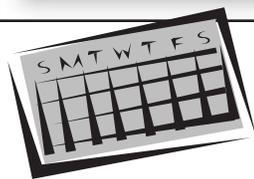
Marsha Freed died peacefully at home on September 14. She had been diagnosed with ALS about a year ago. Friends and family rallied around giving her love and support during this very difficult year.

Marsha spent her life helping people. In the 1970's she headed the Newton-Needham-Wellesley Council for Children and worked with the people drafting the legislation that created the Office for Children. For almost 20 years, she volunteered at Children's Hospital and was recently honored for her almost 5,000 hours of service. She volunteered at the Newton Food Pantry. She helped organize the Root Cellar Food Coop. For someone who didn't have a job, she worked very hard.

Some of us remember the days before computers and xerography — when we produced the League Newsletter by typing on a stencil, then running the pages off on the Gestetner mimeo machine at the First Baptist Church. Then a group would gather for a morning of collating, stapling, labeling and sorting. Marsha was a member of this team; but she was not happy with the way that all that stapling left us with sore hands. So she decided that the League should acquire an electric stapler. She did the research and made the purchase for the League. We were all very grateful to be able to do the stapling without getting bruised hands. Currently I have custody of the stapler. It resides at NewTV where I work. It occasionally goes out on assignment when there is a job that requires a lot of stapling — such as the Newton Conservators Newsletter. The stapler is a small symbol of Marsha's commitment and contributions to the good of the community.

We are thankful for the years she was in our midst. Our deepest sympathy goes to her family, her husband Michael, their daughter Jenny and her husband Brian and baby Sophie, their son Josh and his wife Dean and their son Stephen.

— • —



LARGE BLOCKS
TO WRITE IN...
NO FRILLS,
NO PICTURES.

2004 League Calendars

Holidays and special days of interest (e.g. National LWV Birthday on Feb 14, United Nations Day on Oct 24) are duly noted.

Please send \$3.50 to cover cost and postage to Priscilla Leith, 162 Islington Rd, Newton 02466 or contact her at islpris@comcast.net to place an order.

Printed by the LWV Of Missouri ■

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

- I would like to join the League of Women voters of Newton. Enclosed is my check for \$50 payable to LWVN.
- Lifetime membership \$1000
- I would like to receive materials about the League.
- I would like to be contacted by a League member to talk about LWVN.

My Email address may be shared with State and National LWV

Mail this form (and your check, if joining) to:
Andrea Kozinetz Holtz at 8 Stoney Brae Road,
Newton Highlands, MA 02461

Local Action

By Deb Crossley, Local Action Chair

The following statement, which describes League opposition to an additional one million CPA grant toward Kessler Woods, was drawn on proposed

plans for development of house lots, according to plans reviewed at the planning department prior to the hearing. New, slightly revised plans were presented at the hearing, which showed 3.5 acres of additional open space gained, instead of the 1.5 acres shown on the previous plans we had reviewed. However, the revised plans still show a 3/4 acre 'buffer' between old and new lots as largely inaccessible city-owned land, and the additional permanently 'protected' open areas shown comprise a 1/4 acre long skinny green space along the access road, and 1.5 acre of mostly wetland and unbuildable land, which is contiguous to the parkland.

October 2, 2003 Public Hearing

Ad Hoc Committee for Community Preservation and Finance Committees, Board of Aldermen

RE: Oppose additional \$1 million proposed expenditure for Kessler Woods



The League of Women Voters of Newton commends the work of the Community Preservation Committee, which in its first year succeeded in facilitating projects across the city that will improve the quality of life for Newton residents. Without this fund, and their efforts in working with a wide range of community interests, Newton would not have had the resources to improve the accessibility of Flowed Meadow Parkland for public use, build many units of community housing, restore the Chafin House children's Library, or expand the facilities at Forte Park, to name but a few.

The League further commends all who worked long and cooperatively to achieve development control of the 42 acre parcel known as Kessler Woods. We congratulate Mayor Cohen, the Board of Aldermen and the CPC for making this possible.

For \$5M, the city has secured almost 28 acres of permanently protected open space that the public can enjoy, a key milestone in furthering the city's open space plan. In addition, the city has secured limited development on two of the most appropriate sections of the parcel, with commitments from the developer to provide some affordable units, and to build the public improvements (entrances and walks) needed to make the parkland accessible. This commitment of CPA funds represents a landmark accomplishment of which all of Newton can be proud.

However, The League cannot support the expenditure of an additional million dollars from this precious fund, to prevent development of three single family homes on two 3/4 acre parcels between Brookline Street and Harwich Road. This is a single family residential area, the lot sizes and homes proposed are in keeping with the character of that area. The fourteen lot plan is a better, more workable plan than the eleven lot alternative, which is in fact less like the existing area, requires multiple easements to access the various lots, and relies heavily on exercising the rear lot subdivision provision of the special permit process.

How does the extra million purchase benefit the citizens of Newton? The long interior 3/4 acre parcel proposed is not accessible for public use, and serves only to secure additional isolation between the back yards of a few abutters and the backyards of the proposed homes. It is wrong to put public money to private use. The other lot at the end of Harwich Road would link to the open space, but if developed would simply complete a cul-de-sac and be a fitting complement to the existing dead end street.

The League believes the Community Preservation program offers Newton a vital and precious resource to encourage further development of community housing, preserve Newton's built history, and expand public access to open space for passive and active recreation for all residents. We must preserve this resource for public uses, or we may jeopardize the future of the program.

We urge the Board of Aldermen to vote against this million dollar expenditure.

Respectfully,
Amelia S. Koch
President, LWV Newton

League members at our October working board agreed that the revised plans would not sway our opposition. Although more land is shown as protected, it would not have been built upon previously, and still some land is shown as purchased for the exclusive benefit of abutters, which can simply not be done with public money. It is our understanding that the developer is back to the drawing boards to reconsider their proposal and that new plans will be coming. We will be reviewing them. ■

Observer Notes

Submitted By Ruby Ajanee

Finance Committee Meeting September 8, 2003 Room 222

Committee Members present:

Coletti, Stewart, Ciccone, Lipof, Parker, Gerst, Gentile and Schnipper.

Vote tallies are listed as For/Against/Abstained/Absent

Item #342-03. The Committee voted 6/0/0/2 to appropriate \$50,000 from the Workers' Compensation School Department Lump Sum account to fund full and final settlement of all Workers' Compensation claims filed by the former custodian at the Lincoln-Eliot School.

Item #378-03. The Committee voted 6/0/0/2 to appropriate \$25,000 from Budget Reserve to procure the services of outside counsel to represent the City of Newton, the Zoning Board of Appeals, and the Commissioner of Inspectional Services in the suit brought against them by the Teddy Bear Club, Inc.

Item #377-03. The Committee voted 7/0/0/1 to reverse the assessed fee in the amount of \$149.60 paid to the Newton Fire Department by Nancy Parritz of 54 Bonad Road, West Newton in accordance with Sec. 24-31d of the Revised Ordinance of Newton, 2001.

Finance Committee Meeting September 22, 2003 Room 222

Committee Members present:

Coletti, Stewart, Ciccone, Lipof, Parker, Gerst, Gentile and Schnipper.

Vote tallies are listed as For/Against/Abstained/Absent

Item #396-03. The Committee voted 5/0/0/3 to re-appoint Dr. Lane Sofman, 336 Lexington Street, Newton, as a Trustee of the Horace Cousens Industrial Fund for a term of office expiring June 1, 2006.

Item #398-03. The Committee voted 5/0/0/3 to appropriate \$10,000 from the Judgments and Settlements account to allow the Law Department to contract with outside counsel to petition to the Supreme Judicial Court for further appellate Court's decision in Boston College v. Newton Board of Alderman.

Item #399-03. The Committee voted 7/0/1/0 to appropriate \$200,000 from the Overlay Surplus to fund two capital projects for the School Department:

- Countryside Elementary School Generator Replacement . . . \$100,000
- Zervas Elementary School Boiler Replacement \$100,000

Item #379-03. The Committee voted 7/0/0/1 to appropriate \$123,000 from the Capital Stabilization Fund to purchase several new vehicles and some training equipment for the Police Department.

Item #396-03. The Committee voted 5/0/0/3 to re-appoint Edward Gourdeau, 81 Dalby Street, Newton, as a Constable for the City of Newton for a term expiring November 1, 2006.

Item #92-03. The Committee voted 7/0/1/0 to deny the abatement of sewer betterment assessment of 256 Chestnut Hill Road, 02467 in the amount of \$7,198.43. ■

Committee Notes

Sustainable Newton Committee

By Linda Walden, Environmental Issues Chair

Mayor David Cohen has formed a Sustainable Newton Committee, which will work with him to develop policy recommendations for overall environmental stewardship, to recommend ways to integrate and coordinate the City's environmental efforts, and to promote continuous environmental improvement. The LWVN has been asked to serve on the committee, which is composed of several environmental organizations and groups, community leaders, business, and city agencies. ■

Committees - in - Action

E d u c a t i o n

Focus Renovations, increasing high school enrollments, school financing, testing & standards

Members Susie Heyman Robin Maltz
 Andrea Kelley Fran Osten
 Andrea Kozinetz Beverly Spencer
 Anne Larner Beth Wilkinson

Contact Jody Klein, Chair 617-244-4767

E n v i r o n m e n t a l I s s u e s

Focus Promoting source reduction, and recycling programs in municipal offices and public schools

Members Deb Crossley Robin Maltz
 Katherine Gekas Rohna Shoul
 Barbara Herson Sharyn Roberts
 Beth Lowd

Contact Linda Walden, Chair 617-630-9538

H u m a n R i g h t s

Focus League outreach, relevance and support for the human rights of Newton's diverse populations

Members Sharon Balfour Susie Heyman
 Linda Morrison

Contact Holly Gunner, Chair 617-964-0767

L o c a l A c t i o n

Contact Deb Crossley, Chair 617-244-7597

OBSERVER CORPS

Community Preservation Committee Deb Crossley
 Jody Klein
 Priscilla Leith

Election Commission Bonnie Carter
 Nancy Criscitiello

Finance Committee, Board of Alderman Ruby Ajanee
 Amelia Koch

Newton Citizen Commission on Energy Deb Crossley,
 LWVN Representative

Parks and Recreation Commission Priscilla Leith

Zoning and Planning Committee, Board of Aldermen Judy Jaffe

N o m i n a t i n g C o m m i t t e e

Members Nancy Crowley Deb Hirsch

Contact Fran Seasholes, Chair 617-969-5927

You may call committee contacts or a Board officer or director to learn more about current committee work. All are welcome to participate.

PRISCILLA M. LEITH, MBA

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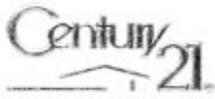
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*Our politics may lean to the left,
 but our work... NEVER!*

State League Phonathon

by Deborah Atwood,
 Fundraising Chair

For two nights in October, a total of 8 wonderful callers donated their evening to the benefit of our Newton league by participating in the LWVM Phonathon. Not only did they have the chance to touch base with League members in Newton and beyond, they also raised money for LWVN through their efforts.

The profit-sharing formula set up by the state League gives each local league \$10 for each caller, as well as 10% of the pledges they raised. For us, this means the eight callers who raised \$1800 in specific pledges will bring in at least \$260 to the Newton league. That amount will increase as non-specific pledges come in.

Camaraderie and a free dinner are bonuses for the volunteers. Our thanks to the eight who gave their time and calling skills:

- Sharlyn Arntz
- Deborah Atwood
- Bonnie Carter
- Judy Jaffe
- Priscilla Leith
- Linda Morrison
- Myra Tattenbaum
- Linda Walden

Our own LWVN provided the most callers of all the Massachusetts League's that participated. Appreciation abounds for both the callers, and members who pledged financial support for the League. Go NEWTON! ■

Legislative Roundtable

Go to www.newtv.org
 and check the
 Blue Channel schedule



LWVN CALENDAR

November

- 2 Sunday, 2:00 p.m. Walking Tour of Kessler Woods led by the Conservators. Meet at Saw Mill Brook parking area, corner of Vine Street and Wayne Road
- 3 Monday, 12 Noon, Last Day and Hour to apply for an Absentee Ballot for the November 4, 2003, Municipal Election, City Hall
- 4 Tuesday, MUNICIPAL ELECTION DAY, Polls Open 7 a.m. – 8 p.m.
- 5 Wednesday, 1:30 p.m Environmental Issues Committee, at the home of Robin Maltz, 20 Chatham Rd., Newton Highlands, 617-930-9538
- 12 Wednesday, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., Unit Meeting, The CPA, at the home of Andrea Kelley, 28 Putnam Street, West Newton, 617-964-4609
6:30 p.m. Working Board Meeting/Newsletter Deadline
- 13 Thursday, 7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m., Unit Meeting, The CPA, at the home of Rose Davis, 209 Commonwealth Ave, Apt PA, Chestnut Hill, 617-244-7502

December

- 3 Wednesday, 7:15 p.m., Board Meeting at the home of Beth Lowd, 38 Hobart Rd., Newton Centre, 617-332-1978
- 10 Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., Newton Comprehensive Planning Workshop, Location to be determined. Deb Crossley, 617-244-7597

Annual Holiday Party!

Sunday Evening December 14
Watch the mail for details!



Planning for Newton's Future

A Public Workshop

Wednesday, December 10 7:30pm

LOCATION TO BE ANNOUNCED

MORE INFO Deb Crossley 617-244-7597

What is the Status of Newton's Comprehensive Plan?

CPAC, the citizens' advisory committee developing key elements of a comprehensive plan for Newton will hold a public workshop November 20 to illustrate its progress and solicit further input from the public.

Planning for Newton's Future

Where are we now, and where are we headed?

- Growth potentials: results of the Build Out Analysis – Planning & Development staff
- The potential in regional and temporal context: the implications for Newton's planning

Our intentions for and questions about a better Newton community as we move into the future.

- Planning for Land Use *Ted Tye*
- Planning for Housing *Josephine McNeil*
- Planning for Transportation *Srdjan Nedeljkovic*

Questions and answers
to and from those attending ■

League of Women Voters of Newton

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