The Mass. League Voter
October-November 2012
A newsletter for members of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts

An Active League Election Season

We're coming down the home stretch in this very active election season, and Leagues around the state are fulfilling our mission to inform voters with candidate and ballot question forums.

In three of Massachusetts' newly redrawn Congressional Districts, local Leagues held Candidates' Forums in hotly contested races. The state League, in partnership with the Massachusetts High Technology Council, invited U.S. Senate candidates Scott Brown and Elizabeth Warren to participate in a forum on the state's economic issues, but the two campaigns did not accept that invitation.

On Sept. 30, the Leagues of the Acton Area, Concord-Carlisle and Westford co-sponsored a Third Congressional District candidates' forum with the support of the Andover/North Andover, Chelmsford, Greater Haverhill, Harvard, Sudbury and Worcester Area Leagues.

U.S. Representative Niki Tsongas (D-Lowell) and her Republican challenger, Jon Golnik of Carlisle, faced off before a crowd of about 180 supporters and voters at the forum at Concord-Carlisle High School, moderated by Risa Nyman of the Brookline League. You can take a look at this forum on the Concord cable TV website's video-on-demand service at www.concordtv.org.

The 9th Congressional District forum, sponsored by the Plymouth Area League, was held Oct. 10 and pitted Democratic Congressman William Keating against Republican Chris Sheldon and Daniel Botelho, an independent.

Reporters from Plymouth, New Bedford and Cape Cod were among those covering the forum, and Keating saluted the League for the civility of the event. About 85 people were there.

The 4th Congressional District candidates' forum drew over 1,000 people to Wellesley College Oct. 15.

The Leagues of Needham, Newton, Brookline, Sharon-Stoughton, and Wellesley worked with the college to host the debate between Joseph Kennedy III and Sean Bielat for the seat being vacated by Barney Frank. Jo-Ann Berry of the Acton Area League moderated.

Joseph Kennedy, left, and Sean Bielat share a light moment at the League 4th Congressional District Candidates' forum, which drew over 1,000 to Wellesley College.

The two candidates answered both written questions and questions directly from audience members, and two sign language interpreters, one for each candidate, were on stage. This forum is available on the Wellesley cable website www.wellesleymedia.org/index.html.

In addition to these Congressional candidates' forums, local Leagues across Massachusetts have been educating voters with forums for state Senate and House races, and for municipal elections, as well as forums on the various ballot questions.

Thanks to all of you for your hard work!

Send us your email address! You are receiving the Mass. League Voter by U.S. Mail because we do not have your email address on file. Please help us save money and trees by sending us your email address. Another advantage is that you can view the newsletter in color! Email Natalie at: nkassabian@lwvma.org. Thank you!

Four Leagues Awarded Grants in New Scharfman Program

Congratulations to the first four Leagues to be awarded Lotte E. Scharfman Citizen Education grants under a new program of the educational fund. These four Leagues submitted excellent grant applications, and all four were rated "highly recommended" by the grant review committee. The deadline for the next funding cycle is Jan. 3, 2013. The September grant recipients were:

LWV Brookline: Brookline Votes 2012 ($250)

Brookline Votes 2012 is an outreach campaign to encourage people to register to vote and to get out and vote in 2012. The campaign's theme, "Your Vote is Your Voice," was developed for the Brookline League by Boston University's AdLab. The campaign is reaching out to every area and every demographic in the Town of Brookline, using a variety of media and methods, with an emphasis on online and interactive features might be especially important to young voters. The grant will fund a portion of the total project budget.

LWV Westford: Town Meeting and Special Town Meeting Warrant Reviews ($80)

Prior to each Annual Town Meeting and each Fall Special Town Meeting, LWV Westford hosts Warrant Review Roundtable meetings. These meetings allow voters a chance to learn what will be on the warrant at the upcoming Town Meeting and to ask questions in an informal setting. The grant money will cover the cost of printing the warrants for the meeting since the warrant is not officially printed before the review meeting time.

LWV Cape Cod Area: Death with Dignity: A Massachusetts Ballot Question ($250)

LWV Cape Code Area is hosting an informational ballot question forum with a panel of four speakers: representatives from Dignity 2012, Hospice of Cape Cod, and the Massachusetts Medical Association, and a medical ethicist from Cape Cod Hospital. It will be held at Barnstable Senior Center, a central location in the Hyannis area, which seats 250.

LWV Worcester Area: New Citizen Education and Registration ($245)

Since 2004, the Worcester Area LWV has partnered with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) at the five annual naturalization ceremonies in Mechanics Hall, Worcester. Between 730-775 individuals from 75-96 countries are sworn in as new citizens at each ceremony.

Worcester League volunteers greet every single candidate, distribute flags, pens and voter registration forms, and open each program by making welcoming remarks including a full 10-minute presentation on how to complete the form, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, including civic engagement and the importance of voting. The League then mails or hand delivers completed forms to town clerks within 48 hours. This grant will fund the materials for one of the upcoming ceremonies.

Contact Karen Price at kprice@lwvma.org for more info.

Brookline Votes 2012 Materials

- *Some highlights of Brookline Votes 2012 are:*
- Website: www.vote2012info.com, a special, nonpartisan website with:
  - Absentee ballot applications and information
  - Ballot question summaries
  - Brief explanation of the Electoral College
  - Candidates and links to their websites
  - Dates of upcoming voter registration sessions
  - Election calendar
  - Polling locations
  - Voter registration information and links to download forms and more.
- Election Alert/Reminder Service: Periodic, brief email alerts with important election information.
- Blog: Brookline Patch (5 written to date - new blog appears approximately every two weeks).
- Facebook: Page for Election 2012, LIKE our page
- Partnerships with Newbury and Pine Manor Colleges for voter registration and Presidential Debate watch events at both colleges.
- Partnership with the Brookline Rotary to place materials in businesses and promote the Brookline Votes 2012 Campaign to the Brookline Chamber of Commerce.
- Partnership with Brookline Housing Authority to conduct voter registration sessions in their locations.
- Holding voter registration sessions throughout the town in the summer and fall.
  - Posters in Town Kiosks.
  - Displays with voter registration and absentee voting information in libraries and other locations.

The League Is Calling

It is Phonathon season! LWV members across the state, who have not already donated to our fall appeal over the past month, will be called by a fellow League member asking for a donation to LWVMA. When you answer this telephone call, remember it is a League member just like you giving his or her time to raise funds for LWVMA and a local League. Please be generous! The fall appeal/Phonathon is the largest fundraiser for LWVMA. The state League needs to raise about $70,000 beyond what is collected by dues to operate, and your donation is very much appreciated.

Think You'd Like to be a Moderator?

One of the League's most important traditions has been training nonpartisan moderators for candidates' forums and other educational events. The state League's Voter Service Committee is offering a moderator training session to train League moderators in time for the spring local election season. The training will be Thursday, Nov. 15, 7 - 9:30 p.m. at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center, 1276 Main St., Concord, MA.

Jo-Ann Berry, Erin Pastuszenski and Stefani Traina will lead the session. There will be ample time to practice, and time to share tips as well. Please consider taking this course. Materials will be emailed in advance. To register, send an email to Stefani Traina by Nov. 8 that includes your name, email address and local League.

Seeking Candidates for OUR Election

The Nominating Committee has started working on a slate of officers and directors for the state League, to be presented at the May 2013 convention.

We ask you to consider serving or to suggest the names of people you think would be perfect for the state Board.

We welcome the suggestions of members from Cape Cod through the Berkshires. Remember, service as a local League president, chair, or vice president is not a prerequisite to service on the Board of the LWVMA. We would appreciate receiving your suggestions by Dec. 31.

The Nominating Committee: Erin Pastuszenski, chair, Nancy Brumback, Andrea Kozinetz, Florence Seldin and Terry Yoffie (nominating@lwvma.org)

Interested in Traveling to Cuba?

LWVMA is looking into a partnership with another organization to sponsor tours to Cuba. These tours would take place in Spring and/or Fall 2013. At this point, we are trying to gauge League members' interest. If you might be interested in traveling on one of these tours, please email Anne Borg at travel@lwvma.org. There is *no commitment*; we just want to assess whether this is worth pursuing.

Wanted: League Angels

Are you willing to help out every now and then with one-time tasks at the state level?

We need extra hands at times to do things like stuffing envelopes, answering the phones at the state office when Natalie is out, data entry, helping with voter registration activities at festivals and events, calling vendors for price quotes on needed purchases, and similar specific one-time jobs.

If you would like to add your name to our League Angels list, send LWVMA Office Manager Natalie Kassabian an email at nkassabian@lwvma.org. When the state Board needs help, we will send an email request to this list and give you the opportunity to pitch in if it's convenient. And your state Board will be very grateful for your help.

LWVMA Calendar

Monday, October 29	LWVMA Board Meeting	11:30am-2:30pm	LWVMA Office
Tuesday, November 6	Election Day		
Thursday, November 15	LWVMA Moderator Training	7:00-9:30pm	Harvey Wheeler Community Center, Concord, MA
Monday, November 26	LWVMA Board Meeting	11:30am-2:30pm	LWVMA Office
Monday, December 17	LWVMA Board Meeting	11:30am-2:30pm	LWVMA Office

Join Us on Facebook!

New Items in Stock!

We are now offering bumper stickers with the slogan "Democracy is not a spectator sport," just in time for the elections. They make great, inexpensive gifts to members and friends or items to sell or distribute at your League events. They are $15 for 10 stickers or 1 for $2.
NB: the lettering is blue.

Other items newly in stock:

LWV Buttons: red/blue logo (approximately 2 inches round); $3.00 each; 5+ buttons at $2.00 each

LWV Note Cards: LWV color logo + League of Women Voters on 5"x3-1/2" white folded cards/envelopes; $6.00/package of 10

LWV Ceramic Mugs: LWV logo + red, white and blue design with quote, "Give Democracy a Wake Up Call" on a white porcelain mug; $8 each

For an entire list of our wares, go to our website www.lwvma.org. To make an order, call the LWMVA office at 617-523-2999.

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What's Inside

Active Election Season 1
New Grant Program 2
"Brookline Votes!" 2
Moderator Training 3
Travel to Cuba 3
League "Angels" Wanted 3
Democracy Bumper Stickers for Sale! 4