

Welcome to September -
time to reset your
engagement



**League of Women Voters-
Acton Area**

Opening Meeting

**Wednesday, September 13, 7 p.m.
Acton Town Hall, Rm. 204**

Join us to ramp up your civic engagement!

Remember when September meant a time to be excited about new ventures, new friends, and new ways to get involved? Come spend an evening to decide how you would like to make a difference in getting involved with the League in our communities.

Time to socialize with old and new friends, and then learn about some of the things we have planned for the year. You'll have an opportunity to add new ideas, prioritize what should get done first, and pick your passion to get involved.

Questions? Contact Marilyn Peterson,
mpeterson@corneliuspeterson.com

**6:45 p.m.
Socialize and
refreshments**

**7:15 p.m.
Meeting
begins**



League of Women Voters – Acton Area

Serving Acton, Boxborough, Littleton, Maynard, and Stow, Massachusetts



September 2017 Bulletin

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September Calendar

Tuesday Sept. 5 First Tuesday	First Tuesday, Bagels Plus
Wednesday Sept. 6, 7:30 pm	Steering Committee, home of Diane Schaumburg
Wednesday Sept. 13 7:00 pm	Opening Meeting Room 204 Acton Town Hall
Thursday Sept. 14 7:00 pm	LWVMA/LWV Boston Climate Forum at the Aquarium
Sunday Sept. 24	Bulletin Articles Due!
Tuesday Sept. 26	National Voter Registration Day
Tuesday Sept. 26 7:00 pm	Book Group, Acton Memorial Library

October Calendar

Tuesday Oct. 3, 10 am	First Tuesday, Bagels Plus
Wednesday Oct. 4, 7:00 pm (refreshments 6:30)	"The Health Benefits of Renewable Energy Choices: A Role for Carbon Pricing" Winchester Town Hall
Wednesday Oct. 4, 7:30 pm	Steering Committee, Location TBD
Saturday Oct. 14, 10:00 – 2:00 (9:30 coffee)	League Leaders' Lunch The First Baptist Church of Worcester, 111 Park Ave. Worcester
Thursday, Oct. 19, 7:00 p.m.	"Greening the Grid: Preparing for Our Clean Energy Future" Cary Memorial Library Lexington
Tuesday Oct. 24, 9:30 am – 12:00	LWVMA Day on the Hill, State House, Boston
Tuesday Oct. 24, 7:00 pm	Book Group, Acton Memorial Library

Steering Committee's Message

September and its hint of crisp days always feels like a time for fresh starts. For those of you whose commitment to engagement may have relaxed over the summer months, we invite you to press the reset button at our Opening Meeting on Wednesday, September 13 at Acton Town Hall, Room 204. Members are invited to come by at 6:45 p.m. to socialize with new and veteran members and enjoy some refreshments.

The meeting will start at 7:15 with a brief overview of the League's program for 2017-2018 (distributed in the Annual Meeting workbook, and included in this Bulletin). Members will prioritize these programs and initiatives, and maybe add any we may have overlooked, and then identify the top items that we would like to be involved with. We hope that each member walks out of the room with some new friends and a fresh commitment to engage in the civic activity in our communities.

One of the activities we typically undertake in September is offering voter registration assistance at our Acton-Boxborough elementary school parent information nights. Leslie Hogan is coordinating this work, and she is looking for volunteers to help cover the evening events. This is a fun activity and great for League members who would like to welcome new families to our community, and ensure they have the information they need to become registered voters.

At both our meeting and at the "Back to School" nights, we will be rolling out our new "Vow to Vote" campaign. Come find out what it's about, and be prepared to promise that you too will be a voter.

Mary Ann Ashton for the Steering Committee

Look at the Links

In the Calendar on the previous page you will see a number of links to more information on the calendar item. These links point to the August [League Leader Update](#), a monthly email from the LWVMA, and to items in the LWVMA website <https://lwmma.org/>. Take a few minutes a month to browse the state and national websites. The national website is found at <http://lwg.org/>.

Ruth Kohls, Bulletin Editor

Give Our New Members A Warm Welcome!

This last year has seen a growth in our membership. Here is a list of our new members. Older members, please introduce yourselves at the next gathering of the League.

New Members:

Diane and Michael Copenhaver,
Westford

Tona Hangen, Stow

Tami Gouveia, Acton

Yanni Gou, Acton

Patricia Underwood, , Acton

Jean DiBattista, Stow

Patricia Underwood, Acton

Kalyani Krishnan, Acton

Deanna Parsi, Maynard

Ronnie (Siuyin)Maffa, Boxborough

Esha Gangoli, Acton

Susan Sekuler, Acton

Lori Cooney, Acton

Amy Krishnamurthy, Acton

Sara Massarello, Acton

Monica Burke, Acton

Membership Directory Update

We would like to have an updated directory of all of our members, their contact information and what group(s) and activities they might be interested in. If you have not filled out a recent membership form, please answer the following questions and send your answers to dianeschaumburg6@gmail.com

1. Has your contact information changed?
If yes, please give us your new contact information.
2. What groups and activities are you interested in?
 - Government
 - Education Policy
 - Book Group
 - Citizen Education
 - Social Policy
 - Environmental Policy
 - Voter Outreach
 - Candidate Forums

First Tuesdays

September 5 and October 3

Join League members for a mix of good coffee or tea, eats, casual conversation and lots of laughter.

Our monthly First Tuesday gatherings are at Bagels Plus, 93 Great Road, Acton at 10:00 am.





Promoting Voter Registration in 2017

The League of Women Voters is again going to promote voter registration this fall by hosting tables at all the Acton and Boxborough elementary school Back to School Nights.

I'll be sending out a doodle poll where you can sign up for slots to help with this effort. This year we are going to again limit the time at each Open House to 1 hour, in hopes we will be able to cover all the schools at least one night. And since it's more fun to work in pairs, our aim is to get 2 people for each slot. It's a fun way to spend an hour of time talking to parents about voting in Massachusetts!

We've found in the past couple years that parents are most interested in understanding how to register to vote online, so that is the information we'll be providing. It's easy to do now, go to the website www.sec.state.ma.us, underneath the **Elections and Voting** button, you click on "Online Voter Registration". Anyone with a valid driver's license can register this way, or if not, the form can be downloaded, completed, and mailed or dropped off to their local election official.

For any new members to the League, this is a fun way to spend an hour engaging with parents and maybe sharing a table with a League member!

Here's the schedule of open house school dates. All are held in the early evening:

Blanchard	Sept 26
Conant	Sept 18 & 19
Douglas	Sept 12 & 19
Gates	Sept 26 & 27
McTowne	Sept 12
Merriam	Sept 26

Please let me know if you'd like to help this year, thanks in advance!

Leslie Hogan **email:** **lesliehogan99@gmail.com**

SOCIAL POLICY REPORT

Scarecrow Alert

The scarecrow contest to benefit the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) at Cucurbit Farm will happen again this year. Starter kits will be available beginning September 1st. The scarecrows will be up for the month of October. This year, instead of having judges from the garden club, we will ask the public to vote throughout the month. Information shared by member Lori Krinsky.

Last fall Bonnie and I enjoyed putting together a scarecrow we dubbed Carrie. At Opening Meeting will ask for volunteers to sign up to join us in creating this year's version.

Other important Alerts

League-Supported/Opposed Legislation 2017-2018

Check out the state League website for updates that will provide hope in these times when much is needed. We are fortunate to have League members who advocate for legislation to address so many timely issues.

This info from LWVMA.org: The legislative advocacy efforts of the LWVMA are led by the Legislative Action Committee (LAC), composed of the League's legislative specialists. Each legislative specialist follows one or more focus areas. For those areas, the specialist researches bills filed with the Massachusetts legislature, recommends League action on them to the LAC, writes testimony on the League's position to submit to the relevant committee of the legislature, and follows the progress of the bill. The bills LWVMA acts on must be consistent with **LWVMA or LWVUS positions**. The specialist may also join with approved coalition partners or advocacy groups to work together to support or oppose bills. The Legislative Action Committee decides on support or opposition for a bill, with the LWVMA board of directors retaining final authority on those decisions.

Some recent examples reported in a recent LWVMA Action Newsletter

- The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act was signed into law by Governor Baker July 27.
- The sex education bill, An Act relative to healthy youth, passed the Senate and is now in the House Ways & Means Committee.
- Two basic human needs bills were reported favorably out of joint committees: [H101](#) creates a common application to apply for safety-net services, and [H695](#) establishes a bill of rights for homeless people.
- A bill to increase the amount of moderate- and low-income housing, [H673/S723](#), was reported favorably out of joint committee.

ALSO:

- On June 9, 2017, Testimony in support of the Safe Communities Act, H.3269 and S.1305, was submitted to the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security by Karen Price, LWVMA Immigration Justice Specialist and Ken Farbstein, LWV-Needham Immigration Team. The bill provides a number of protections for our vulnerable immigrants and ensures these protections are extended to all communities in the Commonwealth. It is based on the tried and



Carrie at Cucurbit Farm

true community policing policies that have served our communities well and given residents confidence in local law enforcement. For Key Features of the bill see Support Safe Communities at: www.Miracoalition.org. As of August 20, 2017, the bill still sits in committee.

- **Note:** The Acton Police Department issued Policy and Procedure #1.25 on June 21, 2017 to be effective June 27, 2017. The document contains a two-paragraph statement of General Considerations and Guidelines and a list of eight specific policies to be followed by police officers and the Department.
- On August 11, 2017 **League of Women Voters Condemns White Supremacists in Charlottesville**

Washington, DC - League of Women Voters president Chris Carson issued the following statement following the horrific acts by white supremacists in Virginia this weekend:

"Yesterday the world watched in horror as white supremacists gathered in Charlottesville, Virginia. There is no place for hatred and violence in our democracy and all leaders must condemn these acts of domestic terrorism. We must send a strong message that while the freedom of speech and the freedom of assembly are some of our most cherished rights and must be protected, those rights do not extend to what we witnessed yesterday. The League of Women Voters stands in solidarity with the victims of violence in Charlottesville and against white supremacism."

Please let us know of your social policy interests and concerns for us to address together in the coming months.

Marge Kennedy, Bonnie Lobel

HOW TO FIND ACTON'S TOWN INFORMATION

The monthly schedule of **board and committee meetings** is listed on the Town calendar at <http://www.acton-ma.gov/Calendar.aspx> Click on *More Details* and then on *Download Agenda*.

Selectmen's and Finance Committee Meetings can be seen live at <http://actontv.org/on-demand/livestream/government>.

After 1-2 days, videoed meetings can also be seen at <http://actontv.org/on-demand/government>
Live and rebroadcast meetings can also be seen on Cable TV at Comcast 99; and Verizon 41.

TO COMMENT OR EXPRESS AN OPINION TO A TOWN BOARD

Send an e-mail to the initials of the Committee/Board "@acton-ma.gov".

For example, for the Board of Selectmen: bos@acton-ma.gov

The list of Acton Committees is at <http://www.acton-ma.gov/75/Boards-Committees>.

To receive e-mailed Town News and/or to be alerted to upcoming Board and Committee meetings, log onto <http://www.acton-ma.gov/list.aspx> and choose the information you want to receive from the Town.

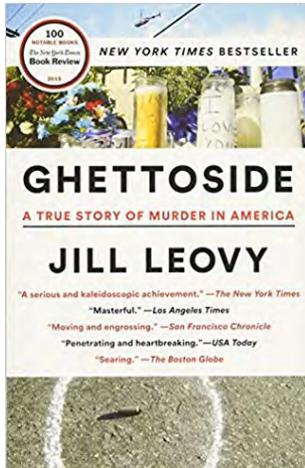
Read the Beacon on-line at:

<http://acton.wickedlocal.com/news/20160728/around-acton-and-boxborough>

Book Group September Meeting

Please join us on September 26 at 7pm at the Acton Library when we will be discussing Jill Leovy's *Ghettoside: A True Story of Murder in America*.

NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD FINALIST • NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY *The New York Times Book Review* • *The Washington Post* • *The Boston Globe* • *The Economist* • *Kirkus Reviews*



“On a warm spring evening in South Los Angeles, a young man is shot and killed on a sidewalk minutes away from his home, one of the thousands of black Americans murdered that year. His assailant runs down the street, jumps into an SUV, and vanishes, hoping to join the scores of killers in American cities who are never arrested for their crimes.

But as soon as the case is assigned to Detective Skaggs, the odds shift.

Here is the kaleidoscopic story of the quintessential, but mostly ignored, American murder—a “ghettoside” killing, one young black man slaying another—and a brilliant and driven cadre of detectives whose creed is to pursue justice for forgotten victims at all costs. *Ghettoside* is a fast-paced narrative of a devastating crime, an intimate portrait of detectives and a community bonded in tragedy, and a surprising new lens into the great subject of why murder happens in our cities—and how the epidemic of killings might yet be stopped.” (Amazon.com)

Our future selections include:

- Tuesday, October 24: ***Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*** by J.D. Vance
- Tuesday, November 28: ***Give Us the Ballot: The Modern Struggle for Voting Rights in America*** by Ari Berman

As summer ends, it is time to assemble a new list of potential book selections for the first half of 2018. Please make note of those books that might interest you and others in the League. Your suggestions will be due to Diane Schaumberg dianeschaumberg6@gmail.com by September 15th.

You do not need to read the book to attend the meetings. If you have any questions, please contact Diane Schaumberg at dianeschaumberg6@gmail.com or Pam Lynn at ohio6232@verizon.net

LOCAL PROGRAM 2017-2018

Local Program Planning is the process by which members determine where they would like to focus their energies during the coming League year. This year, we held a Program Planning session May 3 to consider proposals. Members came to consensus on program recommendations to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee recommends these following actions should be adopted by members at the Annual Meeting:

1. The Steering Committee recommends that all Active positions listed below be re-adopted:

Education	Growth Management
Local Education – Financing of Schools	Planning and Zoning
Acton Public Health Nursing Service	Water Protection and Water Supply Management
Town Government	Traffic Management
Town Meeting Proceedings	Transportation
Environmental Protection	

The position on mental health should be adopted subject to the addition of the word behavioral in the title and throughout the position as appropriate. This change will update the language consistent with practices in the field and will broaden the position to include, in particular, addiction. The position will be titled “Mental and Behavioral Health Services.”

It should be noted that LWVUS made a similar change last year.

In 2015-16, all the local positions were reviewed, revised, and designated as either Active or Archive. The Steering Committee voted to approve the revised positions as authorized by members at the Annual Meeting in 2015.

2. The Steering Committee recommends no new local study for 2017-2018.

A LWVMA study to examine the process by which Citizens’ Petitions are placed on the ballot will commence in 2017.

3. The Steering Committee recommends the following program areas for Priority Action Focus in 2017-2018:

- **Monitor Acton Town Meeting:**
 - Promote Voter Turnout

- Increase Town Meeting visibility with signs, banners and social media
- Survey Town residents about Town Meeting
- **Social Policy – Outreach and Educational Programs**
 - Forums and panel discussions on various topics: Aging in Place, Caregiving and Adults with Special Needs
 - Attend local social services meetings and events to develop observer notes in support of this special focus; notes to be published in Bulletin
 - Engage in programmatic collaborations with groups such as Healthy Acton, Safety Net, Acton Cares, and United Way
- **Civic Engagement Initiative**
 - Get voters more involved in government through civic education activities such as:
 - Public reading of the Constitution
 - Running for Office Motivation and Guidance
 - Voter registration at local employers
 - Develop basic civics primer, hold class
- **Engage Members in other community issues including:**
 - Capital planning for the Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools and the Town of Acton
 - Sanctuary Cities

5. The Steering Committee recommends these organizational activities for 2017-2018:

- Civics Bee
- Participate in Town Safety Net meetings to measure social service needs in the community
- Voter Service – Candidate forums, get out the vote activities such as voter registration
- Book Club
- Meet Legislators at Chat and Cheer
- Update from Superintendent of Schools
- Warrant meeting open to public
- Improve LWVAA digital communication with inter connecting social media
- First Tuesday, member gathering time; consider repeating experiment with evening alternative



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BULLETIN

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