



Amherst League of Women Voters

A Voice for Citizens, a Force for Change
e-bulletin

November 2023

CALENDAR

Wednesday, November 1, 6:30 PM - LWVA Steering Committee meeting. [Email](#) for location and agenda.

Tuesday, November 14, 7:00 PM - Judy Brooks Conversation - Guest Speaker Billy Spitzer, Executive Director of the Hitchcock Center for the Environment: *Achieving Equity in Environmental Education in Western Mass.* [Click here for the link..](#)

Dear Members and Friends,

This past month was a busy time for the Voter Service Committee, and I want to thank everyone involved in the planning and implementation of the forums and the 2023 Voter Guide. I also want to give a special shout-out to Jessica Ryan who kept all the plates spinning, and to Sue Lowery for juggling all the emails involved in moving our second forum to a different day.

By the time you are seeing this message, some of you may have voted. To those who have not, please do your best to learn about the candidates. The LWVA organizes the forums and the Voter Guide to help the candidates present themselves to the public in a general way, but it is up to the voters to go deeper. I encourage everyone to check out the candidates' websites and, better yet, try to meet them to get to know their positions.

In the middle of the month, hopefully before you start worrying about menus and holiday traffic, please join us on Zoom to hear from Billy Spitzer, Executive Director of the Hitchcock Center for the Environment. Spitzer will be talking about racial justice and environmental education as part of the Judy Brooks Conversation Series.

Happy November,

Rebecca Fricke
Spokesperson

LWVA Membership Renewal Time
This year we've made it easy.
Click below to start.

Voter Engagement News

You still have until the 27th of October to register to vote. You can vote-by-mail by requesting a ballot, or vote-in-person on November 7th.

Please see our [2023 Voter Guide](#) for information about how to vote, where to vote, and who is running.

If you were not able to come out to our candidate forums, the link to the Town Council candidate forum is on [our website](#) and the link to the Library Trustee and School Committee candidate forum will be up as soon as possible.

2023 Book Sale Report

Susan Millinger submitted a brief, but extremely thorough report on all aspects of the book sale. Fortunately, many of the volunteers are already looking forward to next years' sale!

[The LWV Amherst Book Sale of 2023: A Brief Report](#)

Racial Justice Committee News

Greetings from the Racial Justice Committee (RJC) for November 2023

Our next Judy Brooks Conversation Series program will be on November 14, 7 pm with Billy Spitzer, the Director of the Hitchcock Center for the Environment. He is an experienced non-profit leader and innovator in science and environmental education, climate communication, and network building to accelerate collective impact. His topic is *Environmental Education for Marginalized Youth in Western Massachusetts*. Please register for this interesting event at www.lwvamherst.org. It will be held on Zoom.

In recognition of Indigenous Peoples Day I would like to offer an inspiring article from a wonderful e-magazine called "The Attic" written by Bruce Watson. (You can subscribe for free!) The [article is called "Rebirth of Nations Project"](#) and discusses Matika Wilbur's photographic "Project 562".

Please remember to vote on November 7th!

~~Marcie Sclove, Chair, Racial Justice Committee (RJC)

Link to register for zoom conversation:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlufu2orjkqHNA2wv0PlcVYWYPWpVMVT12U>



JUDY BROOKS SERIES

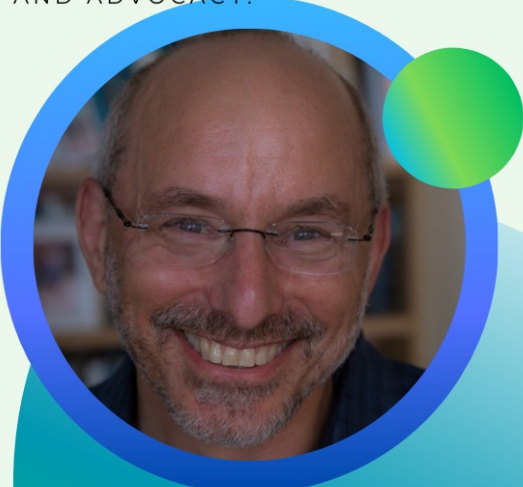
ACHIEVING EQUITY IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN WESTERN MASS

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, A NONPARTISAN POLITICAL ORGANIZATION, ENCOURAGES THE INFORMED AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS IN GOVERNMENT, WORKS TO INCREASE UNDERSTANDING OF MAJOR PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES AND INFLUENCES PUBLIC POLICY THROUGH EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY.

**TUESDAY
14 NOVEMBER 2023
7.00 PM**



**LWVAMHERST.ORG
FOR ZOOM LINK**



WITH BILLY SPITZER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE HITCHCOCK CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

ONLINE



JUDY HARRIS BROOKS (1944-2018) WILL BE LONG REMEMBERED AS AN EDUCATOR AND CIVIC LEADER WHO WAS ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN FINDING SOLUTIONS TO COMPLEX ISSUES IN HER COMMUNITY.

Civic Action Grants

The LWV Amherst is now accepting applications for 2023 Civic Action Grants Up to \$2,500 for projects that are directly related to the League's priority programs Read more [here](#).

Health Care For All

The "Medicare for All for Residents of Massachusetts" Resolution passed the Town Council unanimously on October 2, 2023. No time is set aside for public comment to accompany resolutions, so we did our lobbying in advance councilor by councilor and then worked with Council committees to make sure

the resolution was in "actionable" shape. We were helped by UMass Professor and friend of the committee, Jerry Friedman, who did [the economic analysis](#) for the 2023 state bills ([H.1239](#) and [S.744](#)), and Jon Weissman Chair of Masscare coalition (<https://masscare.org>) of which LWVMA is a member. The wording of the resolution, press release, and press coverage are on [the LWV Health Care Toolkit](#) and will be on the [Public Citizen M4A Resolution](#) webpage.

Our next project in the short-term is to prepare written and oral **testimony for a hearing scheduled by the Joint Health Care Financing Committee on November 14**, which we hope to do in conjunction with League allies, such as the Survival Center, the Poor People's Campaign, a student public health group, or other. We will likely be coming to other LWVA committees for help finding organizations that will add their support for it.

Barbara Pearson

Affordable Housing

In September, the Amherst Municipal Affordable Housing Trust discussed senior housing. Risha Hess, who has joined the Board of Health and therefore is leaving the Housing Trust committee, presented information on broadening housing options for seniors: Co-housing and Home Sharing. Amherst has experienced a major rise in senior population – there are 5,280 people over the age of 60. The recent Age and Dementia study showed that many people living in single family homes are hoping to downsize. Currently there are 114 public and 738 private units of senior housing in Amherst. The waiting list for public housing is enormous. Home sharing (rent can be reduced or even free in return for specific services) could be a win/win for seniors/students. Vermont has a state sponsored Home Sharing program. Amherst has two cohousing communities: Cherry Hill and Pine Street.

There was an Open House / celebration at the East Gables project on Northampton Road on September 22.

In mid-October, the town was interviewing candidates for the position of Housing Planner.

The next meeting of the Housing Trust will be Thursday, November 9 at 7 PM. I cannot attend. The LWVA is looking for a League member willing to attend these Thursday meetings (by Zoom) and report to the the LWV Amherst.

Elisa Campbell

LWVA Book Group Schedule

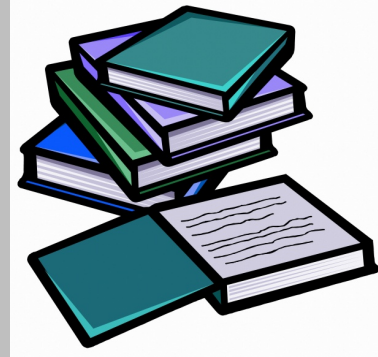
The LWV Book Group will meet the second Wednesday of the month at 1:30 p.m. at Applewood. The building is handicapped accessible.

Here is the schedule and books:

Nov. 15th 1:30 - Lab Girl, Hope Jahra

Jan. - Cloud Cuckooland, Anthony Dorr

Feb.- How the Word is Passed, Clint Smith
March - American Character, Colin Woodard
For information call Phyllis Lehrer 253-5179
or email Phyllis Lehrer [here](#).



LWV MA

FORWARD THIS MESSAGE!

This monthly message is for anyone interested in the League, not just members. If you know someone who might be interested, forward this message and invite them to subscribe themselves, using the link below.

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Rebecca Fricke, Spokesperson & E-Bulletin
Marla Jamate, Social Media
Susan Lowery, Membership
Jessica Ryan, Voter Engagement
David Shanabrook, Treasurer
[Click here for email links.](#)

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LWV Amherst



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