

March 2010

PO Box 142
Brunswick, ME 04011

The Brunswick Voter



Items of Interest

- What's Happening at Home?
- LWVBA Mourns Loss of Long-Time Member
- Introduction to the Work of the LWVUS Arms Control Task Force

Save the Date

~Harpwell Election (9:00 a.m.) and Town Meeting (10:00 a.m.), Harpswell Islands School, Route 24, Saturday, March 20

~Keys to the Capitol, Welcome Center, Capitol Building, State Street, Augusta, Thursday, March 25, 9:00 a.m.

~Program about the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, Monday, April 5, Morrell Room, Curtis Memorial Library, 23 Pleasant Street, Brunswick, 7:30 p.m.

~League of Women Voters of Maine Board Meeting, Thursday, April 8, University of Maine at Augusta, 10:00 a.m.

~Election Day, Tuesday, June 8



Nuclear Test Ban Program Scheduled for April 5

Brunswick, ME - Ira Helfand, M.D., of Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Ret. Col. Richard Klass, of the Council for a Livable World, will speak to the League of Women Voters of the Brunswick Area about the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in the Morrell Room of Curtis Memorial Library on Monday, April 5, at 7:30 p.m. The public

is urged to attend.

During their two-day tour through Maine, Dr. Helfand and Col. Klass will also speak in Portland, Lewiston, Waterville and Orono.

In 1983, the League of Women Voters of the United States adopted a position to limit proliferation of nuclear weapons and to eventually

eliminate all nuclear weapons.

Between 1997 and 1999, LWVUS urged the U.S. Senate to ratify the CTBT. However, the treaty was rejected in 1999. Maine Senators Snowe and Collins were among those who voted against the treaty. Vice President Joseph Biden has begun another push for ratification of the treaty this spring.

People's Veto on June 8 Ballot

Augusta, ME - On June 12, Governor John E. Baldacci signed a tax restructuring bill into law. The bill lowered the top income tax rate from 8.5 to 6.5 percent on incomes lower than \$250,000, while extending the sales tax to cover more goods and services and increasing the meals and lodging tax from 7 to 8.5 percent. Proponents of the bill predicted that 90 percent of Maine people would pay lower taxes.

After the bill was signed, its opponents, who feared its impact on the business climate, swung into action and

initiated a people's veto petition, collecting and submitting 71,035 signatures to Maine's Secretary of State by September 11. On November 9, Matthew Dunlap determined that 56,107 of those signatures were valid and certified the question for the June 2010 ballot. The question that will read:

"Do you want to reject the new law that lowers Maine's income tax and replaces that revenue by making changes to the sales tax?"

Certification of the question was not without controversy. On November 2, Charles

Webster, chair of Maine's Republican Party, sought a declaratory judgment against the Secretary of State from the Kennebec County Superior Court after Dunlap's office missed the October 13 deadline to issue a decision about the validity of the signatures submitted. Following a hearing, Superior Court Justice Donald H. Marden ordered the Secretary of State to place the people's veto question on the ballot, finding that he had lost his authority to determine the validity of the petitions when he exceeded the 30-day statutory time limit.



What's Happening at Home?

Bath, ME - At its February 3 meeting, the **Bath** City Council voted 5 to 4 to approve a \$300,000 bond ordinance to construct an artificial turf field at McMann Field. Opponents of the ordinance gathered 1,111 signatures on a repeal petition and submitted them to the City Clerk on February 23.

If the Clerk certifies the validity of at least 755 of those signatures, then the City Council has the choice to repeal the ordinance. Otherwise, a referendum will appear on the June 8 ballot.

The Attorney General's Office is investigating alleged election irregularities in **Bowdoinham**. In a February 2 special election, Dan Billings defeated Doug Tourtelotte by 22 votes for a vacated seat on the Board of Selectmen. However, there are allegations that an absentee ballot was improperly shown by one individual to another and that town officials engaged in campaigning from the Town Office.

In **Brunswick**, the School Board is facing a \$2.4 million loss in state aid to education. There will also be a sharp decrease in federal Impact Aid for students from military families and lower tuition payments due to the lower number of Durham students who will attend Brunswick High School.

The **Georgetown** School Board anticipates a \$117,000 loss in state aid to education, in part due to its failure to participate in school consolidation. It is currently negotiating

with SAD 49 in Boothbay to form an Alternative Operating Structure to avoid such penalties.

The **Harpwell** Town Meeting will take place on Saturday, March 20, at the Harpswell Islands School on Route 24. Polls will be open from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. The business portion of the meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m.

There are two contested elections. Alison Hawkes is challenging incumbent Jim Henderson for a seat on the Board of Selectmen. Incumbent Dorothy Carrier is facing a contest with Linda Hall for a seat on the SAD 75 Board of Directors. In addition, there is a referendum question that asks the Town to appropriate \$120,000 for resident use of Curtis Memorial Library.

The **RSU 1** communities of Arrowsic, Bath, Phippsburg, West Bath and Woolwich are expecting a \$368,000 loss in state aid to education. Superintendent William Shuttleworth announced that the cut was lower than he had anticipated.

Teachers in the School Unit have been working without a contract since September 1. Union leaders claim that negotiations have stalled over working conditions such as preparation time, school hours and sick time. However, Board Chair Charles Durfee has now proposed a wage freeze for all employees through the 2011-12 school year.

RSU 5, which consists of the communities of Durham, Freeport and Pownal, will receive

an additional \$297,000 in state aid to education in the coming year. However, the increase is due solely to debt service payments on the new Durham Elementary School that will open in September.

On January 26, voters in the **RSU 12** communities of Alna, Chelsea, Palermo, Somerville, Westport Island, Whitefield, Windsor and Wiscasset rejected a proposed \$26.1 school budget - the fourth since June - by a margin of 448 to 400. The first proposed budget was \$27.7 million. Until a school budget is actually adopted by the voters, the RSU will operate under the \$26.1 million budget approved by voters at a January 16 "town meeting."

On February 25, the **SAD 75** Board of Directors heard public comments about the District's proposal to close the West Harpswell School and to send all elementary school students to the Harpswell Islands School beginning in September 2010. At a referendum on March 9, Harpswell residents voted 906 to 827 to keep the school open. Under the school consolidation law, Harpswell will now be solely responsible for paying the extra \$219,000 in operating costs to keep the school open.

The SAD 75 communities of Bowdoin, Bowdoinham, Harpswell and Topsham anticipate a \$1.5 million loss in state aid to education. Superintendent Michael Wilhelm says that the District will look at every department in search of cuts.

LWVBA Mourns Loss of Long-Term Member

Brunswick, ME - Anne A. Springer, 91, of Brunswick, died on Monday, February 1, 2010. A memorial service was held on Monday, February 8, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

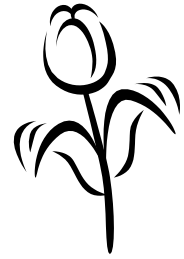
Anne was born on September 29, 1918, in Oakland, CA, the daughter of the Rev. Alexander Allen and Anna Louise Wood. Her father was rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Oakland. Her grandfather and great-grandfather were rectors of St. Thomas Church in Millbrook, Ontario. She graduated from Palo Alto High School and the University of California at Berkeley.

During World War II, Anne worked at the 4th Air Force Headquarters in San Francisco as secretary to the commanding general. She later married Lawrence Springer, a professor of classics. While living in Geneva, NY, she was secretary at Trinity Episcopal Church and First Presbyterian Church. She also volunteered for the local hospital and Planned Parenthood and was active in community theater.

After moving to Brunswick, Anne worked as a secretary for Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. When she decided to retire, at age 80, she continued to enjoy a range of volun-

teer activities with the local hospital, library and League of Women Voters. She was also a mentor to junior high school students and volunteered with Home to Home, a program that helped children of divorced parents. She loved to cook and garden, was an avid reader, and had a lifelong interest in politics and current events. She was also a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Brunswick.

Anne is survived by four children and six grandchildren. Her son Allen and his wife Anne reside in Brunswick with their children, Sophie and Jake.



Introduction to the Work of the LWVUS Arms Control Task Force

Washington, DC - On December 5, 2009, the bilateral Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, one of the cornerstone treaties intended to reduce and control the use of nuclear weapons, expired. The Treaty between the United States and Russia took effect in 1994 after being negotiated for much of the 1980s.

The world order has changed considerably since the Treaty was negotiated. In this changed world, there are more nuclear nations, and acts of terrorism have raised fears that nuclear bombs and other weapons of mass destruction will fall into the hands of non-state actors. Concerns about weapons proliferation,

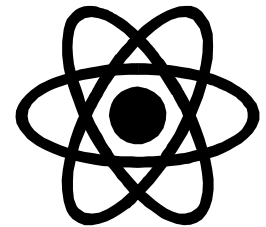
mishandling of fissile materials and the wide distribution of conventional arms have raised concerns about global security.

In response, the Obama administration has adopted the view put forward by the bipartisan quartet of George Schultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger and Sam Nunn, and has made a commitment to pursuing a world free of nuclear weapons. The Administration's first steps include submitting the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty to the Senate for ratification this winter, as a precursor to playing a strong leadership role in the Non-Proliferation Treaty discussions in May of 2010.

With this backdrop, the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) decided it was appropriate to form a task force to review its 1983 Position on Arms Control for "relevance, usefulness, and practical application." Despite all that has happened in the last 26 years, the Task Force finds the principles and language of the Position to be broadly applicable today. However, it anticipates suggesting some revisions once its deliberations are complete.

The LWVUS Arms Control Task Force is comprised of six at-large members, Ellen Z. Berg (Seattle, WA), Ralph Kuiper (Los Altos, CA), Ann

(Continued on page 4)





League of Women Voters of Brunswick
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Please deliver to:

*The League of Women Voters is where
hands-on work to safeguard democracy
leads to civic improvement.*

LWVME and LWVUS are now on Facebook!

Nuclear Test Ban Program on April 5

Potential Update to LWVUS Arms Control Position

(Continued from page 3)

Lakhdhir (Westport, CT), Lois Requist (Benicia, CA), W. Michael Slattery (Maribel, WI) and Donald J. Turner (Norcross, GA), and it is advised by three LWVUS Board Members, Stephanie Johnson (Arkansas), Judy Duffy (Minnesota) and Elisabeth MacNamara (Georgia).

The Task Force identified and reviewed a number of issues and has written information papers that can help the members and the Board to arrive at potential updates to the Position. The articles are posted on the LWVUS Web site,

lww.org.

The questions that the Task Force asked were about the appropriate U.S. leadership role in multilateral agreements; compliance issues; state development of nuclear weapons outside of international law; non-state actors or terrorist organizations; international collaboration; verification; missile defense systems; accountability for nuclear, chemical and biological weapons; and the economic and social consequences of the proliferation of conventional weapons.

Ultimately, the Task Force feels that the time is ripe for

the United States and the world to be free of nuclear weapons and move forward with safeguards against their proliferation. In addition, the Task Force hopes that the information it has developed can help individual members be better informed citizens on this important subject and be well prepared to contribute to the public discourse that is certain to become more intense over the coming months.

League members Ellen Z. Berg (Seattle, WA) and Ralph Kuiper (Los Altos, CA) are members of the LWVUS Arms Control Task Force.

