

Hingham Voter

Serving the Towns of Hingham, Hull, Cohasset and Norwell

April 2007

HLWV Steering Committee

2006—2007

President: Cindy Coe**Secretary:** Judy Parsons**Treasurer:** Marisa Costello**Membership Recruiter:**

Christine Dietterich

Publicity: Jerry Elsdon**Web Site:** Lynn Cotter**Newsletter:** Julie Strehle**Advisors:** Helga Jorgensen, Cathy Salisbury

President's Letter: What a Terrific Two Years This Has Been!

The Hingham League of Women Voters is coming to the end of another eventful year, and I am coming to the end of my two year term as President of HLWV. It has been an exciting time! HLWV has seen explosive growth, especially over the past year, which has included energetic and creative women who want an active role. I think it's terrific, and I'm proud of all that the Board and member volunteers have been able to accomplish.

Our most recent activities include our annual **Candidates Night** forum, held on April 11. Please see page 2 of this newsletter for an article about the candidates. I thank Cathy Salisbury and Ann Marie Schembri for their superb coordination of this event, and also give thanks to Palma Cortese for acting as moderator again this year.

The Green Study Committee continued its efforts educational agenda with an **Organic Lawn Care Workshop**, held on April 15 at the Hingham Public Library. See page 3 for tips on how to care for your lawn organically. I thank Sandy Cole for securing landscaper Dave MacDonald for the event. Dave is quite knowledgeable on the subject, and his company's information can be found on the outside page of this newsletter.

Our final event of the year will be our **Annual Meeting** on Wednesday, May 30, at the South Shore Country Club. Please fill out the enclosed Call to Annual Meeting to sign up for



Landscaper Dave MacDonald (center) spoke at the Organic Lawn Care Workshop. Green Study Committee member Sandy Cole (left) helped to organize the event, and Kate Boland (right) is the new Chair of the Green Study Committee.

Upcoming Events

Steering Committee Meeting

Tuesday, May 8
7:30 p.m.
Dina O'Neil's
house
Call 749-8450

Annual Meeting

Wednesday
May 30
6:30 p.m.
South Shore
Country Club

the event today! Friends who are interested in HLWV are invited to attend as well. Our speaker will be Bruce Rabuffo, Chairman of the Hingham Development and Industrial Commission (HDIC), who will speak to us on the topic of the upcoming Greenbush train (what to expect, how will our daily lives be impacted), as well as issues concerning Downtown Hingham and the Harbor. Please bring your checkbook and pay dues for the new year of HLWV.

Looking ahead to next year, we have a dynamic group making up our Board. Julie Strehle will be President, and there will be two Vice Presidents: Debbie Courteau will head up Voter Education, and Melanie Quackenbush will oversee studies and advocacy, such as the Green Study Committee, a new group

which will be studying Municipal Finance for a state league study, and Observer Corps. Marisa Costello will continue to serve as Treasurer and Chair of Observer Corps, and Christine Dietterich is Membership Recruiter again. New member Victoria Milano will serve as Recording Secretary, and Jerry Elsdon will continue in Publicity. Lynn Cotter will expand her Web Site role to include writing this Newsletter. Dina O'Neil will be Events Coordinator. Kate Boland will chair the Green Study Committee. And finally, I will act as an advisor to the Board, and will also run a new project, the reinstatement of the Know Your Town publication, which will also include resource information for new families moving to Hingham.

I look forward to seeing everybody at Annual Meeting! - Cindy

Candidates Night 2007

HLWV held its annual Candidates Night forum on Wednesday, April 11, at Hingham Town Hall. Thanks to member Palma Cortese, who moderated the event again this year, and to Catherine Salisbury and Ann Marie Schembri, who coordinated the event.

The evening started off with statements provided by candidates running uncontested for an office. Tom O'Donnell is running again as **Town Moderator**, a one year position which he has held since 1967! He outlined his responsibilities, which include running Town Meeting each year, and also appointment townspeople to serve the town on various committees.

Jean Montgomery is running for **Treasurer/Collector**, a job which includes the receipt, deposit, investment and disbursement of the town's money. She has been a town employee in Hingham for 18 1/2 years, including Assistant Treasurer for four years.

Caryl Falvey is one three candidates who are running for three open seats on **School Committee**. She grew up in Hingham, has an MBA degree, has children in the 4th, 6th and 8th grades, is the current PTO President of the Hingham Middle School, and has been Treasurer and President of the PTO in Simsbury, CT.

Laura Burns is running uncontested for the **Board of Selectmen**. She has lived in Hingham for the past twenty years, and spent the past six years on the Advisory Committee. She is concerned about the issue of rising property taxes in Hingham, and wants to also concentrate on affordable housing and alternative energy.

Kirk Shilts, the current Chair of the **Board of Health**, is running unopposed for re-election,

and looks forward to continuing his work on the Board.

The Candidates Forum then changed gears to include statements and then questions and answers from candidates for the two contested offices: **Planning Board (5 Years)** and **Recreation Commission (5 Years)**. **John "Jack" Gamache** is running for Planning Board after spending three years on the Country Club Management Committee. He has also been on a subcommittee to explore the feasibility of placing a windmill in Hingham. His main concerns are traffic in Hingham, specifically as they relate to the proposed Shipyard and the coming Greenbush commuter train. He would also like to change zoning bylaws in Hingham to promote "green development" of buildings.

Gary Tondorf-Dick is also running for Planning Board. He is currently serving on the Planning Board, appointed in January, 2007, to fill a vacant seat. He has also served two terms on the Historic Districts Commission and been Chair of the Historical Commission. He wants the Planning Board to continue its efforts to work with the Shipyard developers to "get it right" for the town of Hingham. He also supports the creation of an Affordable Housing Trust, which would propel local initiatives and solutions for affordable housing so the town won't be burdened by Chapter 40B applications. He also wants the Planning Board to continue its work with other town committees, such as the Community Preservation Committee and the Open Space Acquisition Committee to balance the preservation of and protection of the town's charac-



Candidates Night organizers, from left to right: Catherine Salisbury, Palma Cortese (Moderator) and Ann Marie Schembri

ter with the town's building needs.

During a question and answer session, when asked what kind of zoning by-law change the candidate would like to make, Gamache expressed his interest in making a "green" mandate for new buildings. Tondorf-Dick would like to expand the proposed changes to the so-called "Hatfield Amendment" zoning by-law on non-conforming residential buildings, so that in the case of extensions of house size on non-confirming lots, the building commissioner can also use percentage of lot covered parameters, so that both the applicant and abutters are both equally protected. (Gamache is not in favor of the proposed zoning by-law change to the Hatfield Amendment, which will be taken up at Town Meeting on April 23.)

Both Planning Board candidates are in favor of building a cinema at the Shipyard.

When asked if either candidate would support a zoning by-law change to set a floor space-to-area ratio on the size of structure on lots, Gamache replied that he thinks that current setbacks are adequate. Tondorf-Dick supports percentage-to-lot-coverage parameters to give the building commissioner bet-

ter tools to review building projects appropriately.

For the **Recreation Commission** race, candidate **Budd Thorne** began with a statement. He has been President of the Hingham-Hull Babe Ruth baseball league for the past twenty-five years, and also worked as a police officer in Scituate. He wants to "put the fun back into Rec", keep kids busy with activities, and promote harmony on the Board.

Bob Whitney has lived in Hingham for the past sixteen years, served previously on the Town of Mansfield Finance Committee, and the Hingham Advisory Committee and Municipal Light Board. He also recently brought the Girls Golf program to Hingham High School. He wants to stress collaboration on the Board and provide healthy opportunities for people in Hingham.

During their question and answer session, when asked what qualitative measures would the candidate take to measure whether Recreation programs are successful, Whitney replied that the program has to be self-funded (revenues should cover costs), and he would survey participants and address any issues. Thorne would seek input from the Board and town citizens. (Cont'd on page 4.)



Dave MacDonald takes questions from twenty interested gardeners at the Organic Lawn Care Workshop on April 15.

Organic Lawn Care Workshop

The Organic Lawn Care Workshop was held on Sunday, April 15, at the Hingham Public Library. Landscaper Dave MacDonald was the guest speaker to a group of twenty attendees. Dave has been accredited for the past four years with the Northeast Organic Farming Association (www.nofa.org), and his landscaping business, Summit Landscape, is based in Marshfield. He started the workshop with a ten minute film, which provided an overview of key elements of organic lawn care, which include determining soil health, weed control, fertilizing, watering and clipping. Then the audience asked many questions, which helped round out the following "report" on organic lawn care:

The first step is to do a soil test of your yard. Based on the results of the soil test, you can apply organic

"amendments" to treat the lawn. Take 2 – 3 inch deep core samples from twelve different locations on your property and dump them into one plastic bag, mixing the soil together. For a cost of \$13, U. Mass Amherst will analyze the soil. You can get the details from the website www.umassgreeninfo.org. Request the percentage of organic matter in the sample (it should be at least 3.5% or more). The health of the soil is the most important aspect of keeping a healthy lawn. Based on the soil sample, you can apply lime if necessary to keep the lawn's pH around 6.5. If you need more organic matter, you should also fertilize your lawn with compost, as it is the best source of minerals, nutrients and beneficial organisms. Compost can be applied at any time, but spring and late summer applications are preferred.

For control of crab grass, you can apply corn gluten, a

pre-emergent. Contrary to popular belief, pre-emergents don't destroy weeds and their seeds, they simply stop them from growing. The big tip to remember is that pre-emergents only work if they are applied to your lawn before the weed's growth period. But if applied too early, weather will dilute the herbicide and the weed will grow unencumbered. A good tip to remember is to apply the corn gluten in spring just before the forsythia bushes bloom. Any later, the corn gluten feeds the growth of weeds! Corn gluten can also be reapplied in the fall. Corn gluten also adds an 11% nitrogen charge to the lawn.

The quantity and frequency of watering a lawn is also important in organic lawn care. Avoid frequent, shallow watering that encourages Japanese beetle grub infestation, fungus and root rot. Water the lawn in the early morning to prevent the spread of fungal diseases on plant leaves. Use a rain gauge, as the lawn needs only 1-2 inches per week. A single, deep watering sends the water deep down to the soil, which will promote healthy soil.

The mowing of a lawn can also be critical. By cutting your lawn to a height of 3 to 3 ½ inches high, the taller blade of grass shades the soil from the sun so weeds won't germinate in the sun. More blade surface is important for photosynthesis and drought tol-

erance. Also, be sure to keep your lawn mower blades sharp; if not, the rough blades can cut and damage the blades of grass, opening your lawn to infection by lawn disease.

Finally, aerating and overseeding a lawn a couple of times a year can also help grow a thick healthy lawn. For example, because of the constant use of athletic fields, the compaction that results can hurt turf grass. An athletic field can be maintained organically by using natural fertilizer such as a compost topper, and over-seeding and aerating several times a season. It was discussed how Connecticut has a law banning the use of pesticides on its athletic fields. (Maybe it would be a good idea for HLWV's Green Committee to investigate Hingham's athletic fields and how they are maintained?)

In closing, Dave MacDonald stressed that it takes time and commitment to change your lawn over to organic. It could take up to three to five years to totally change over to organic from a chemically treated lawn. The best time of year to "renovate" or start a new lawn is the fall, but it's never too late to start taking steps to eliminate the use of synthetic chemicals on your lawn. It helps to protect the environment, as well as children, yourself and pets!

Candidates Night 2007 (continued from page 2)

(Continued from page 2) When asked what vision he has for the Recreation Commission, Thorne would like more athletic fields available; Whitney would have Recreation make health and fitness a priority, provide an educational resource to the community, and offer the top rated program on the South Shore by the year 2015. Both candidates agreed that the field space and their conditions are existing programs that need to be improved.

When asked what talents he would bring to the Recreation Commission, Thorne

replied that he could help facilitate harmony on the board. Whitney cited his experience as a member of the Advisory Committee, where he had to listen to many competing interests, and would apply that experience to listening to parents and other town boards.

Another question addressed the public sector experience of the candidates. Bob Whitney has marketing and organizational experience to improve events, such as the 4th of July Road Race. Thorne has been

President of the Hingham-Hull Babe Ruth organization for twenty-five years.

HLWV thanks the candidates who presented their views for this forum. Candidates Night was taped for rebroadcast on Comcast Channel 10, so look out for it on Saturday, April 21 and Sunday, April 22, at 12 p.m., 5 p.m., and 8 p.m. Don't forget to vote on Saturday, April 28!

Local Government Update ... What Are They Up To Now?

By: Debbie Courteau

As a follow-up to his State of the State All-Member meeting with the HLWV in February, Representative Garrett Bradley has clarified his legislative priorities for the 185th Session of the General Court. Some priorities of interest are:

Renewable Energy: Many of our cars can run on 85% ethanol and 15% gas. The number will increase once more "Flex Fuel Vehicles" are built. Also, ethanol can now be produced from biodegradable material, as well as corn. However, obtaining this fuel is not easily achieved since the closest commercial ethanol pump is in New Jersey. Therefore, Rep. Bradley has filed legislation to establish reimbursements and tax credits to gas stations that install ethanol pumps in an effort to stop our reliance on foreign oil.

Mercury Free Vaccines: Rep. Bradley has re-filed legislation to remove all mercury based preservatives, such as Thimerosal, from vaccines given to children under three and pregnant woman. Mercury based preservatives have been removed from some, but not all, childhood vaccines. Ironically, the CDC is now recommending the flu shot for pregnant woman and infants. The flu shot is the main shot that still contains Thimerosal. However, mindful of the reports of a pandemic in the future, the Commissioner of Public Health, in an emergency, can suspend the law for up to two years. Several states, including New York and California, have already passed similar laws. If we do not follow them, the majority of preservative free vaccines will go to the states that have implemented these regulations.

Seat Belts on School Buses: Rep. Bradley received an email from Michaela Brickley, a fourth grade student at South School in Hingham who asked why school buses, of all vehicles, do not require seat belts. After researching the issue, he found that one major issue is cost. As a father of three, Rep. Bradley finds this unacceptable and he looks forward to moving a bill forward with Michaela and her class's input.

Local Projects: Rep. Bradley will continue to focus on the redevelopment of the Hingham Shipyard, the replacement of West Corner Culvert, the second phase of the sea wall replacement and beach replenishment in Hull, the implementation of the Greenbush Commuter Line, the development of the Weymouth Naval Air Station and the usage of the new runway at Logan Airport.

Veterans: In the last session, Rep. Bradley authored a bill that was incorporated into the omnibus Veterans Welcome Home Bill that provides a check off on our tax form. This check-off allows money to be put into a military family relief fund for members of our armed forces. Rep. Bradley asks that you keep this in mind as you do your taxes.

*Information obtained from Rep. Garrett Bradley's Office.
If you have further questions or comments, Rep. Bradley can be
reached at his office at 617-722-2396 or at Rep.GarrettBradley@hou.state.ma.us.*

HLWV Membership Form

May 2007 – May 2008

Hingham League of Women Voters

Send to:
Marisa Costello
43 Woodlock Road
Hingham, MA 02043

Name _____

2nd Member _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email* _____

We need your email address so we can alert you from time to time about a League meeting or let you know when a new Voter newsletter is on our website

Individual	\$50.
Household	\$75. (\$50, first member; \$25 second)
Full time student	\$25.
CONTRIBUTION	\$ _____
PAYMENT ENCLOSED	\$ _____

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization encouraging the informed and active participation of citizens in government. It influences public policy through education and advocacy. We never support or oppose any political party or candidate. We are delighted to get help from our Members. Below is a list of activities in need of your help. Please check or circle any items with which you can assist:

___ **Voter Education**

- * Help run Candidates Night
- * Register voters
- * Pass out "I Voted Today" stickers at the polls

___ **Advocacy**

- *Municipal Finance Study
- * Green Study Committee
- * Report on Town Boards with Observer Corps

___ **Social Event Planning**

- * Plan All-Member meetings, including Annual Meeting



Hingham's Town Election will be held on Saturday, April 28. Look out for HLWV volunteers who will be handing out these "I Voted Today!" stickers to voters as they exit the polling stations. Thanks to volunteers Kathleen Nugent, Lynn Cotter, Cindy Coe, Victoria Milano, Cathy Salisbury and Lynn Barclay. We have a couple of time slots left, so if you'd like to join in the effort to thank the voters and get the word out for people to vote, please call Julie Strehle at 749-6956.

**HINGHAM LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS**

231 Leavitt Street
Hingham, MA 02043

*Democracy: The more you use it,
the better it gets!*

Available for Consultations.
If you would like to receive additional information, please check the appropriate boxes below and mail to: Summit Landscape, 250 Arlington Street, Marshfield, MA 02050

- Organic Land Care Program
- Maintenance Program:
- Pruning/Mulch/Weeding/etc.
- Tree/Shrub Care
- Arborist Services
- Organic Plant Health Care
- Kitchen Gardens (vegetable/ herb)
- Lawn Renovation/Care
- Compost Tea
- Compost/ Mulch Application
- Compost/ Mulch Delivery
- Design/ Installation
- Consulting
- Storm Water Management

Organic Spray Programs:

- Caterpillar Control
- Compost Tea Applications
- Tick & Mosquito Control
- Poison Ivy Control



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Organic Land Care

DAVE MACDONALD
Accredited Organic
Land Care Professional

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