

Form Name:
Submission Time:

Citizens Commission
March 29, 2019 9:03 pm

Name	Mary Donald
Address	<div></div> <div></div>
Phone	<div></div>
Email	<div></div>
Citizenship Affirmation	I am a U.S. Citizen
Residency Affirmation	I am a resident of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Statement of Intent	I intend to comply with and advance the policy established by this Act.
Statement of Interest	I am incensed that "big money" can buy elections. Corporations are not people.
Résumé or Summary of Qualifications Upload	https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.formstack.com/uploads/3282862/71887710/489873425/71887710_2017-march-lwv-aa-bulletin_1.pdf
Political Party Affiliation, if any, over the previous five years	Unenrolled
City or Town where you reside	ACTON
Employment Status	Unemployed

League of Women Voters — Acton Area

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

March 2017 Bulletin



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March Calendar

Wednesday Mar 1 7:30 pm	Steering Committee, home of Suzanne Shanahan
Tuesday Mar 7 10 am	First Tuesday, Bagels Plus
Tuesday Mar 7 7:30 pm	Meet ABRSD Superintendent Dr. Glenn Brand, home of Sahana Purohit
Saturday Mar 11 1:00 pm	Annual Civics Bee, Acton Town Hall Room 204
Wednesday Mar 15, 7:00 pm	Acton Candidates' Forum, Acton Town Hall
Wednesday Mar 15, 7:30 pm	Acton Water District Annual Meeting, Acton Memorial Library
Sunday Mar. 19	March Bulletin Articles Due
Wednesday Mar 22, 7:30 pm	Acton Warrant Meeting, Acton Town Hall Room 204
To be Rescheduled	Book Group Acton Memorial Library
Tuesday Mar 28	Acton Town Elections

April Calendar

Monday April 3 7:00 pm	Acton Town Meeting ABRHS Auditorium
Tuesday April 4 10:00 am	First Tuesday, Bagels Plus
TBD	Local Program Planning
Tuesday April 25 7:00 pm	Book Group, Acton Memorial Library
Friday & Saturday April 28- 29	LWVMA Convention, Sheraton Framingham



Acton Annual Town Meeting 2017

Ann Chang, Government Team Chair

It's that time again: Annual Town Meeting preparation. Annual Town Meeting is the time that we set the budgets and deal with known capital items. At this time, the warrant is not yet set, meaning some articles may be removed and some changed.

There are two articles of special interest, both dealing with a company named Insulet Corporation. Full disclosure: I'm a member of the Economic Development Committee which is in total agreement with this proposal.

Insulet is asking for the Town to give them a TIF (Tax Incentive Financing) agreement and to change the zoning of 100 Nagog Park from Office Park to Manufacturing. Insulet manufactures a small device that provides diabetics with their needed dose of insulin in a manner that does not require pumps or needles. For diabetics, this device is a breakthrough in their treatment.

The zoning change is for a building that has not been occupied for approximately 15 years. Insulet plans to build an addition to 100 Nagog Park for their manufacturing needs as well as move their administration from Billerica to Acton. The manufacturing process is a "closed" sterile environment that does not use water or expel fumes. There is waste that is, by law, picked up by a private firm and disposed of at facilities that deal with medical waste.

Insulet expects to employ around 1,000 people at the Acton facility. In addition to those that come with them from Billerica there will be new hires as Insulet intends to close their manufacturing unit in China. This consolidation will allow Insulet to have their administration and manufacturing at the same location.

In a TIF a town "forgives" the property tax on a building for a set period of time. In this case Insulet will pay no property tax on the new construction for the first five years, though they will pay property tax on the unimproved 100 Nagog Park building. After the initial period the property tax paid on the new building will increase over a period of years from 25% to 50% to 75% to 100% of the assessment. Meanwhile Insulet will continue to pay the property taxes on the existing structure.

The business owners in the Nagog Park Mall have been contacted and are in favor of such revitalization to the area.

I am working on a Warrant Meeting, open to the public, where these and other warrant articles can be discussed. The Warrant Meeting will be at Acton Town Hall Room 204 on Wednesday March 22 at 7:30.

Voter Service

John Sonner, Voter Service Chair

The Acton town elections are on March 28th. Our chapter plans a Candidates' Forum at 7:00 on Wednesday, March 15th at Acton Town Hall, Room 204.

There are 3 contested races:

- School Committee (3 Positions Available): Amy Krishnamurthy, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, and Angie Tso
- Library Trustee (1 Position Available): Harvey Berliner, Thomas Lemire, and Tori Orr
- Board of Selectmen (2 Positions Available): Peter Berry, Frances Osman, and Joan Gardner

There are 4 uncontested races:

- Moderator: Peter Ashton
- Housing Authority : Nancy Kolb
- Water District Commissioner: Stephen Stuntz
- Water District Clerk: William Stanford

ActonTV will broadcast the forum on Comcast channel 99 and Verizon channel 41, and it will be available on demand after the event at:

<http://actontv.org/on-demand/government>.

Book Group

Diane Schaumburg, Book Group Chair

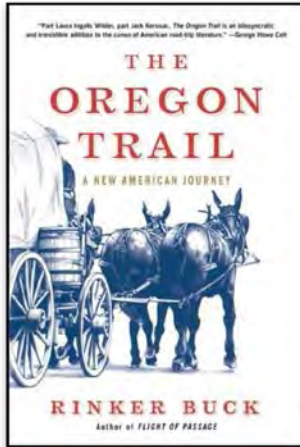
Due to a scheduling conflict with the Warrant Meeting, the March book group meeting is being rescheduled. Those on the book group email list will receive an announcement with a new date, time, and location soon. The announcement will also be on our website. If you have any questions, please contact Diane Schaumburg at:



When we meet, we will discuss Rinker Buck's book, *The Oregon Trail: A New American*

Journey. You do not need to read the book to join the discussion. In fact some people come to the discussion to see if they want to read the book.

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“Enchanting...A book filled with so much love...Long before Oregon, Rinker Buck has convinced us that the best way to see America is from the seat of a covered wagon.” —*The Wall Street Journal*

“Amazing...A real nonfiction thriller.” —Ian Frazier, *The New York Review of Books*

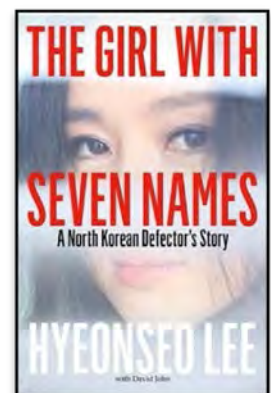
“Absorbing...Winning...The many layers in *The Oregon Trail* are linked by Mr. Buck’s voice, which is alert and unpretentious in a manner that put me in mind of Bill Bryson’s comic tone in *A Walk in the Woods*.” —Dwight Garner, *The New York Times*

"A major bestseller that has been hailed as a “quintessential American story” (*Christian Science Monitor*), Rinker Buck’s *The Oregon Trail* is an epic account of traveling the 2,000-mile length of the Oregon Trail the old-fashioned way—in a covered wagon with a team of mules—that has captivated readers, critics, and booksellers from coast to coast. Simultaneously a majestic journey across the West, a significant work of history, and a moving personal saga, Buck’s chronicle is a “laugh-out-loud masterpiece” (*Willamette Week*) that “so ensnares the emotions it becomes a tear-jerker at its close” (*Star Tribune*, Minneapolis) and “will leave you daydreaming and hungry to see this land” (*The Boston Globe*)."

In April (Tuesday the 25 at 7 pm at the Acton Public Library) we will be reading *The Girl with Seven Names: A North Korean Defector's Story* by Hyeonseo Lee.

"An extraordinary insight into life under one of the world’s most ruthless and secretive dictatorships – and the story of one woman’s terrifying struggle to avoid capture/repatriation and guide her family to freedom.

As a child growing up in North Korea, Hyeonseo Lee was one of millions trapped by a secretive and brutal totalitarian regime. Her



home on the border with China gave her some exposure to the world beyond the confines of the Hermit Kingdom and, as the famine of the 1990s struck, she began to wonder, question and to realize that she had been brainwashed her entire life. Given the repression, poverty and starvation she witnessed surely her country could not be, as she had been told “the best on the planet”?” (Amazon.com)

CALLING ALL BOOKS

It is that time again. Please send me the titles and the authors of books you would like to suggest for our next reading cycle. The books need to be non-fiction. My e-mail address is dianeschaumburg6@gmail.com

March Social Policy Report

Bonnie Lobel and Marge Kennedy, Social Policy Team Co-Chairs

Groups providing social services in the Acton-Boxborough area are increasing their effectiveness by meeting monthly to share their plans, avoid duplication of services, and reach beyond their membership to publicize their activities.

The R.I.T.E Project Collaborators, originally brought together with a “Resident Isolation To Engagement” grant from CHNA 15, met on January 24th and decided to continue their activities after the grant ends as “Healthy Acton”. This new name, which reflects the sponsorship of the Acton Health Department, is actually a misnomer because group members represent a wide range of Acton and Boxborough services such as schools, churches, health providers, and emergency services. A website, <http://www.healthyacton.org/>, will feature community resources and list upcoming activities.

- A new community group, called Acton-Boxborough Cares, is being formed to focus on Behavioral Health issues, including suicide prevention, that effect all ages. The idea first emerged during a meeting of the ABUW grantees. Danny’s Place and A-B Schools District representative Dawn Bently [REDACTED] will be looking for cooperation from community groups.
- We would like to point out that LWV-AA has submitted “Behavioral Health Concerns” to the State League as an Action Priority for Program Planning in 2017-2019. Specifically, we have recommended the League look into measures that provide for training of police and emergency service providers, improve access to care, seek insurance parity, and explore the overlap between mental health issues and criminal justice reform.
- A “Beating the Winter Blues Workshop” on January 30th featured an Eliot Center therapist who specializes in treating older adults. She said 20 to 30 minutes outside

each day, or at least sitting in a sunny window, might help boost serotonin levels, and maintaining a regular schedule of social engagements (at least a phone call every day) could improve one's mood. She urged people to include one meaningful activity every day, such as helping a friend in need.

- A two-part Fall Prevention Workshop is scheduled for February 28th and March 7th, from 10:30 am to noon in Town Hall. The workshop will look into why falls occur, how to prevent them, and suggest ways to reduce risk in your home. Simple chair exercises to increase balance will be taught, and their effectiveness measured in the second class after a week's practice. Signup with Sheryl Ball of the Acton Health Dept.: [REDACTED]

There was a Safety Net meeting on January 26th, led by Acton Community Services coordinator Laura Ducharme. A diverse group of representatives of churches, government agencies, and non-profit service providers from the Acton-Boxborough area shared their concerns and activities.

- The speaker was Sally Mendoza of the Neighbor Brigade, a group of community volunteers who provide temporary assistance to people who are in crisis due to a health concern, accident, high-risk pregnancy or birth, injury or death in the family. Most of the help focusses on day-to-day needs such as delivering meals, simple housekeeping chores, and walking the dog. One current case involves a mother who broke her foot and couldn't get her children to their bus stop; volunteers have stepped in to transport the children twice a day.
- After a volunteer applies and is accepted (a CORI check is required), they can visit www.neighborbrigade.org and sign up to provide the help. Individuals seeking services can also use the site. Though the organization has 27 chapters in Massachusetts, the Acton-Boxborough group was just organized last September and is looking for members.

Please let us know of events and issues we should include in our next Report.

First Tuesdays

March 7 and April 4

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.



Take Action on Behavioral Health Legislation

Lori Krinsky, February 2017

Many read the Boston Globe Spotlight series The Desperate and the Dead about the behavioral health system in Massachusetts. While sensational, it did bring attention to a network that needs shoring up.

“Behavioral health” is the nationally accepted term covering mental illnesses and substance use disorder. “Substance Use Disorder” includes substance addiction.

At last year’s national LWV convention, a position on behavioral health was adopted by concurrence. Specifics on the position are available at this link:

<http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/notice-intent-lwvus-board-propose-concurrence-behavioral-health>.

The League’s positions on basic health care and criminal justice reform also tie in to efforts in this area.

Every League now has a place to stand to spearhead local change to help those living with mental health and substance abuse concerns.

Other organizations track legislation that affects behavioral health. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is a national grass roots organization that serves to educate, support, and advocate on behalf of individuals and families living with mental health concerns. NAMI Massachusetts offers a priority list of issues and bills that will help bridge the gaps in our state’s behavioral health system. Below is a cut and paste excerpt from the NAMI Massachusetts executive summary of legislative priorities for 2017-2018. The full text is available at <http://namimass.org/contact/advocacy>. Once on the advocacy page, to view the specific bills being recommended, select the “Actions” tab. There you will note that Senator James Eldridge is the sponsor of one of the bills.

Please consider lending your personal support to these efforts by visiting, phoning, or writing an email or letter to your State Rep or State Senator asking them to support the following bills. Contact is important even when the legislator already supports a bill. Contact information can be found at: <http://www.malegislature.gov/>.

DMH Funding: NAMI Mass’ #1 priority has always been and continues to be advocating increased funding to the Department of Mental Health (DMH) budget. NAMI Mass is encouraged that the trend over the past several years has been first to restore devastating cuts and then, more recently, modest increases in critical funding for DMH services.

A Comprehensive, Sustainable Police and First Responder Mental Health Training Program: Throughout the Commonwealth, people with mental illness and substance use disorders are arrested and incarcerated at disproportionate rates, leading to devastating consequences for individuals, families, and communities. Proven strategies can reverse this trend by focusing on the initial point of contact with law enforcement, diverting people who pose no safety risk to appropriate treatment instead of arrest. These strategies consist of two main components: quality mental health training for police officers and collaborations across disciplines. Pockets of excellence and innovation around the state have successfully diverted people with mental illness from jails and prisons and have increased access to services. Many more are eager to move in this direction as well.

Bridgewater State Hospital: For decades, the Commonwealth has asked its state prisons to take responsibility for people who have human services issue like mental illness and substance use disorders. In virtually every other state in the country, these same individuals would be cared for by the state mental health and public health systems. People who have not been convicted of a crime and all those who meet the very strict criteria for civil commitment must be the sole responsibility of our state mental health and public health systems, not kept at Bridgewater State “Hospital” as is the current practice in Massachusetts.

Expand Emergency Service Provider Coverage (ESP’s): An ESP is a community-based and recovery-oriented service. It provides behavioral health crisis assessment, intervention, and stabilization services for people with psychiatric illness. ESP teams have trained psychiatric clinicians that are “mobile” and will travel to the location of the crisis— home, school or community locations. Currently, individuals on MassHealth are covered by ESP services but many people with private health insurance do not have access to these essential and oftentimes life-saving services.

Reimbursement Rates for MassHealth for Hospitals: NAMI Mass supports a significant and sustainable increase to MassHealth’s budget so hospitals can afford to provide inpatient psychiatric services within their communities, and so out-patient mental health clinics can remain open and operating. It is unfair and inhumane to force families to wait for days before they can find an inpatient bed for a loved one who is suffering. It is unacceptable that mental health clinics are closing and reducing their patient load when the need is so great. Behavioral health needs cannot be met when MassHealth reimbursement rates are so inadequate. NAMI Mass calls for a comprehensive remedy to this problem in the FY2019 budget by increasing funding to ensure adequate access to critical hospital and outpatient services throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.



**Saturday, March 11th 2017, 1:00
p.m.**

Acton Town Hall, Faulkner Room

6th Annual Civics Bee Get into the BUZZ!

Test the Sharpness of your Civics

It's that time of the year again! Adults and students in our community are buzzing about the Annual Civics Bee coming up on March 11th! You don't want to miss the opportunity to participate this year with our students, your friends and neighbors!



The League of Women Voters encourages civic engagement in all aspects of our government, and we're offering residents in our communities a chance to come together for a fun afternoon of friendly competition to help you engage in government – how much do you remember from your social studies and civics classes? It's also a great way for members to get to know the students from our community.

Each adult will be paired with a team of three students from the Acton-Boxborough High School team, picked randomly. This event is open to all residents of our community. All are guaranteed to have a great time and learn some things about our founding documents and our history. We also hope that students and adults will have a chance to meet and learn more about each other.

We are again fortunate to partner with ABRHS Social Studies Department in this venture. We are looking forward to another successful and fun Civics Bee. Hope you will be able to join us for the event.

If you are interested in participating, don't wait! Just send an email with your name and a contact number to Sahana Purohit [REDACTED]

Entry is free. Prizes will be offered to all who compete and the top three teams will receive gift certificates.

If you are interested in helping out with the event, or for other questions, please contact Sahana Purohit [REDACTED]

or

Mary Ann Ashton [REDACTED]



LWVMA- Student Video Contest Kicks off February 1st, 2017

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts (LWVMA) invites all Massachusetts high school students to enter our fourth annual Student Video Contest.

The annual student video contest is designed to foster civic awareness among young people and provide them with an opportunity to share their opinions and viewpoints on matters of public importance.

The theme for this year's contest is ***Making Democracy Work in My Community.***

We want to know what people are doing to nurture democracy at the local level—whether that means fighting injustice, organizing action, fostering dialogue, encouraging civic participation, or educating about important issues.

We invite Massachusetts high school students to create and submit **two-minute videos** that show how someone (an individual or group) is making democracy work where they live.

The contest kicks off on February 1, 2017 and runs through March 31, 2017. The first-place award is \$500; second-place, \$250; and third-place, \$100. All winners will be invited to attend an award ceremony at the Massachusetts State House, and winning videos will be publicized throughout the state.

Entries may be submitted online from February 1 through March 31, 2015.

HOW TO FIND OUT 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>

Schedule of Annual Town Meetings and Elections

Town	Annual Town Meeting	Annual Town Election
Acton	April 3	March 28
Boxborough	May 8	May 16
Littleton	May 1	May 6
Maynard	May 15	May 2
Stow	May 1	May 9



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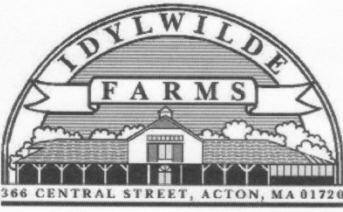
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www.lwv-aa.org

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For additional contacts, see our website:

www.lwv-aa.org



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League of Women Voters — Acton area

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BULLETIN

Volume 56, Issue 6
March 2017

Eight issues: September, October, November/December,
January, February, March, April and May/June

Mary Ann Ashton,
Spokesperson



Ruth Kohls, Editor

