



*Citizens for
Lexington
Conservation*

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April, 2000
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Have You Renewed Your Membership?

Citizens for Lexington Conservation is a non-profit organization that relies on dues paid by members to cover its expenses. Look at your mailing label to check your membership status. If it says "Dues paid 2000," you are up to date. If it says "Dues paid 1999" (or earlier), then it is time to renew your membership for 2000. If it says "Complimentary Copy," you are receiving a complimentary copy of our newsletter because you are a Town Meeting Member or other public official in Lexington. We hope that those who receive complimentary copies will find our organization of value and will become dues-paying members. To join CLC or renew your membership, please send \$7.00 for a regular membership or \$10.00 for a sustaining membership to CLC, P.O. Box 292, Lexington, MA 02420-0003.

CLC PUBLICATIONS ORDER FORM

These publications may be ordered from CLC. Please allow two weeks for delivery.

They are also available free on our web site,
<http://www.lexingtonma.org/clc/HomePage.htm>

Publication Number	Title	Pick-up price	Mailing price	No. copies	Total cost
LG-1	Birds of Dunback Meadow	0.80	1.20		
LG-2	Ferns of Whipple Hill	0.80	1.20		
LG-3	Introduction to Hayden Woods	0.20	0.60		
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P-9	Geological History of Lexington	1.10	1.95		
P-10	Checklist of Birds of the Great Meadows, Lexington	0.20	0.60		
P-11	Guide to the Great Meadows: A Walking Tour.	1.00	1.70		
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Add \$7.00 yearly dues if you wish to join CLC and receive our newsletter _____

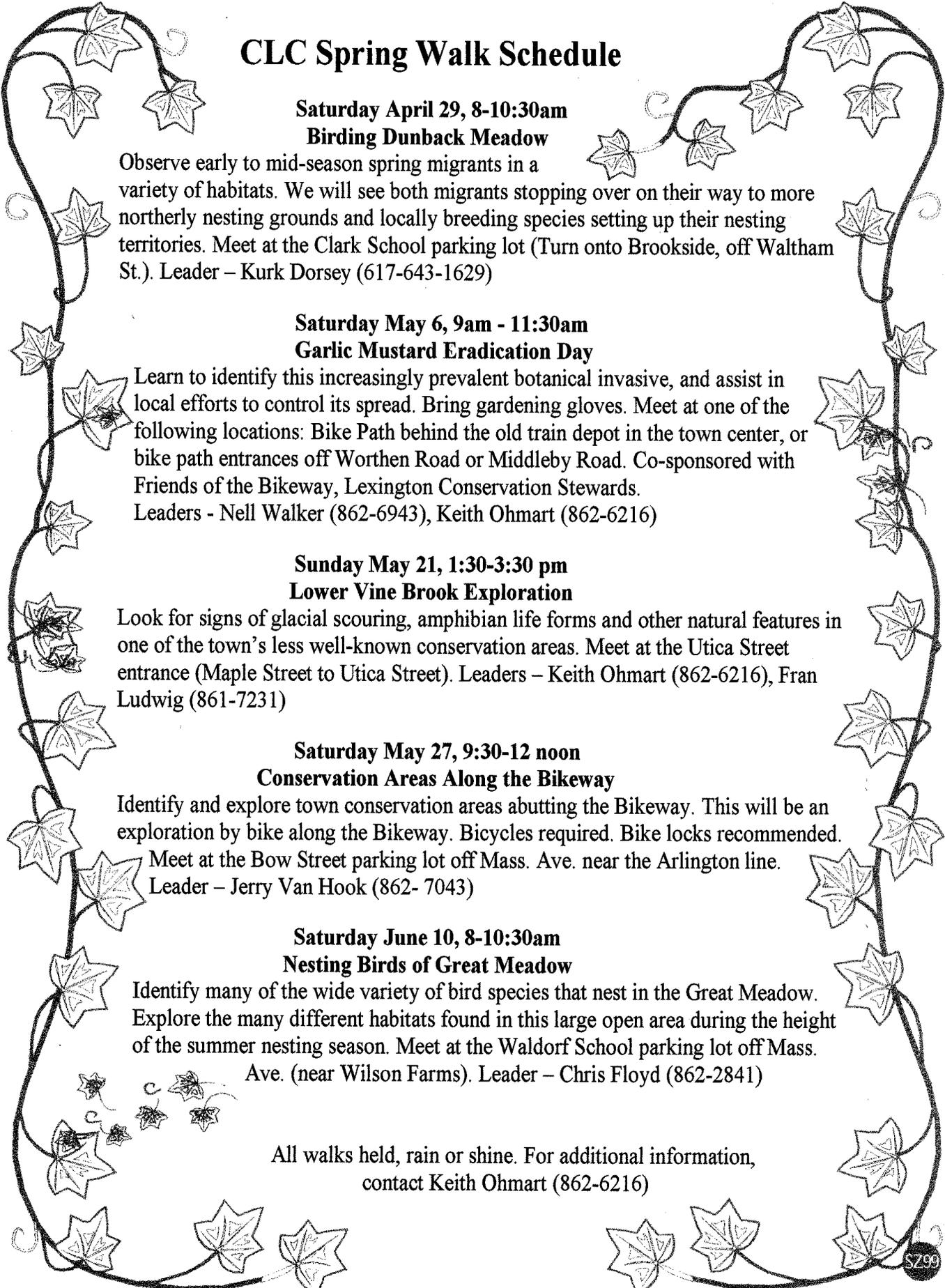
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The cost of mailing is high. If you wish to pick up your order and pay the lower price, call Rosemary Green at 862-5971



CLC Spring Walk Schedule

Saturday April 29, 8-10:30am

Birding Dunback Meadow

Observe early to mid-season spring migrants in a variety of habitats. We will see both migrants stopping over on their way to more northerly nesting grounds and locally breeding species setting up their nesting territories. Meet at the Clark School parking lot (Turn onto Brookside, off Waltham St.). Leader – Kurk Dorsey (617-643-1629)

Saturday May 6, 9am - 11:30am

Garlic Mustard Eradication Day

Learn to identify this increasingly prevalent botanical invasive, and assist in local efforts to control its spread. Bring gardening gloves. Meet at one of the following locations: Bike Path behind the old train depot in the town center, or bike path entrances off Worthen Road or Middleby Road. Co-sponsored with Friends of the Bikeway, Lexington Conservation Stewards.

Leaders - Nell Walker (862-6943), Keith Ohmart (862-6216)

Sunday May 21, 1:30-3:30 pm

Lower Vine Brook Exploration

Look for signs of glacial scouring, amphibian life forms and other natural features in one of the town's less well-known conservation areas. Meet at the Utica Street entrance (Maple Street to Utica Street). Leaders – Keith Ohmart (862-6216), Fran Ludwig (861-7231)

Saturday May 27, 9:30-12 noon

Conservation Areas Along the Bikeway

Identify and explore town conservation areas abutting the Bikeway. This will be an exploration by bike along the Bikeway. Bicycles required. Bike locks recommended.

Meet at the Bow Street parking lot off Mass. Ave. near the Arlington line.

Leader – Jerry Van Hook (862- 7043)

Saturday June 10, 8-10:30am

Nesting Birds of Great Meadow

Identify many of the wide variety of bird species that nest in the Great Meadow. Explore the many different habitats found in this large open area during the height of the summer nesting season. Meet at the Waldorf School parking lot off Mass.

Ave. (near Wilson Farms). Leader – Chris Floyd (862-2841)

All walks held, rain or shine. For additional information, contact Keith Ohmart (862-6216)

Hazardous Household Product Collections for 2000

The Minuteman Hazardous Household Products Facility on Hartwell Avenue has announced the year 2000 dates for collection of household hazardous products: April 29, May 20, June 24, July 29, August 26, September 30, October 28, and November 18. The operation of this facility depends on the help of volunteers, shared by each of the member towns. Lexington's first turn is on April 29. If you would like to help out (and gain a closer look at the interesting operation of this collection) call Beverly Anderson at 862-0500 ext. 237, or Marge Daggett at 862-1651.

Below are some general instructions on what products you may bring. More specific details are at the Board of Health Internet site: <http://patriot.ci.lexington.ma.us/OCD/Health/HazWaste.htm>

- **Cleaning Products:** Bathroom cleaners, drain openers, oven cleaners, metal or furniture polish, spot removers
- **Automotive Products:** Motor oil and oil filters, brake or transmission fluids, antifreeze, solvents, auto batteries, polishes and wax
- **Pesticides:** Weed killers, fungicides and herbicides, insecticides and pest strips, fertilizers with weed killer, wood preservatives, rat poisons
- **Paint and Paint Products:** Paint and paint thinners, paint removers, stains and varnishes, aerosol cans (Put empties in with the regular trash.), epoxies and adhesives
- **Other Products:** Batteries, fluorescent lights, thermostats, driveway sealer, pool chemicals, hobby or photography chemicals, waste fuels (e.g. gasoline), propane tanks (up to 22 lbs.)
- **Do Not Bring:** Ammunition, fireworks, explosives, asbestos, commercial hazardous waste, empty aerosol cans, fire extinguishers, gas cylinders (other than propane), infectious or biological wastes, medicines or syringes, PCBs, radioactive materials, smoke detectors, tires. To learn more about the disposal of these materials see the Web site: <http://patriot.ci.lexington.ma.us/OCD/Health/HazWaste.htm>, or call Beverly Anderson at the Town of Lexington Health Department, 781-862-0500 Ext. 237.

Congratulations, Lexington

The Fiscal Year 1999 Commonwealth of Massachusetts "Buy Recycled Award" for BEST MUNICIPAL PROGRAM was presented to the Town of Lexington on October 29, 1999. It is gratifying that Lexington's town policy of buying recycled has been recognized.

Spring Stewardship Meeting

There will be a Spring Stewardship Meeting on May 25 in Room G-15 of the Town Office Building at 7:30 p.m. The guest speaker is Frances Clark who will speak on the environmental study she recently did for the Great Meadow (Lexington). She is also an expert on invasive plants and will address this issue. At this meeting there will also be an effort to organize a joint Lexington/Arlington Stewardship program for the Great Meadow. Currently there is no formal program.



A Biography of Lincoln Park

by Nell Walker

Twelve years ago Lincoln Park was a scruffy five acre expanse of three athletic fields and a parking lot doubling as a dump for snow collected from the town center. In big snow years the salt/ sand laden iceberg remained until mid-May. Sixty years ago the site was the official town dump, or landfill, as it came to be called in the passing decades. It remained thus until 1964. Almost three hundred years ago the marshy wetland fed by the north branch of the Vine Brook was set aside as ministerial lands for the first clergyman. Today it is a 60 acre park which encourages the greatest variety of outdoor activities of any open space in Lexington. Human use ranges from quiet nature study along the boardwalks of the Lee Fitness/Nature Trail to athletic games on the five fields paralleling Lincoln Street. This article is a brief synopsis of the dramatic metamorphoses that led to the site's present park status.

The land use history of Lincoln Park and the water needs of the town are linked. After the first settlers arrived, lands, about 600 acres to the south and east of Lincoln Street, were given to the minister to provide him with a source of farming income. At the time of the Revolution, Lincoln Street was the main farm road connecting Lexington to Lincoln. In 1881 the Lexington Water Co., a private firm, started a series of projects to increase the water supply to the growing town. The Old Res and the Vine Brook's north branch were a key to this scheme, and the town agreed to fund the project. The pumping station remnants can still be found in a hidden corner of the park. The new water supply was soon inadequate, and the town joined the fledgling regional system (then the MDC, now called the MWRA) built around 1902 to import water from Wachusett Reservoir. The huge Quabbin Reservoir was built decades later. So what happened to the ministerial lands and the Vine Brook?

The next phase is a sad story of what was planned and what became reality. In 1930, the lands set aside as a park in 1905 gave way to use as a unofficial dump. The following years saw the rapid expansion of open dumps as suburbia grew. By 1955, the land along Lincoln Street had gained 30 feet in elevation. Where once the Vine Brook wandered it was soon entombed in a 4 ft. diameter culvert, cutting a beeline on the edge of back yards of the new houses going up on Baskin Road. The new residential development around Lincoln Street caused the town to move the dump, again into a wetland (Tophet Swamp) at Hartwell Avenue in 1964. At the time of closure, regulations for capping dumps were rudimentary. In the 1960's the Mystic River was dredged and it seemed that this silt-laden muck was a free and readily available material for capping, a method by which surface water is prevented from entering the refuse pile and exiting as leachate. This cost-cutting idea would leave a legacy of horticultural and other problems. In 1968 the Town paid the princely sum of \$20,000 to the Olmsted Bros. firm in Brookline for a recreation plan. This was the first attempt to reinstate the land, now highly degraded, as a park. The ambitious plan was not implemented because of the expense and the physical restrictions of the site. At this time the old landfill was being used for disposal of asphalt and rock from the construction of Route 2. This further complicated the underground profile of the nascent park. (To be continued in the next newsletter. Part II: The Role of the Lincoln Park Committee)

Help CLC Save Paper and Postage

If you would like to receive your CLC newsletter as a PDF file attached to an email, ask Kate Fricker at kfricker@tiac.net. All formatting and graphics will be identical to the snail mail version, and you will receive yours before anyone else. In addition to avoiding paper waste, CLC will save about one dollar per issue for each person who elects to receive the email version.

Yard Waste Pickup

Yard waste curbside pick up will be on the weeks of April 10, April 24 and May 15 on the regular trash day. Of course it is much more environmentally sound to compost your own yard wastes on your own property. (Why send away all those nutrients and that nice soil conditioner?)

Web Sites

There is a wealth of interesting and informative environment and conservation-related material available on the Web.

- <http://people.ne.mediaone.net/marjrines/MarjLinks.htm> - (Marj Rines, of Arlington, has links to interesting bird Web sites and some of her own photos of local birds)
- http://www.listbot.com/cgi-bin/subscriber?Act=view_archive&list_id=Arlingtonbirds (Information on birds seen in Arlington)
- <http://www.lexingtonma.org/swat/HomePage.htm> (Check out Let's Talk Trash articles.)
SWAT Website (Lexington's Solid Waste Action Team)
- <http://www.lexingtonma.org/clc/HomePage.htm>
CLC Website (Citizens for Lexington Conservation)
- <http://ortho.mit.edu/nsdi/draw-ortho.cgi?image=225910> - link to satellite photo of the center of Lexington. Maps # 229906 and 225906 also contain part of Lexington. Courtesy of MIT and Mass. GIS. Click on Imagery overview to see how to get to other views of eastern Mass.
- <http://www.capecod.net/~bnikula/masslist.htm> - Dragonflies and damselflies of Massachusetts. Hundreds of beautiful photographs.
- <http://www.state.ma.us/dep/recycle/crt/crthome.htm> - The DEP official information on recycling television sets and computer monitors. At this site you can also download a file of questions and answers about CRTs.
- <http://invasives.fws.gov> - Information on invasive species
- <http://lichen.com> - Information and lovely photos of lichens
- <http://www.concordma.com/natural.htm> - Information about the natural history of Concord.
- <http://www.lexingtonma.org/swat/TrashTalk.htm> - Let's Talk Trash, articles by Laura Dickerson



Contact Us

Use our web site comment page to send in interesting conservation-related happenings or unusual birds or other wildlife that we can use in our web site and our newsletter: <http://www.lexingtonma.org/clc/Comment.htm>, or contact Eileen at ebe@alphatech.com, or Kate at kfricker@alum.swarthmore.edu.

Recycling TVs and Computer Monitors

As of April 1, 2000, cathode ray tubes (television screens, computer monitors and video games) are no longer accepted at Massachusetts incinerators or landfills. The new regulations were necessary because of the amount of lead and mercury that is released into the environment when these tubes are crushed in landfills or burned in incinerators.

The DEP is promoting the recycling of electronics by providing subsidies for the infrastructure to either repair them and resell them or recycle the copper, gold and lead in them. More information is available at www.state.ma.us/dep/recycle/crt/crthome.htm, or by calling 617-338-2255.

In Lexington, workable computers and television sets may be donated to Goodwill Industries at the attended trailer next to Walgreen's. They report that 70% of the units they collect are re-sold, i.e., recycled. The DPW has a grant from the state to help with the disposal of the broken and useless units, but it only goes through June, 2000. To keep in touch with the latest developments in recycling and hazardous waste, check these three sites:

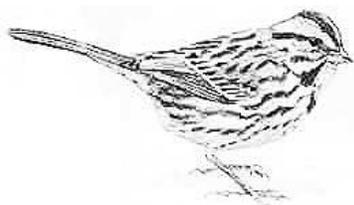
<http://www.state.ma.us/dep/recycle/CRT/> (Massachusetts information on recycling CRTs)

<http://patriot.ci.lexington.ma.us/DPW/Documents/recycle.PDF> (Lexington recycling info.)

<http://patriot.ci.lexington.ma.us/OCD/Health/HazWaste.htm> (Lexington Haz.Waste Information)

Massachusetts' Clean Elections Law Survives Attack

By John Andrews



In 1998 Massachusetts voters approved a Clean Elections campaign financing law that took aim at the influence of special interests and big money donors in Massachusetts politics. The vote was 2 to 1 in favor of the change. With that vote Massachusetts joined Maine in leading the national move toward campaign finance reform.

But the 1998 vote was not the end of the story. Not surprisingly, many incumbent legislators immediately began scheming to undermine the system the voters had forced upon them. The most serious attack came in a secret amendment that was attached to the state budget. After negotiating the state budget behind closed doors for months, Senate President Birmingham and Speaker Finneran released the 1999 budget two days before it was to be voted upon. Included in this budget was a clear attack upon the Clean Elections law. The change would have made it possible for candidates to run on private money until six months before an election, then apply to the Clean Elections system for public money. In effect, it would have made it impossible for any candidate to run a viable campaign without raising and spending large sums of private money prior to the six-month clean money period. Dirty money would continue to rule. In a clear violation of accepted protocols, Birmingham and Finneran did not consult with the sponsors of the ballot initiative (Mass Voters for Clean Elections) before making this major change to the law.

The antidemocratic tactics of Beacon Hill (secret texts, last minute release, and boss-rule on the floor) got the amendment passed without serious debate. Then the citizens who had voted for Clean Elections stood up and the real battle began. Activists all over the state began to call and write their legislators asking why the will of the people was being undermined. A rally was held

on the steps of the capitol. A civil rights style sit-in was held at Governor Cellucci's office. As the spotlight focused on the pols, the battle got ugly. Governor Cellucci claimed that Senate President Birmingham tried to pressure him into supporting the changes by threatening to hold up a gubernatorial pay raise. Birmingham denied the charges and Cellucci called for him to take a lie detector test. Newspaper editorials criticized the tactics. Faithful democrats expressed their dismay at what their party's leaders were doing. The scheme crumbled. Cellucci vetoed the changes to the law. Faced with having to actually cast a recorded vote against reform, the legislature backed down. The Clean Elections law survived with \$10M funding.

This is a history that no one wanted to see repeated in 2000. Although they remain hostile to the new law, the legislative leadership is more reluctant to attack it directly. More and more legislators are accepting the fact that voters will not accept continuation of the old money-driven system. This year, Governor Cellucci included \$10M for funding Clean Elections in his budget. The House and Senate appear poised to approve this level of funding. There does not appear to be quite the same willingness to undermine the law with amendments.

In March, a delegation of Lexington citizens visited Beacon Hill to talk to Senator Susan Fargo and Representative Jay Kaufman about the new law. The delegation included John Andrews, District Coordinator for Mass Voters for Clean Elections, Judy Uhrig, Co-President of the Lexington League of Women Voters, Rachel Rosenblum, Chair of the Democratic Town Committee, and David Nuss, Common Cause coordinator for Lexington. In their discussions, Senator Fargo and Representative Kaufman both expressed their support for the new law. Representative Kaufman has been one of the legislative leaders on the side of campaign finance reform, and is being counted on to help ward off any weakening amendments that might be introduced in the House.

The Clean Elections system is scheduled to begin with the elections of 2002. It will allow candidates to spend more time listening to the voters and less time "dialing for dollars". That's a change that Massachusetts's voters eagerly await.

National Environmental Scorecard Released

By John Andrews



The National Environmental Scorecard for the first session of the 106th Congress has just been released by the League of Conservation Voters. This scorecard records how Congress voted on key environmental protection issues such as pollution control, mining waste disposal, oil drilling on public lands, fuel efficiency standards, and renewable energy. Seventh District

Representative Ed Markey scored 100%, Senator Edward Kennedy scored 89% and Senator John Kerry scored 100%. The Massachusetts average was 96% pro-environment, a score that was topped only by Vermont (with 100%).

The difference between the two major parties was striking. In the House, Democrats averaged 78% and Republicans 16%. In the Senate, Democrats averaged 76% and Republicans 13%. Even more striking were the averages for the Republican leadership. Republican Senate leaders (Lott, Nickles, Mack, and Coverdell) averaged ZERO (They did not cast a single vote for the environment). House Republican leaders (Hastert, Arme, DeLay, and Watts) averaged 4% pro-environment.



Team Effort Addresses Solid Waste

By John Andrews



Lexington's Solid Waste Action Team (SWAT) was formed in early 1998 to enlist citizen support in strengthening the town's recycling and composting programs. It is also responsible for making recommendations to the Board of Selectmen on how the town's waste management programs can be improved.

In February, the SWAT asked the Lexington Board of Selectmen to endorse a petition being circulated by the Mass. Coalition to Reduce Waste. The petition was occasioned by the fact that the State of Massachusetts is now in the process of revising the state solid waste master plan. The petition asked that state officials include three points in the new plan:

1. Aggressive waste reduction with the goal of reducing waste generation by 20% or more in Massachusetts by the year 2010 to reduce or eliminate the need for more landfills or incinerators and to reduce local solid waste management costs;
2. Increased state funding for local recycling programs, with the goal of increasing the overall state recycling rate to more than 50%; and
3. A commitment to pursue Extended Producer Responsibility programs that will require manufacturers to take financial responsibility for the collection of used products to take this unfunded mandate off the cities and towns.

On February 28, the Board of Selectmen endorsed this petition. To date, over 30 other Massachusetts communities have also signed it.

Note: The SWAT has created a site on the World Wide Web that contains information on recycling, waste prevention, and waste management. The address for this site is <http://www.lexingtonma.org/swat/HomePage.htm>. For more information on recycling and waste reduction, watch for the biweekly "Let's Talk Trash" column in the Lexington Minuteman.



Summer Conservation Crew

Marilyn Nordby, Conservation Office, 1625 Massachusetts Avenue, Lexington, MA 02420 is accepting applications for the Summer Conservation Crew, to work 35 hours per week from early to mid June through August. The start and end dates can be flexible to accommodate college schedules. Applications are available at the Conservation Office. Call Marilyn Nordby or Linda Gaudet, 781-862-0500 x226 or 227 with questions or for an application.

Thank You

CLC thanks our generous friends who led the CLC Fall Walks, Bart DeWolfe, Dennis Busa, Nell Walker and Chris Floyd.

Pat Doherty: Memorial Tribute

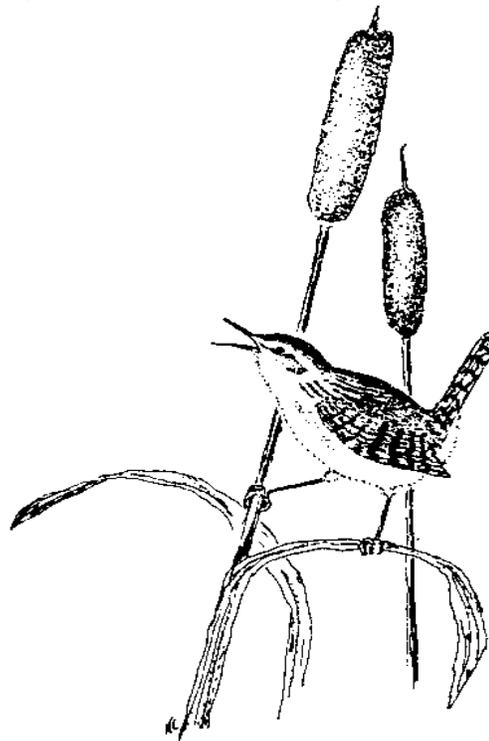
By Eileen Entin

CLC is saddened by the death of Pat Doherty, a longstanding, active member of the organization. Pat served on the CLC executive board for many years. She was secretary in charge of membership until 1990 when she became president of CLC. She served as president until 1994, and then resumed her role as membership chair until 1999. She also served as CLC's liaison to the Garden Club. Over the years she was a gracious host for many CLC Board meetings, fortifying us with her home baked goodies.

During the years when CLC ran the town recycling center, Pat was among the CLC volunteers who monitored the site, welcomed people who came with recyclables, rummaged through the bins to remove non-recyclables from them, and repaired vandalism damage. More recently, she spearheaded a stream cleaning initiative that CLC started in 1997, and participated in several stream-cleaning events. For a number of years, Pat picked up the batteries with mercury that Theatre Camera collected, and stored them at her house until it was time to bring them to the annual hazardous waste collection. She always came to CLC meetings with amusing stories to tell us about her efforts.

Pat loved the outdoors. She shared the joys she experienced in her extensive travel experiences, and on the local scene was an eager participant in many CLC walks. She was a strong believer in conservation of resources, recycling, and reuse, and she carried her beliefs through in her actions. She was careful to minimize the use of extra packaging materials, always on the alert for bulk or 'bring your own' packaging alternatives, used public transportation whenever possible, and never made unnecessary car trips. She always reported opportunities for conservation of resources that she came upon.

CLC will sorely miss Pat's ideas, her enthusiasm, and her energy. The Board is exploring a gift to the Town in her memory that will serve as a permanent tribute to her contributions.



Discovery Day

Discovery Day will be on May 20 this year, and CLC will again have a table near the exit from Depot Square. Come visit, and enter our contest. The prize will be a book, *Reclaiming the Commons; Community Farms and Forests in a New England Town* by Brian Donahue. Brian is a resident of Weston and Assistant Professor at Brandeis. The book talks about efforts in Weston to preserve open space as productive land. It's an interesting account of their efforts at preservation and the challenges and benefits of maintaining productive farm and forest land in a suburban setting. Brian is an environmental historian whose research interest is in land use in Colonial times.