

# Brookline PAX Newsletter

June, 2017

Volume XXVIII, No. 1 Co-chairs & editors: Marty Rosenthal & Neil Gordon [www.brooklinepax.org](http://www.brooklinepax.org)

## Brookline PAX Annual Meeting & Awards

Tuesday, June 27, 6:00-8:00 P.M.

Brookline American Legion/VFW Post  
386 Washington Street, Brookline MA

Admission: A voluntary donation to the Brookline Emergency Food Pantry (nonperishable food or personal care items)

Speaker: M. Elena Letona, Neighbor to Neighbor Massachusetts  
"Why Is Lady Liberty Lamenting and What Can We Do?"

Annual Awards (see website for past recipients)

- Jack Backman Social Justice Award: **Bobbie Knable**
- Ethel Halperin Lifetime Achievement Award: **Robert Sperber**
- Ethel & Ben Alper Progressive Activism Award: **Steve Cirillo, Alan Balsam, Bruce Genest**

## Brookline PAX Board

Co-chairs: Martin Rosenthal and Neil Gordon, Treasurer: Gary Jones

Catherine Anderson  
John Bassett  
Craig Bolon  
Edith Brickman  
Nelson Brill  
John Businger  
Abram Chipman  
Susan Chipman  
Susan Cohen  
Susan Ellis  
Raul Fernandez\*

Andrew Fischer  
Phyllis Giller  
Jane Gilman  
Rachel Goodman  
John Harris  
Paul Harris  
Regina Healy  
Nancy Heller  
Chobee Hoy  
Gilbert Hoy

Julia Johnson  
David Klafter  
Bobbie Knable  
Virginia LaPlante  
Mark Levy  
Harry Margolis\*  
Rebecca Mautner\*  
Rita McNally  
Puja Mehta  
Bob Miller\*

Tony Naro\*  
Frank Smizik  
Diana Spiegel  
Stanley Spiegel  
Naomi Sweitzer\*  
Dwain Tyndal  
Judith Vanderkay\*  
Kea van der Ziel  
Tommy Vitolo\*  
Donald Weitzman  
Sarah Wunsch

\*Recently elected

**Join Brookline PAX or renew your membership today!**

Send this coupon with a check payable to Brookline PAX to:

Brookline PAX, P.O. Box 470525, Brookline MA 02447-0525

- Regular: single \$30, family \$50  Student or fixed income: single \$20, family \$30  
 Sustaining Member \$50  Patron \$100  
 I'd like to get more involved in PAX activities. (Please e-mail [neil@nrgordon.com](mailto:neil@nrgordon.com).)

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Co-chair's Column: Dedicated to Frank Farlow

**By Marty Rosenthal**—Who'd imagine that moving the above apostrophe to before the "s" could mean so much? For fifteen years it was after it, and this column was by the two of us. He being such a saint, we never argued about content, just picayune stuff like the Oxford comma; and we always deferred to whoever felt stronger – I to him on nixing said commas, he to some of my celebrity aphorisms. Now, shocking to all, he's (physically) gone.

What keeps coming to mind as I struggle to summarize PAX' 54th year, is the morbid joke, "Other than that, Mrs. Lincoln, how was the play?" To so many, Frank's death so overwhelmed the rest of the year that it's hard to focus on the latter. Frank is sorely missed by me, PAX, Brookline, MA, USA, humanity, and especially (his) Marty & their family. And, he still inspires us, and always will.

So, trying to shift from the sublime to the mundane – politics and government – I attempt to highlight some of 2016's events: Our Annual Meeting at the M. L. King Room at Brookline High was a great success, with keynote speaker Harris Gruman, Mass. Political Director of SEIU, speaking on the Fair Share Tax. We presented the Backman Award to GBIO, the Halperin Award to Evelyn Roll, and the Alper Award to Werner Lohe.

In the 2016 Town election, we continued our successes, both town wide and increasing the number of PAX-endorsed Town Meeting Members. For School Committee, our Board, after considerable discussion, took the unusual – maybe unprecedented, and definitely controversial -- step of not endorsing anyone in an uncontested race, due to frustration for numerous reasons with the School Committee's perceived lack of leadership. And, we again were very successful at the Spring Town Meeting, with almost all our warrant article recommendations followed, including three excellent resolutions. We were successful again in November's Town Meeting, which included a long-awaited clean-up of the Diversity Commission and related by-laws.

Due to Frank's passing, we rearranged our winter schedule, especially our January Annual Meeting – now on June 27th. We also scrambled to fill our huge vacuum. Board member Neil Gordon stepped forward and coordinated the most urgent tasks with my & Board help. Most pressing was our endorsement process, exacerbated by the welcome slew of new Town Meeting Member candidates – inspired to involvement in local government by our so-called president. We updated our notoriously probing candidate questionnaire, got it to over 100 candidates; and Neil, with great help from Board members, collected the returned questionnaires – from the vast majority of candidates, then facilitated the Board's (always thoughtful, sometimes difficult) endorsement decisions.

And, we had even better success than the recent (also successful) years. Our town wide office-holders are collectively more progressive than any in the last three decades; and

Town Meeting Members are near-overwhelmingly PAX-endorsed, including inroads in what have been historically weaker PAX precincts. For School Committee, we continued to challenge the incumbent School Committee's lack of leadership, endorsing, as part of the new Alliance for Brookline Schools, the two non-incumbent candidates, Suzanne Feder-spiel & Paul Harris. Suzanne topped the ticket; Paul lost by just 3 votes to the 2nd incumbent. We congratulate the winners, and hope the School Committee will get our repeated message and become more responsive to the community.

Also exciting, we have many new Town Meeting Members, inspired in part by events in D.C. As we wrote to all the Town Meeting Members as to the Town Meeting warrant article urging Trump impeachment, which PAX supported and I spoke for, "all the welcome new anti-Trump energy ... must be morphed into long-run progressive, grass-roots infrastructure and coalition-building, including attention to what we are FOR, and HOW to struggle for it." As Harry Belafonte recently cautioned to civil rights activists, "we have a struggle but not a movement." Similarly, we added quite a few new Board members; though not a requirement, all are Town Meeting Members, some newly elected.

Both of the foregoing "new-blood" points return us to Frank. We e all must live up to his indefatigable -- and immortal -- spirit & model. Brookline's late, great Sumner Kaplan, a past PAX Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, quoted the Talmud: "You are not to complete the task, nor are you free to desist from it." Please join PAX.

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## Co-chair's Column: Marty Needed a Partner

**By Neil Gordon**—When I first ran for Brookline Town Meeting, eight years ago, progressive Precinct 1 Town Meeting Members urged me to seek a PAX endorsement. As a relative newcomer to Brookline, and certainly to its politics, I asked why, and was easily convinced that my brand of progressive politics was "good enough for government work." Questionnaire completed and PAX endorsed, I won a Precinct 1 Town Meeting seat, in a contested race, by 20 votes.

I was a diligent enough Town Meeting Member, I suppose, and, PAX-endorsed, retained my seat in two subsequent competitive elections. It wasn't until three years ago, though, that my local political involvement was turned up several notches. Ben Franco, whom I got to know as a Precinct 1 Town Meeting Member, was running for Selectman, and he asked me to join his campaign team. Involvement stepped up again as I worked with Bernard Greene's campaign for Selectman, and, at the same time, the pro-override "Vote Yes for Brookline" campaign. I was meeting Selectmen, School Committee members, and others active in Town government. The Moderator appointed me to the Advisory Committee – which PAX has long felt – and said -- was short on liberals.

About a year and a half ago, Marty Rosenthal asked if I'd be

interested in joining the PAX Board. “It’s light lifting, unless you volunteer to do more” Marty said. He told me it was more important to come to the candidate endorsement meeting and warrant article recommendation meetings, just three (more important) meetings a year. I accepted.

I remained active in Brookline politics, busy with Advisory Committee work, veterans’ advocacy, the Selectmen’s and then the Moderator’s leaf blower committees. I was also active as an amateur environmental educator (or as I tell the 5th graders on board, “Remember, I’m not a teacher pretending to be a sailor.”), volunteering on Pete Seeger’s Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, and joining their board. I was just busy enough.

In January, at the Martin Luther King Day event at the Coolidge Theater, Marty Rosenthal and I chatted briefly. Frank Farlow had passed away just weeks before, Marty was reeling from the loss, and so was PAX. Marty asked if I would consider filling just part of the vacuum, at least on an interim basis.

It was mid-January, cold to some, but the very beginning of Brookline’s political season, a season that’s very hot & mission-critical to PAX. In just weeks, candidates for town wide office, and in every precinct, would be gathering signatures and courting voters. In a tribute to PAX, most would be courting PAX endorsements, too, and, vice versa, PAX recruiting/courting them.

The logistics of the PAX election endorsement process were far beyond what Marty could do alone, also with an active litigation practice and some active legalese committees. “Frank did that,” was the answer to most every PAX-related task, and especially so when it came to Town elections and PAX endorsements. Questionnaires needed to be edited, distributed to candidates, reviewed, processed through the endorsement committee and the board. Post-endorsement and pre-election, an ad for the TAB needed to be designed and placed, a mailing needed to be designed, printed and posted. I said yes, on an “interim” basis, I’d be co-chair of Brookline PAX.

I didn’t tackle the process alone. Marty was there with me; Gary Jones, too, and Diana Spiegel and Mark Levy. Collectively, we worked our way through the most competitive Town election Brookline has seen for decades: competitive races for Selectmen, Library Trustee and School Committee, and competitive Town Meeting Member races in 14 of 16 precincts. And, we pulled off our annual election party, as always at Ed Greer & Judy Lieberman’s.

And how did PAX do in this most competitive Town election? Through our collective efforts, our endorsements, and our efforts to get the word out (including a frequent voter mailing to nearly 6,000 Brookline households), we see a lot of new faces, and a younger and more diverse Town Meeting. Overall, PAX endorsed 71 Town Meeting candidates for 83 Town Meeting seats. Of those, 67 (94%) were successful, including 25 PAX endorsed non-

incumbents. PAX endorsed candidates took more than 80% of the open Town Meeting seats! Even in our three “weaker” precincts, PAX endorsees topped the tickets.

A special shout out to those recently joining the PAX board, and my personal thank you for stepping up. There’s lots of good work to do, and it takes more than just a few hands for us to come close to what Frank did for PAX and for Brookline. With the Town election behind us, and Town Meeting and our voting recommendations behind us, as well, we can celebrate what we’ve accomplished at our Annual Meeting on June 27th. The last six months reaffirmed to me what PAX can do, so I have re-upped, as co-chair, and appreciate the Board’s recent affirmation vote. We’ll take a break for summer, but we’ll surely come back stronger in the fall.

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## Toward Becoming a Sanctuary Town

**By PAX Board Member Tony Naro**—In 2013, there were more than 1 million immigrants in Massachusetts, comprising 14.4% of the population. In 2012, approximately 2.3% of that population, about 150,000 people, were unauthorized immigrants. Among Mass. cities, in 2009, Chelsea had the highest concentration of immigrants, followed, in order, by Malden, Lawrence, Vineyard Haven, Everett, Randolph, Somerville, Lynn, Revere, Boston, Cambridge and Quincy. Brookline’s immigrant population may not be less, , but they are important to our community. In 2009 it was estimated that 23% of Brookline’s population was foreign born.

This January, recognizing the immigrant community’s importance in our Town, the Selectmen charged the Commission for Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations with the task of reviewing the Police Department’s current policies and practices relating to the Town’s compliance with federal immigration programs. The Selectmen further requested a review of our practices, and research into best ones, to deliver findings and recommendations to the Selectmen.

The Commission established a Working Group made up of not only Commission members, but also interested citizens, including a clinical psychologist, a Town Meeting Member, a Town employee, and an immigration attorney. The Working Group’s meetings have enjoyed large audiences, from which two additional members of the group were recruited.

We also enjoyed support from the Chief of Police, Daniel O’Leary. As we drafted various proposals to amend the current procedures of the Department, or create new ones, the Department’s input has been sought prior to presentation to the full Commission. On every occasion, the Department provided timely responses and helpful feedback. Working with the Department enabled the

Working Group to draft credible immigration policies for the Selectmen (Police Commissioners) to consider.

As a result of the Commission's hard work, the Selectmen adopted an expansive set of protective policies, including, a prohibition against local law enforcement inquiring about a person's immigration status, a prohibition against holding any person on an ICE detainer or administrative warrant, and a prohibition against using any Town resources for federal immigration enforcement.

The Commission recently submitted more proposed amendments to the BPD's General Orders, now being considered by the Selectmen in a broader revision of the Department procedures. In coming months, the Working Group will propose procedures for the Department if and when ICE conducts "raids" in the Town, as well as reviewing other policies of the Department. And, we hope for further support from court officials, either from the pending Sreynoon Lund (SJC) case, or (we hope) passage of the "Safe Communities" bill.

It should be noted that this issue did not surface out of nowhere. After the Nov. Presidential election, Pax's co-chairs, Marty Rosenthal (sponsor of successful Town Meeting sanctuary resolutions in 1985 & 2006) and Frank Farlow, a tireless advocate for immigrant rights, brought this issue to the forefront. Frank's lobbying of the Diversity Commission and Selectmen led to the policy changes summarized above, as well as those which will be implemented over time as the Commission, Police Department, and Selectmen continue to collaborate and develop policies aimed at protecting both public safety and the rights of immigrants in our community.

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## Force Multiplier: Awakening the Sleeping Giant

**By Cindy Rowe**—Right after November 8, the calls and e-mails started coming. The refrain was the same: "I have to do something. Tell me what I can do." Then, after that, there were calls saying, "I'm starting an Indivisible group" or "I'm starting an Our Revolution group," and I want your advice. There were calls from people who said, "I just invited 50 people to come to my living room tomorrow night. Will you join us?" Calls came from people involved locally in SwingLeft and Flip-pable, national efforts to win back seats for Democrats. Our local Democratic Town and City committees were overwhelmed by new volunteers. Many of us had volunteered for years, this time for Hillary or for Bernie, but many of us had never worked in a campaign. After weeks of these contacts, and knowing that there were over 25 groups meeting just in Brookline, Newton, and Wellesley, we decided that the organizers of all these efforts should meet. That was the start of "Force Multiplier."

While so many of us were devastated on Election Night,

the shock of this new Administration taking power has also unleashed an underlying thirst for taking action, perhaps dormant in some for many years, perhaps a new sensation for others. The notion that anyone can sit on the sidelines and just let elections and public policy blindly be trusted to other people is now gone. When we went around the room at the first Force Multiplier meeting, asking people to describe their groups and their priorities, we found that our combined membership and social media followers added up to over 10,000 people, spanning many generations, ranging from people in their 20's to their 90's.

Knowing that we are stronger together, the Force Multiplier groups started thinking about ways in which we could reinforce each other's work. Since that first meeting, we have formed a Google group to share our upcoming meetings and projects, joined together to work for out-of-state candidates trying to turn red seats blue across the country, and raised money to support those campaigns. (Few of us could think of a time when we would gather over 60 people to send money to a candidate in Montana, for example.) Many of us have worked on local resolutions to show support for impeachment of this President. We have also received communications from other groups like ours, bringing together people regionally, across the state and country, to work together on advancing our strategies.

Frequently these days, my mind drifts to what is described as a Chinese curse, "May you live in interesting times." In 1966, Robert Kennedy, said that his times were ones "of danger and uncertainty; but they are also the most creative of any time in the history of mankind." While these times seem politically fraught with fear and tension for us in what lies ahead, based on what I have seen, these are also times of great possibilities for the progressive movement, both here and around the country. Now that people have been "woke" and have felt the mantle of responsibility for their country's action, my fervent hope is that there is no turning back, and that we have awakened a sleeping giant of activism in our country.

*Cindy Rowe is Chair, Brookline Democratic Town Committee. For more information about Force Multiplier, and to add yourself to the list for information on any local or out-of-state campaign or fundraising efforts, please contact Cindy Rowe at [Cindy@RoweResources.com](mailto:Cindy@RoweResources.com).*

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## Cuba Solidarity in Brookline

**By Peter Miller**—Since December, 2014, when Presidents Barack Obama and Raúl Castro made simultaneous announcements that the U.S. and Cuba would undertake efforts to normalize relations, Brookline has been a center of supportive educational and political activities, and Brookline PAX has played a major role. That work — focused on the three major issues of ending the Embargo, returning Guantanamo to Cuban

sovereignty, and respecting that sovereignty by ending “regime change” policies and practices — has had regional and even national impact, as well as local influence, and is projected to continue into the future.

The long-standing U.S. embargo on Cuba is the major matter at issue. Universally condemned by the United Nations, 191-0-2 on the last vote last October, when even the U.S. abstained from supporting its own policy — “El Bloqueo,” as it’s called in Cuba, is blockade-like in its restrictions on trade, not just with the U.S. but extended to any foreign company wishing to trade with Cuba, as to do so limits the ability to trade with the U.S. Travel restrictions are still in place; those with U.S. passports cannot travel to Cuba as tourists. An ever-growing majority of those in the U.S. oppose the Embargo, including those in the south Florida Cuban-American community, and large numbers of conservatives and business interests, a state of public opinion that provided a foundation for President Obama’s role in the joint initiative, and accelerating under it.

When Brookline Town Meeting passed its resolution calling for an end to the U.S. Embargo last spring, this joint effort between the Boston area July26.org Cuba Solidarity Coalition and Brookline PAX received major assistance from Frank Farlow in shepherding the proposal through the petitioning process, the Board of Selectmen and Advisory sub and main Committees, and, along with the encouragement of other PAX members and activists, at Town Meeting. Although the initial effort to include a condemnation and call for an end to covert USAID “regime change” programs was not approved, the main resolution passed by an overwhelming 98%.

The idea of local proposals calling for an end to the Embargo originated earlier in the year with campaigns in the San Francisco Bay Area, in Richmond, Berkeley, and Oakland. Supported by the National Network on Cuba ([nnoc.info](http://nnoc.info)), the Brookline resolution has helped make this a truly national effort. A similar resolution was recently passed by the Hartford City Council, and the process is underway in Albany. The campaign has been highlighted by the National Congress on Latin America, “[Ending the U.S. Embargo on Cuba at the Grassroots.](#)” and was a featured workshop at the recent National Conference on Cuba, where Newark Mayor, Ras Baraka, provided one of the keynotes.

The U.S. military prison at Guantanamo is a double mark against U.S. policies and practices, the home of illegal confinements and gruesome torture that would not be tolerated on our own shores, and a vestige of our colonial imperialism in Cuba on-going since the Spanish-American War. Focusing on the latter with interviews of Cubans living in the surrounding communities, the July 26th Coalition and Brookline PAX along with the National Network on Cuba and the International Committee for Peace, Justice and Dignity

cosponsored the Boston-area premiere of “All Guantanamo Is Ours” last July 26. With preprogram publicity in the Brookline *Tab* and on the PAX, July26.org, and Greater Boston Activist ACT-ma.org elists, people packed the meeting/movie room at the Coolidge Corner Library for the short documentary with follow-up discussion led by Nancy Kohn, who had attended the previous year’s [International Seminar in Guantanamo on Peace and the Abolition of Foreign Military Bases.](#)

*Peter Miller (peterm@igc.org) is the Brookline PAX representative on the July26.org coalition, manages its web site, and blogs about media and technology development in Cuba and the Solidarity movement at [peterbmiller.wordpress.com/cuba-project](http://peterbmiller.wordpress.com/cuba-project).*

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## Environmental Summary

**By Clint Richmond**—PAX is a longtime supporter the environment and has often joined with the Green Caucus of Town Meeting Members in endorsements for various Town Meeting Warrant Articles. (The Green Caucus consists of over 80 Town Meeting Members, and new Members who share our goals are invited to join.) Many of these articles have been brought in whole or in part by members of the Caucus. In the recent May Town Meeting, PAX made identical endorsements as the Green Caucus and all articles passed.

The Caucus has emphasized energy and climate issues, which was a prime motivator for its creation. We are pleased to see the Town reducing the use of highly polluting fossil fuels through renewable energy and energy efficiency. We have taken positions against gas and oil pipelines, and adopted the Paris climate agreement. Locally, we look forward to the application of Net Zero Energy design principles to our next two large school projects. We have also supported many other healthy, equitable, and sustainable transportation initiatives including mass transit, pedestrians, bicyclists, and electric vehicles. The Town can also be proud of our upcoming community aggregation of electricity, and its mandatory commercial recycling by-law.

The Town has been a leader in the related issue of reducing pollution from toxic plastic packaging derived from fossil fuels. In November 2012, Brookline passed the first specific plastic bag legislation in Massachusetts, and the first polystyrene packaging by-law in the state in over twenty years. Brookline is now part of a group of 14 contiguous cities and towns in the Metro Boston area with sustainable bag laws representing almost 700,000 people. We expect these trends to continue, and ultimately to lead to the passage of statewide laws. We also applaud the Town’s installation of water refill stations at various municipal sites, in keeping with our by-laws of May 2015.

*Clint Richmond is a Town Meeting Member, Precinct 6 & Co-chair of Town Meeting’s Green Caucus.*

**Brookline PAX** ([www.brooklinepax.org](http://www.brooklinepax.org)) has a 54-year history of campaigning for liberal causes and working to achieve increasingly progressive government in Brookline.

## **BROOKLINE PAX ACTIVELY SUPPORTS:**

**OUTSTANDING PUBLIC EDUCATION** — PAX is committed to the public schools. The organization and the political candidates it supports have a proven record in support of public education, from early childhood through graduate school.

**EXCELLENT PUBLIC SERVICES** — PAX supports sustained state and local investment in quality municipal services such as police and fire protection, public health, libraries, schools, parks, recreation, and public works, as well as state services such as social programs, transportation and environmental protection. PAX and its endorsed candidates pursue policies of support for basic human needs, including healthcare for all, affordable housing, and services for both children and senior citizens.

**RESPECT FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYEES AND ORGANIZED LABOR** — PAX stands up for fair labor practices and for policies that show respect for the dedicated people whose competence and commitment make Brookline and this Commonwealth work.

**RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT** — PAX is committed to keeping Brookline and this Commonwealth livable and environmentally responsible – by supporting recycling; energy conservation; the maintenance and enhancement of parks, play-grounds, and green space; and sound environmental regulation.

**DIVERSITY, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND PEACE** — PAX works to preserve and increase ethnic and economic diversity and social and economic justice for all, through affordable housing, universal health care, and fundamental civil rights and liberties. We respect the human rights of all people, regardless of ethnicity, nationality, or location; and we support multilateral solutions to international affairs. We oppose the unilateral use of military force except when applied defensively under international law and clear and convincing evidence exists of a serious and imminent threat of aggression, and then only force no more than commensurate with the magnitude of the threat.

### **Stay in Touch**

We urge you to **sign up for PAX's listserv** to e-hear more from fellow PAX folk about upcoming events and occasionally lift a keyboard finger for grassroots lobbying. To sign up, just send an e-mail to [dianaspiegel@yahoo.com](mailto:dianaspiegel@yahoo.com) with your name in the body of the message.

### **Sponsors**

There is still time to **sponsor the Annual Meeting**. (Sponsors' names will be announced at the meeting.) For information and/or to a sponsor, please contact our Treasurer, Gary Jones, at (617) 731-1611 or by email at [Garymarsh1@earthlink.net](mailto:Garymarsh1@earthlink.net)



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