



THE CAPE COD VOTER

VOLUME 56 ISSUE 5

JANUARY 2016

CALENDAR

Tuesday January 5
9:30am

Board Meeting
Cape Cod Five, Dennis

Monday, January 11
1:30pm

County Government Discussion
Cape Cod Five, Dennis (*Details p5*)

Thursday January 14
1:00pm

Health Committee Meeting re Spring Forum
Home of Amy Harris

Friday, January 15
2-4pm

Money in Politics Consensus Discussion cont'd
Brewster Ladies Library

Wednesday, January 20
10am

Third Week Coffee
Panera, Route 132, Hyannis

Saturday, January 23
10am - Noon

Candidates Workshop
"Don't Just Stand There--Run!"
Cape Cod Media Center, Dennisport

LOOKING AHEAD

Tuesday February 2
9:30am

Board Meeting
Cape Cod Five, Dennis

Tuesday, February 9

Day on the Hill

Thursday, February 18
Location tba

Third Week Coffee

A happy, healthy & peaceful 2016 to all!

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FROM THE LWVCCA STEERING COMMITTEE

Holiday Brunch Program a great success. It was good to see so many of you at our annual holiday brunch on December 5th, featuring guest speaker Jane Scarborough, who spoke on the growing movement to change how we elect our President from the Electoral College method to a national popular vote. Jane has a JD from Northeastern University and was a Law School dean and faculty member there, teaching constitutional law, securities law, professional responsibility, and sexuality, gender and the law. She currently teaches courses on the U.S. Constitution at the Academy for Lifelong Learning at CCCC. After listening to Jane speak, it is clear why ALL her classes are filled to capacity!

Many thanks to Bobbi Rennie-Greer for arranging for our guest speaker and making all the arrangements for the brunch, and to Judy Thomas for providing the book giveaway. There were “impromptu book reviews” as we picked up our books and shared the titles with tablemates.

Make your voice heard. Part II of our LWVUS consensus process on **Money in Politics** is scheduled for **2-4 p.m., Friday, January 15** at Brewster Ladies’ Library, 1822 Main Street (Rte. 6A). We will meet in the lower level Conference Room. Instead of assigned reading, we are recommending that you do your own research and share your findings as part of our discussion. We will email the questions to all LWVCCA members on or about January 5. Please join us and make your voice heard in this important election year. And please contact Barbara Wellnitz at the email address below to let us know you plan to attend.

Looking further ahead, we will schedule a March membership meeting to discuss and establish priorities for LWVCCA for the next couple years. We believe it is important to focus our energies on the issues and programs most important to our members. More on that in the weeks ahead.

In the meantime, we wish you a healthy, happy New Year.

Joan Bernstein

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Barbara Wellnitz

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COUNTY GOVERNMENT -- SAVE THE DATE-JANUARY 11

From Mary Lou Petitt and Paula Bacon

With the recent news of more dysfunction within Barnstable County government resulting in the long-delayed appointment of a new County Administrator, LWVCCA has joined with the Cape Cod Business Roundtable, APCC and the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce in a new effort to reorganize County/Regional government. The recent completion of the Clean Water Act Section 208 Areawide Water Quality Plan demonstrates how the Cape Cod Commission and the individual towns can work together to be innovative, optimize results and likely save money while maintaining local control.

On January 11th, Ed Dewitt, Executive Director of APCC and Alan McClennen, Co-Chair of the Business Roundtable, will share with us their initiative to improve the structure and efficacy of County government. You do not have to be a member of LWVCCA's County Committee to participate in this conversation -- we are all stakeholders in how Barnstable County will be governed in the years ahead. Please join us.

"MY VIEW"

"The following is a joint statement of the Business Roundtable, the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area, the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce and the Association to Preserve Cape Cod.

There is no surprise in reading the latest news about our county government's dysfunction over the hiring of an administrator, the operation of the fire academy, the managing of court leases and the handling of debt. Of even more concern is the diminished visibility and engagement of county government in regional challenges, including development of a regional capital plan. Many Cape citizens actually believe the Barnstable County government has been abolished, as it has been in most of Massachusetts.

The disappointing aspect is that we know the organizational weaknesses that directly contribute to these lapses. In March of 2012, the county's Special Commission on County Governance issued its report calling for the streamlining of regional government. The problems are not caused by bad people but rather by an obtuse, inefficient structure. Implementation of the special commission's recommendations has largely remained stalled in the Assembly of Delegates. One recommendation was to downsize and merge the Assembly of Delegates and County Commissioners into a single legislative body. The current charter requires these elected officials to downsize themselves, but downsizing requires both leadership and courage in eliminating the very job an official proudly holds.

The good news is that we know how to excel at regional solutions. The recent completion of the Clean Water Act Section 208 Areawide Water Quality Plan points out how regional government in the form of the Cape Cod Commission can work together with the towns to be innovative, optimize results and likely save money while maintaining local control. We should transfer the lessons learned from the Section 208 process and reorganize the rest of regional government so that it is innovative, optimizes

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results and saves us money. The Section 208 process was transparent and visible and provided a sense that government can actually solve challenging problems. It is an ideal model with proven results.

For nearly a decade, organizations like the Cape Cod Business Roundtable, the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area, the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce and the Association to Preserve Cape Cod have been strong advocates of reforming county government into an efficient and effective regional government. We did so not to support bigger or more expansive government, but to create a more functional government with efficient service delivery and greater regional visibility, recognizing that many municipal challenges are shared and can be resolved once instead of 15 times or in 15 different ways. The current form of county government, with 18 elected officials overseeing a total budget of less than \$30 million, much of which is nondiscretionary spending, is cumbersome, bloated and simply a potential ATM for waste and abuse.

The Cape Cod Business Roundtable, the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area, the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce and the Association to Preserve Cape Cod urge the assembly to do its job and institute the changes recommended by the special commission in the charter that are needed to effectuate a streamlined county government. If, for whatever reason, this does not occur by the first quarter of 2016, we urge the Cape Cod legislative delegation to introduce a new county charter consistent with the special commission's recommendations in the state Legislature."

This commentary was signed by Elliott Carr, chairman of the Business Roundtable; Chris Meade, steering committee member of the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area; Matthew Lee, chairman of the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce; and Ed DeWitt, executive director of the Association to Preserve Cape Cod.

VOTER SERVICE

from Joan Grant and Chris Meade

LWVCCA's outstanding workshop, "Don't Just Stand There--RUN!" will be held again this election year on Saturday, January 23, 2016, from 9:30 to noon at the Cape Cod Community Media Center in Dennisport and **will be aired live on Channel 99**. The workshop will assist citizens who are considering running for office by providing information on campaign preparation, fundraising, nomination and filing procedures, working with the media, developing and delivering their message. In addition, three panelists will share their personal experiences running campaigns and serving in public office.

We are co-sponsoring the workshop with the Cape Cod Times, CCYoung Professionals and the Cape Women's Coalition. In addition, we are receiving significant support from local newspapers and radio, including an excellent ad, developed by the Cape Cod Times, which ran in the Times in November and will run a couple more times in January. Copies will be sent to all members. Also, Judy Thomas has written a My View piece that will also promote the workshop.

Note: last page of this VOTER can be printed and posted in your local community

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LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Renate Sands, Legislative Chair

Day on the Hill 2016 -- If you wish to attend Day on the Hill on **Tuesday, February 9**, please let me know as I will be attending and will be driving. This year, instead of a speaker, the LWVMA is having a panel discussion on **“Why This? Why Now? What Finally Moves Legislation?”** The panelists will be Sen William Brownsberger, D, Middlesex and Suffolk, on criminal justice legislation; Rep. Shawn Dooley, R, Norfolk, on election reform and Pamela Wilmot, Executive Director, Common Cause of Massachusetts, on public records access. After the panel presentation, the state League legislative specialists will outline specific bills they are following.

Please e-mail me at rhsands@comcast.net or call me at 508-888-8349 if you would (a) like to attend and (b) like to carpool.

LWVCCA’s Legislative Breakfast will be Friday, February 26 at Cape Cod Community College.



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HEALTHCARE COMMITTEE

From Amy Harris, Chair

We are continuing to study the issues surrounding cannabis -- specifically (a) decriminalization and (b) medicinal uses -- with an eye toward the ballot question looming in November. It has become apparent to us that the 2009 changes in the law regarding possession, and the opening of medical dispensaries beginning this year, both require a lot more study -- before even considering the question of recreational use.

With that in mind, we are hoping to schedule two forums in 2016, one in the spring and one in the Fall. The working title for our March 20th forum is, "*The State of Medical Marijuana*".

The group has recently read Marijuana, the Unbiased Truth About the World's Most Popular Weed by Dr. Kevin Hill and also participated in a webinar with the group, "Freedom from Chemical Dependency" (which also participated in our healthcare forum last April).

This is a huge issue. Our committee would welcome a few new members as well as ideas and suggestions from any and all LWVCCA members. Please consider joining us!

Next meeting

**Thursday, January 14th -- 1pm -- at my home
4 Chapel Hill Road, Harwich
For directions, amyharrisjge@gmail.com**

YOUTH SERVICE

From Karen Mazza

Kathleen Schatzberg column shines spotlight on LWVCCA Civic Engagement program

In her November 25 column in the Barnstable Patriot, retired CCCC President and LWVCCA member Kathleen Schatzberg noted the plethora of single-candidate/uncontested elections held earlier that month in many Cape towns. “In Barnstable”, she pointed out, “fewer than 8 percent of voters actually voted. . .noting that “these turnout rates and lack of opposing candidates are testimony to levels of civic engagement that are sadly, even embarrassingly low.

“What can we do to shake voter complacency into action? The League of Women Voters, Cape Cod Area, has an answer. What if, LWVCCA asked, we helped teachers inspire youth to greater civic participation. Teachers are powerful role models. . .and research has shown that civic education motivates young people to become knowledgeable about public issues, engage in public advocacy and vote.”

With the help of the Cape Cod Foundation, Dr. Schatzberg continued, LWVCCA raised funds from local businesses and from their own members to offer grants to middle school and high school teachers. Applications were sought from middle and high school civics teachers and, after much review and consideration, four grants were awarded:

- Barnstable HS and Lawrence Middle School (Falmouth) students will attend courses at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute in Boston -- Lawrence students for the Senator-In-Training program and Barnstable students to learn to conduct exit polls at upcoming elections
- Nauset students will produce TV programs exploring social issues such as diversity--at school and beyond.
- Dennis-Yarmouth students will be working with Yarmouth Senior Services creating intergenerational game simulations aimed at developing age-friendly communities.

Note: this article has been somewhat edited. To read Kathy Schatzberg's article in its entirety:
<http://www.barnstablepatriot.com/article/20151125/NEWS/151129556/0/SEARCH/?Start=2#loadComment>

Thanks to Kathy for this great show of support of the League's work.

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NOTES FROM THE DECEMBER 1 BOARD MEETING

From Judy Thomas, Secretary

- Phyllis Walsh has agreed to serve on the nominating committee.
- A committee of Florence Seldin, Karen Mazza and Suzanne Finney has been formed to work on an event related to the showing of "Iron-Jawed Angels." 209 membership brochures were picked up at the Dennis showing of "Suffragette."
- A full membership meeting will be held in March, focusing on the **future direction of the League.**
- The League's part in the Archive Project has been completed. Cape Cod Community College archive area will organize and store our material.
- Our Health Committee has selected medical marijuana as the focus of its forum this spring.
- The board agreed to continue our League's work on the Money in Politics LWVUS consensus study in spite of some frustration with some of the questions and materials.
- Florence Seldin will be attending meetings of the Human Service and Faith Community Network of the Lower Cape as a member of the League.

Ed note: Remember that ALL members are welcome at Board meetings!

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MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Helen Bresnahan, Membership Chair

Please keep in mind that it is imperative that when you change your contact year-round address, phone number or email, you forward the details to me at 508-420-0308, sunrisedawn110@aol.com, or www.lwvcapecod.org. This information is important so we can keep in touch with you through the year and have reliable information in our Member Handbook.

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----- Please post in your town hall or library -----

*The League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area,
in association with Cape Cod Young Professionals, the Cape Women's Coalition
and The Cape Cod Times
present:*

“Don't just stand there, RUN!”

**Saturday, January 23, 2016 -- 9:30am to noon
Cape Cod Media Center, Shad Hole Road, Dennisport**

***An important panel discussion and nonpartisan workshop
for anyone considering running for elective office***

Speakers will include: LWVCCA members Florence Seldin and Judith Thomas. . . Dennis Town Clerk Terri Bunce, Nexus Werx LLC Campaign Consultant Stefanie Coxe . . . and former town officeholders Ralph Cahoon (Barnstable School Committee), Aimee Eckman (Eastham Selectwoman), Shirley Gomes (Harwich Selectwoman) and Jim Hoben (Yarmouth Selectman). . .

Subjects will include: Campaign preparation, Nomination papers, Developing and delivering your message, Working with Media and more.

2015 saw too many uncontested races in our local town elections. Please consider attending this workshop and inviting friends and acquaintances who may be thinking of running for office.

ALL ARE WELCOME

Registration is suggested as seating is limited

To register, contact lwvcca.events@gmail.com or phone 508.945.0511
