

THE CAPE COD VOTER

VOLUME 55 ISSUE 8

APRIL 2015

CALENDAR

Tuesday April 7
9:30am

Board Meeting
Cape Cod Five, Dennis

Thursday April 9
1:30pm

County Committee Meeting
Cape Cod Five, Dennis (*tent.*)

Saturday, April 18
9:30 - noon

Healthcare Forum
Harwich Community Center

Friday, April 24
8:30am

Legislative Breakfast
CCCC, Lorusso Bldg Solarium
See p 3 + return form at end

Tuesday, April 28
10am

Day on The Hill
State House, Boston
See page 3

LOOKING AHEAD...

Tuesday, May 5
9:30am

Board Meeting
Cape Cod Five, Dennis

Wednesday, May 13
0:00 pm

Annual Meeting
Riverway, (West) Yarmouth

CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Dear Members:

We are happy to share spring greetings with you as we finally are emerging into longer sunshine, birds singing, and melting snow! We'd like to share some highlights of League activities in the past month and invite your participation in coming events for the spring.

International Women's Day breakfast, of which LWVCCA was pleased to be a co-sponsor, was held on March 6th, planned by the Cape Women's Coalition and focused on "Breaking Through". Two hundred women attended the sold-out event. Keynote speaker, Ann Bookman, Director of the Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy, gave an enlightening speech about women's participation in elected office, progress that women have made and the significant imbalance that continues in the number of women in elected office. She and panelists Mary Pat Flynn, Anastasia Welsh Perrino, and Elisa Zawadzka then discussed helpful strategies for pursuing elected office. The League was proud to assist with this program by moderating the panel discussion and we thank League members Chris Meade and Betsy Bray for serving as timekeepers while Karen Mazza moderated. Several other League members were in attendance and members Maggie French and Helen Bresnahan participated in the planning. Our League intends to continue to address the issue of women entering politics next fall, by co-sponsoring with the Cape Women's Coalition, a workshop on preparing candidates to run for local office.

External Fundraising: The Fundraising Committee for 2015-2016 will be co-chaired by Kay Bryce and Marilyn Gullett who have already begun planning. There are two components: raising funds for the Ed Trust and separately for LWVCCA. The Ed Trust cannot meet its current expenditures without drawing on its reserve. This makes it unsustainable without outside income. The proposal is to solicit support from local businesses to advertise in the *Voter* by placing a business-card sized ad for \$75 which would run for 10 issues, September-June. The goal is to have at least 10 of these ads for the season.

Fundraising for LWVCCA will be a concert by the *Original Dissonance Jazz Band* with whom Kay's husband plays. They have performed in many venues around the Cape and have agreed to donate their services. Kay and Marilyn are working on a venue for this which will be in the Fall and most likely on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. As we go into the 2016 election year, it would be helpful to have funds for additional activities and our current income does not allow for all the League might like to do.

If you have any suggestions for businesses to whom the Committee could send a letter asking the business to advertise in the *Voter*, please let them know. (Marilyn can be reached at marilyn@gullett.org and Kay at skbryce@comcast.net.) You would not be asked to do any more than provide the business name and contact person. Also, if you have any suggestions for a venue for the Fall concert, please let Kay or Marilyn know.

Upcoming Events. Please note the important calendar dates on the front page. Our health committee has worked hard to prepare the April 18 Forum and details appear later in the voter. Our legislative breakfast with our state legislators is April 24 and it's extremely important for us to have a good turnout to make our voices heard. May 13 is our Annual Meeting at which we will make

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important decisions for the coming year. This is also a nice social event at which we look forward to celebrating our work. Please mark the date on your calendar; more information will be available soon about the location. Also, please let Karen know (mazzak@comcast.net) if you are interested in attending the state League convention in Springfield May 15-16. There is money available in our budget to support attendance for a few members. Karen will be driving if you would like to carpool.

Third Week Coffee: Six members met for coffee and breakfast at Bonatt's Bakery in Harwichport for our March get-together. We had great conversation and it was wonderful to meet two of our newer members, Suzanne Finney and Gail Anderson, both from Barnstable. We will not have an April coffee since we have two other League events this month, but look for announcements in the next *Voter* about May's Third Week Coffee, which we are hoping to hold at the Cape Media Center where we will be able to view the long-delayed LWVMA forum on **Economic Inequality and Money in Politics**.

In League,

Karen and Marilyn

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

From Renate Sands, Legislative Chair

Legislative Breakfast

The following legislators have replied and will be attending the Legislative Breakfast on Friday, April 24 at 8:30 at Cape Cod Community College.

Senator Dan Wolf

Senator Vinny deMacedo (If he cannot attend Lance Lambros will represent him)

Representative Sarah Peake

Representative Timothy Whelan

Rebecca Hamlin, Chief of Staff to Rep. Whelan

Representative Brian Mannal

Representative Randy Hunt

If you have any questions, concerns or issues you would like to have your legislators address please e-mail them to me and we will incorporate them into the program if we can. My e-mail address is rhsands@comcast.net

Attached you will find the flyer so you can register for the breakfast. The menu will consist of eggs, bacon, sausage, home fries, fruit salad and pastry.

This is an important occasion so please try to attend. According to Thomas Jefferson, "Whenever people are well informed, they can be trusted by their own government."

Day on the Hill

Day on the Hill will be Tuesday, April 28, 2015 from 10:00 AM to noon at the State House. Senator Stanley Rosenberg, newly-elected president of the State Senate, will be the keynote speaker. I will be able to drive and can take 3 people in my car. Let me know if you are interested in attending.

***PROGRESS ON THE
MENTAL HEALTH FRONT:
Involving the community in recognition,
prevention & recovery***

***A League of Women Voters forum
Saturday, April 18
9:30 - Noon***

***Harwich Community Center
Oak Street, Harwich Center***

-- Speakers --

***Cheryl Bartlett, Director, CCHhealthcare Substance Abuse
Prevention Initiative***

Tim Ryan, Sr. Prevention Specialist, FCD Hazelden-Betty Ford

Fiona Jensen, Founder & Director, Calmer Choice

Beth Albert, Director, Barnstable County Human Services

***Marta "Dikke" Hansen, Director Behavioral Health, Outer Cape
Health***

James Cummings, Sheriff, Barnstable County

Further information: 508.432.0763

The League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area

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NOTES FROM MARCH BOARD MEETING

from Judy Thomas, Secretary

- Fundraising: LWVCCA has received \$1,469 since November, an increase of nearly \$500 over last year. In addition, the Ed Trust received \$1,175, an increase of \$185. Thanks to all!
- Budget Committee: National PMP or Per Member Payment, will rise by \$1 next year. At that point our entire \$55 dues will go to national and state for PMPs.
- Nominating Committee: All officer and director positions have been filled with the exception of president. A draft job description for a steering committee, based on Falmouth's experience, was presented to the Board and adopted for a one year period.
- Youth: Karen, as a member of the LWVMA Education Committee, attended a **MA State Commission on Education** hearing regarding the funding formula which disadvantages the Cape because of our high property-value statistic v. need--due to significant poverty (D-Y 50%, Barnstable 40%).
- Youth Support: the name of the grant fund through which the Cape Cod Foundation will be receiving contributions is "The League of Women Voters Civic Education Fund."
- Membership: our attractive new brochure is done and will be passed out at every opportunity.
- Save May 13 for the LWVCCA annual meeting.
- Helen S. Aaron Ed Trust Annual meeting March 12.

MEMBERSHIP

From Membership Chair Helen Bresnahan

Suzanne Finley, comes to us by way of Barnstable Village, New York City and Washington. In DC, where she lived for twenty years, she was an active and well-regarded member of the art scene--holding numerous administrative positions -- organizing exhibits, curating for cultural attaches at embassies, cataloguing art and designing and installing exhibits as well as managing budgets, training and supervising volunteers. In 2010 she became a member of the Women's National Democratic Committee and served as Chair of the Arts Committee.

Suzanne attended Barnstable High School, the School for Visual Arts in New York City and graduated from George Washington University with a BFA in Art History. She later continued her studies in the graduate program at Harvard.

Now back on her native Cape Cod and residing in Hyannisport, Suzanne is currently a member of the Mid-Cape Cultural Council. We're delighted that, like her mother before her, she has also become a member of LWVCCA and would like to join the Membership Committee

COUNTY COMMITTEE

Submitted by Jari Rapaport, Co-Chair

Much activity centers on budget decisions for fy16. The Commissioners are developing the budget for presentation to the Assembly by early May. Since funding for the county comes from the Registry of Deeds, the continuing decline in real estate activity is of concern to both the Commissioners and the Assembly of Delegates. Leo Cakounes, newly elected to the Board of Commissioners, is frequently a dissenter as the votes are taken and in ongoing initiatives.

The Commissioners are also now involved in seeking applications for the County Administrator position, now carried out by Michael Brillhart as an interim appointment through May 2015, and are reviewing proposals from several organizations to undertake the search process. A subcommittee has been formed to undertake the search and includes LWVCCA member **Mary Lou Pettitt**. In addition, the Commissioners are seeking proposals from legal firms to take on the work of the county attorney's office. Commissioner Lyons has expressed dissatisfaction with the current county attorney and sees need for a firm which would be present to assist at all Board meetings. Leo Cakounes sees no need for any changes in the County's legal representation and notes that special counsel can be hired as needed.

Of interest to many Cape residents is the proposal to develop a public/ private partnership to join in funding the preservation of land on the Bay in Dennis and the adjoining ARC shellfish seed company. The partnership would involve the towns of Dennis and Yarmouth, the County and the State. This company is the supplier of seed for aquaculture--which is central to the Cape's economy --yet there is some concern about the future of the facility. Leo Cakounes feels this action is unwarranted in the current fiscal situation. Some League members will recall an enjoyable visit to the facility several years ago as part of the annual Cooperative Extension program tour.

The Assembly of Delegates is holding weekly hearings on the proposed county budget and interviewing each department on their plans and funding.

VOTER SERVICE

From Joan Grant and Chris Meade

Reminder: We will moderate candidates' events in Chatham on April 20 and Brewster on May 7. Joan Craig and Barbara Wellnitz will moderate and Marilyn Gullett and Betsy Bray will assist. Joan Grant and Chris Meade will be contacting members seeking additional assistance as greeters, card collectors and to time. The Dennis candidates' event scheduled for April 30th was cancelled since all of the races are uncontested.

MONEY IN POLITICS -- Part III

Written by Renate Sands

This is the last of a three part series of articles on "Money in Politics." The first, by Florence Seldin, covered the history of the influence of money on politics up to the McCain-Feingold Reform Act of 2002. Marilyn Gullett's article brought us up to the present time and also explained what the LWV has done on national, state and local levels. The present article explains how we can reset the balance of influence through legislative change, regulatory change and constitutional change to mitigate the effects of the latest Supreme Court rulings.

Legislative Action

American Anti-Corruption Act

The "American Anti-Corruption Act" (AACA) is proposed legislation originally crafted in 2011 by Trevor Potter, former FEC chairman, in conjunction with dozens of strategists, democracy reform leaders and constitutional attorneys from a wide political spectrum. All the provisions of the act are based on existing laws in some parts of the U.S. that have withstood court challenges. The apparent constitutionality makes it possible for local, state and federal governments to enact versions of the AACA. It is designed to limit or outlaw practices that affect and contribute to political corruption and would

- Stop political bribery by overhauling lobbying and ethics laws
- End secret money by dramatically increasing transparency
- Give every voter a voice by creating citizen-funded elections

HR 270 Empowering Citizens Act (Rep Price and Van Halen) is the most comprehensive campaign finance reform legislation. The bill would

- End individual candidate Super PACs
- Repair presidential public financing system
- Create similar financing systems for congressional races
- Strengthen rules prohibiting coordination between outside spending groups and candidates

**Latest Action - 01/15/2013 Referred to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.*

HR 20 Government by the People Act (Rep Sarbanes) attempts to shift the dependency for fundraising from the wealthiest to the electorate. It has 157 sponsors. The bill would

- Provide \$25.00 My Voice Tax Credit to empower everyday Americans to participate in campaigns
- Establish "Freedom from Influence Matching Fund" to match small grassroots donations
- Provide candidates with additional resources to maintain level playing field through the end of the campaign

**Latest Action - 03/06/2014 Sponsor introductory remarks on measure.*

*Copied from the Congress.Gov website 3/22/2015.

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Money in Politics cont...

Regulatory Action

A lot can be accomplished through regulatory agencies such as the FCC, FEC, IRS and SEC.

--The FCC ruled that all political advertisements on all television station post online contracts and other information about the political advertisements they are airing.

--The IRS is reviewing 501(c)4 non-profits to clarify and redefine rules governing political activities of "social welfare" agencies that are raising and spending money on elections.

--The FEC is responsible for administering and enforcing the 1975 Federal Election Campaign Act. The agency is viewed as ineffective because of partisan composition.

--The SEC oversees the stock market. It has authority to adopt and rule governing corporate political expenditures. The SEC declined to rule on these changes in 2013.

Therefore, the following recommendations have been made

- Expand and enforce FCC disclosure requirements
- Redefine 501(c)4 rules
- Replace the FEC with an independent non-partisan agency with teeth
- Regulate corporate political campaigning through the SEC

FCC (Federal Communications Commission)

FEC (Federal Election Commission)

SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission)

Constitutional Action

An amendment to the Constitution has generated interest. Two amendment proposals are getting a lot of attention. The first one focuses on restoring the power to Congress and states to regulate the raising and spending of money for elections. The second is a proposal that would limit constitutional rights to human beings. The LWV is withholding endorsement of an amendment pending completion of a national study to be completed in 2015.

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You are invited. . .

LWVCCA - LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST - 2015

CAPE COD COMMUNITY COLLEGE
SOLARIUM, THE LORUSSO BUILDING
FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2015
8:30 AM

Please join us for stimulating conversation with our State Senators and Representatives. Bring your concerns, suggestions and questions to share with our legislators. Learn what their plans are for addressing important issues facing the Cape and the Commonwealth. Meeting with legislators is one way that the League seeks to impact policy and legislation and it is important that we have a good turnout to be influential.

Feel free to bring a friend or relative who might be interested in membership in the League or learning more about League advocacy with legislators. The cost of the breakfast is \$11.00 per person. April 20, 2015 is the deadline for reservations.

To reserve, please complete the form below, include your name and the number of any guests you have invited.

Make checks out to the LWVCCA and send to:
Ira Seldin
321 Deer Meadow Lane, Chatham, MA 02633

Directions: From the campus entrance, go around the campus road to parking lots 10 and 11. Walk up the hill. Handicapped parking is up the hill next to the Lorusso building.

I will attend the Legislative Breakfast. _____

I am bringing the following guest(s). Name(s) _____

Enclosed is a check payable to the LWVCCA for \$11/per person. _____