

THE CAPE COD VOTER

VOLUME 53

ISSUE 1

SEPTEMBER 2012

CALENDAR

Tuesday, September 4
9:30 am

LWVCCA Board Meeting
Cape Cod Five, Dennis

Wednesday, September 6

Primary Election Day

Saturday, September 15
12: pm Noon

Coast Week Celebration
Highland Center, N. Truro
Cape Cod National Seashore

Saturday, September 15
Following Coast Week Program
After Coast Week Activity

Environment Committee
Highland Center

Monday, September 20
1:30 pm

County Committee
Cape Cod Five, Dennis

Saturday, September 22
8:30 am

WIPFL Conference
Clean Water Workshop
Cape Cod Community College

Monday, September 24
1:00 pm

Ed Trust Board Orientation
Cape Cod Five, Dennis

Monday, September 24
1:30 pm

Ed Trust Board Meeting

Tuesday, September 25 National Voter Registration Day **LWVCCA Action**

SAVE THE DATES

Thursday, October 4 LWVCCA General **Membership Meeting** and Pot Luck Supper

Saturday, October 20 **FORUM:** Death with Dignity, a Massachusetts Ballot Question

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Election Season: With the upcoming November election, I am reminded of the importance of our membership in the League of Women Voters. As I listen to campaign advertising, observe the influence of Super PACs on the campaign, and watch and read news coverage I realize how important it is to have an organization such as the League work to preserve democracy. I am proud to know that the League is fighting to uphold voting rights where states are restricting them, and to see League efforts to promote informed thought about issues in an environment that often militates against truth and critical thinking. The League work is work worth doing. As part of this work our Voters Service Chair, Judy Thomas will be organizing two **voter registration drives** on September 25, National Voter Registration Day. If you are interested in participating please contact Judy at jmtrevid@aol.com. I have also been asked to participate with the Dennis Yarmouth Girl Scouts in an event on October 1 called **"I Promised a Girl Scout I'd Vote"**. This event is scheduled for 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM and I would be particularly interested in having members with experience in voter service and members from Dennis and Yarmouth join me to teach a mini-lesson on voting. If you would like to consider helping out please contact me at lwwccapres2012@gmail.com.

Fall Coming Events: Your LWVCCA colleagues have been hard at work this summer planning special programming for the fall.

Renate Sands has consulted with other members of the Environment Committee to plan **Coast Day on September 15** at the National Seashore Highland Center. Please read the article later in this newsletter for details and come out and enjoy this beautiful location with us for some good camaraderie and an informative program.

On October 4 we will have a General Membership Social/Program from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. We will have a planned potluck supper to mix and mingle followed by a program in two parts. The first short program will be a discussion of League activities and ways to be involved. The second short program will be a discussion with Dr. John Cox, the new President of Cape Cod Community College. Please see the description later in the newsletter for details. It would be wonderful to have everyone who is available, join us that evening.

The Health Committee is planning a timely **forum for October 20** on the November ballot question on "Death with Dignity". The presentation will feature speakers with insight that will provide information on different facets of this sensitive issue. Save the date.

Member Handbook: The member handbook has been sent to the printer and will be mailed to members shortly before or shortly after Labor Day. Please note our program for 2012-2013 and the ways that you can participate in LWVCCA activities. I look forward to seeing you at upcoming events and I encourage your active participation in our organization.

Sincerely,

Karen Mazza

COAST WEEK

HIGHLAND CENTER

AT CAPE COD NATIONAL SEASHORE IN TRURO

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 AT NOON

Cathy Skowron, a park ranger at CCNS, will give us an introduction/overview of the history and current use of the Highlands Center. Later we will walk over to the Atmospheric Radiation Measurement mobile facility (ARM) site to see the launch of the balloon.

ARM is a multi-laboratory interagency program known for being a key contributor to national and international research efforts related to global climate change. It operates permanent programs in Alaska, Oklahoma and the Western Pacific. Besides these permanent sites it also operates aerial and mobile facilities. One of the mobile facilities is at the Highland Center from July 1212 to July 1213.

Highland Center has been established on a former US Navy Air Force site. Partners now include The Payomet Center for the Performing arts, Truro Center for the Arts at Castle Hill: Wood Firing and The Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies.

Bring something for lunch and a beverage and we will truly picnic in this very appealing setting.

Directions: The Highlands Center is located off of Route 6 at the Highland Light Exit in North Truro, MA. From the south take Route 6 to Highland Light Exit in North Truro (about 12 miles north of park headquarters). Turn right off the exit onto Highland Road. At the end of the road, turn right onto South Highland Road. After approximately 0.6 miles turn left onto Old Dewline Road. The Highlands Center is at the end of the road.

Cathy will meet us there and direct us to a picnic area.

In case of **inclement weather** a classroom has been reserved for us which we can use for lunch and the presentation.

Renate Sands

Environment Committee

Members of the committee met on May 31 to identify priorities and possible actions. Four priorities were named: wastewater/regionalization, clean air/the mirant plant, pond health and alum as treatment, climate change and renewable energy.

Issues around wastewater became the focus with a plan evolving whereby members of the committee would monitor anything related to wastewater in their town. Towns represented include Orleans: Erica Parra, Joan Grant and Richard Utt, Eastham: Kate Krouch (possibly with support from other members from Eastham), Chatham: Judy Thomas, Yarmouth: Rory Marcus, possibly with Jan Hively, Barnstable: Helen Bresnahan, Sandwich: Renate will try to make some contacts. In the near future, meetings to observe include the summer meetings to be held by the Cape Cod Commission featuring Paul Niedzwiecki. (a summary of these meetings is found in this issue)

Based on the Q&A of the Niedzwiecki meetings, we might compile data of frequently asked questions. These info sheets might then be used as background information when wastewater comes up for discussion at selectmen's meetings and, more importantly, town meetings. It was felt too often the comments of naysayers are not countered by good information which influences voters negatively as there is not balance and often too much misinformation.

Coast Week Day will be held on Saturday, Sept. 15 with a wonderful program. Please see the notice elsewhere in the *Voter!* Plan to come and bring a friend(s).

This committee would like to have new chair. The committee itself is knowledgeable and would provide good support to any new chair. Please talk with League president Karen Mazza about the possibility of the serving the League and the cause of the environment this way. Thanks!!

Judy Thomas

Voter Service News

Tuesday, September 25 is National Voter Registration Day and our League is participating! How much we can participate depends a bit on you. Currently we are anticipating two registration sites: Cape Cod Community College – where we hope to register young adult voters, and in front of Trader Joe's and next to Christmas Tree Shops in Hyannis. We need 2 to 3 (preferably 3) volunteers for each site. One to help distribute forms, answer any questions and to make sure the forms are filled out correctly and one to solicit possible registrants. Yes, this will take a slightly extraverted person who enjoys contacting passerbys. But what satisfying work! (Last time we had a voter registration drive we also recruited member Betsy Bray, so voter registration is also an opportunity to reach out to potential new members.)

Are you able to give the League 3 daytime hours on the 25th? Please let me know ASAP. Judy Thomas 508-432-2775 jmtre vd@aol.com

Our volunteers will have special buttons from the Arlington, Texas area League that read:

“I can help you register. LWV”

As a reminder, the last day to register to vote in the general election is Wednesday, October 17th, 2012. An additional reminder is that voter registration forms can be downloaded and printed from the secretary of state's website: www.sec.state.ma.us The link is easily found on the top center of the website. This information is also found on our website www.lwvcapecod.org.

Debate report. In June, our League was interested in working on three debates this election cycle. Two were pre-primaries for the newly reconstituted 9th Congressional District and for the 2nd Barnstable State Rep seat. Unfortunately we were unable to get the support necessary from candidates to achieve this goal for those races. We will be holding a two-part debate for (1) the 5th Barnstable District seat which included: Barnstable Pcts. 11,12; Bourne Pacts. 1,2,7; Plymouth Pct 9; and Sandwich and for (2) the state senate district which includes Bourne, Sandwich and Falmouth. This debate, co-sponsored with the *Cape Cod Times*, will be held at Sandwich HS on either Oct. 11 or 17 (date to be determined after the primary for that state senate seat). More in the October Voter. There will be no other state rep or senate *contested* races on the Cape in the general election this November.

Judy Thomas, Voter Service Chair

County Government Committee

Committee members have continued to observe meetings of the Board of County Commissioners and the Assembly of Delegates this summer. We have followed closely discussions/action on the recommendations of the Special Commission on County Governance and continuing work on wastewater solutions. The Commissioners have largely been concerned with what actions can be taken without the recommended changes in structure. At this point it is clear that the timing calendar for any change has reached the point where no action can be taken to effect change within the next 2 years. It should be noted that the entire Assembly delegates are up for election this fall as are 2 seats on the Board of Commissioners. Mary Pat Flynn and Sheila Lyons will be running for re-election.

The Assembly of Delegates continues to oppose any restructuring of the County government and to emphasize the necessity of including representatives of each town on any legislative body.

A Special Section of the September Voter includes published reports on our Tour of the County's Cooperative Extension Program and on recent actions of the Commissioners on Special Commission recommendations.

As always we welcome all interested members to join us and when possible take turns observing the county in action. If you are interested or need more information please contact Jari, preferably by email, jari2@comcast.net.

Jari Rapaport, Co-Chair

BOARD AND COMMITTEE VACANCIES

SECRETARY: Due to personal commitments, there has been a resignation from the position of Secretary on the LWVCCA Board. If you have an interest in serving on the Board and are comfortable with producing the minutes of Board Meetings please volunteer your time to serve on the Board and help with this important role. Having minutes of our discussions helps us to follow through on decisions. Most Board meetings are the first Tuesday of the month from 9:30 AM to Noon.

UNIT/TOWN REPRESENTATIVES: The nominating committee was unable to complete a full roster of Board positions prior to the Annual Meeting in May. We are still looking for members who would be willing to represent their Unit or at least their town. The vacancies exist in the Nauset Unit: (Brewster, Orleans, Eastham, Wellfleet, Truro, Provincetown); Mid Upper Cape: (Barnstable, Dennis, Mashpee, Yarmouth) and the Sandwich Unit.

The Board is at present considering new ways to make this local representative role easier and provide more support for people in that role. One possible approach is to have two or three people who are willing to share responsibility for representing their area. The most important aspect of this role is to make sure that our organization is aware of local civic issues that may benefit from League service. The local representative role also helps us develop our annual program and is a communication link to our membership via e-mail and phone. Local representatives are Board members, but if you are unable to make Board meetings in the morning, we do not want to preclude the possibility of your helping out, so we would still like to hear from you. If you are interested in learning more about this role please call Karen Mazza at (508) 694-6843 or send an e-mail to lwvccapres2012@gmail.com. If you are relatively new to the League, don't be shy. This is a good way to get to know other League members.

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR OR CO-CHAIRS: The environment committee goals for the year are printed in the Handbook. A primary focus this year will be to continue to observe and participate in local and county wastewater discussions and to encourage regional collaboration on shared solutions. We need one or two people who are willing to keep the Environment Committee and Board informed of important public discussions and decision points and convene an occasional meeting to consider proposed actions or positions to be shared with the Board and membership. Again, if you are unable to attend Board meetings, do not let this be a barrier to your volunteering for this role. To discuss the role further please call or e-mail Judy Thomas, (508-432-2775, jmtrevid@aol.com)

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE MEMBERS: In the past two years we have had one person who has very capably helped us with fundraising. But this is an outreach role that would benefit from additional help. If you would be willing to assist in this important role please call Karen Mazza at (508) 694-6843 or send an e-mail to lwvccapres@gmail.com. We have been fortunate to receive donations from local businesses and we will continue with this approach. We may also try additional fundraising strategies and would welcome your ideas.

WILPF CONFERENCE

The Cape Cod Branch of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) is inviting LWV members to a free conference being held from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 22, at the Cape Cod Community College. Titled *Roots of Violence, Seeds of Change*, the conference is designed to look at the causes and repercussions of global issues that are right here on Cape, Cod

The conference will feature a "political fashion show," a nutritious lunch of foods from local growers, and six workshops focused on Cape Cod issues. One of them will be about "Clear Water for Cape Cod," a familiar topic for the League of Women Voters. Presenters from GreenCAPE, the Green Center, and the Falmouth Water Quality Committee will describe how they are nurturing "seeds of change" to reduce water pollution on Cape Cod. More detail will be sent shortly.

The challenge will be to energize conference attendees to network and collaborate for positive change. The afternoon program will be keynoted by Move to Amend's David Cobb, who has raised awareness around the country about the history and law underpinning corporate "rights" to virtually govern. His talk is related to the Democracy Amendment item on the November ballot in Massachusetts

Advance registration is required for lunch, through 508-432-4245. The conference will be held in the Commons at the 4Cs. Come for part or all of the day.
Jan Hively

OCTOBER FORUM: DEATH WITH DIGNITY

The Health Care Committee is organizing a forum titled "Death with Dignity: A Massachusetts Ballot Question" on October 20, 2012, 9:30 – noon at the Barnstable Senior Center in Hyannis. It is an informational program with four speakers representing different perspectives:

A representative from Dignity 2012, which got the signatures to put the issue on the ballot in November;

A representative from the Cape and Islands Hospice;

A representative from the Massachusetts Medical Society; and

A medical ethicist.

Presentations will be followed by questions for the panel, submitted in writing, and answers.

Joan Bernstein, Chair

Losing Cape Cod Forums – A summary of four town forums

Held late spring 2012 with Paul Niedzwiecki

League members attended these 4 meetings in Chatham, Orleans, Brewster and Harwich. We have summarized their reports in the following summary.

Questions

1. Time Frame: Is there any realistic possibility that something can be done in 5-10 years on the wastewater problem?

Answer: It is possible for water quality to improve, once a solution is in place, within 5-10 years due to the short time it takes for nitrogen to travel through the groundwater to an estuary in most areas of Cape Cod. Paul does think it might be possible for us to leverage federal dollars if we come together and approach this as a region.

2. Follow up: Even Chatham's plan spreads solution over many years. So in terms of the urgency, where does this leave things?

Answer: We need to get started now and prioritize the subwatersheds that require the most nitrogen removal to meet water quality standards, even though the total solution will take longer.

3. Why is it so hard to get residents to see the need for action?

Answer: When one of Cape Cod's 215,000 year-round residents flushes the toilet, no one can see what happens. It's not like a pot hole in the road. What happens is gradual, but it has been happening for a very long time.

4. Will you give some examples of where the situation is really dire right now?

Answer: Waquoit Bay between Mashpee and Falmouth is very bad. Pomponnesett Bay in Mashpee, Barnstable/Cotuit is bad. The Mashpee River is essentially dead with the exception of some worms. The more estuaries/bays go in land, such as in Barnstable, the worse the problem is. The wastewater situation is becoming increasingly well-known off cape as well as on—a fact that could impact tourism and home values.

5. What is the situation in Brewster, Bay side?

Answer: The 6-8 foot tide gives the Cape Cod Bay area a good flushing, so that area is not so bad. However, Brewster has a big problem with its ponds with phosphorous.

6. Explain about septic and nitrogen loading.

Answer: Cape-wide, 80% of the nitrogen problem is from wastewater. 85% of nitrogen is discharged in Cape backyards. Septic does very little to remove nitrogen. It removes pathogens. About 5% of the loading comes from fertilizers. Increasing culvert sizes, such as on Rt. 28 and Pleasant Bay, would increase flushing and reduce need for sewage treatment in some areas, where appropriate.

7. In terms of a "Big Pipe", isn't this a huge solution for our problem?

Answer: What's considered a "Big Pipe" here on the Cape would not be considered a big pipe in the Boston metro area. But no one is pushing one solution at this time. A sewage pipe is but one of other options to meet varied needs.

8. What does a “regional approach” mean?

Answer: Regionally we would/could advocate for more resources; we would/could urge better regulations from the state; we would/could also urge for more flexibility in some regulations. If CLF wins, it would most likely lead to federal solutions which tend to be big pipe solutions. Feds could require a higher level of treatment at the existing wastewater treatment facilities. If a facility is treating wastewater with effluent that results in 5 parts per million nitrogen (compared to 26 parts per million which is the concentration from septic) they may be required to treat to a lower level. Treating wastewater to below 5 parts per million requires technology that is very expensive.

9. What creates the cost?

Answer: 70% of the cost is collection and transport. 30% of the cost is what happens at the treatment facility. Facilities need to be built to handle flow from a population that more than doubles in the summer months.

10. How much of the problem is residential v. commercial property?

Answer: 74% of the residential property on Cape Cod is in a watershed that is potentially nitrogen sensitive. 80% of wastewater is generated from on-site septic systems.

11. Is the Commission advocating one plan over another, for example, a big pipe solution?

Answer: Absolutely not! Paul sees a “mosaic” of solutions as the way the Cape should go, a mix of traditional and green infrastructure /alternative approaches across Cape Cod.

12. What about technologies other than large wastewater treatment facilities?

Answer: The Commission plans to offer much information on all technologies, including the costs, efficiencies, etc. It has been spending the last 6 months on a software application that will allow towns to investigate for themselves. A centralized treatment solution is often the least costly solution; this is particularly true in a densely populated area.

13. What about a “wastewater authority?”

Answer: This was a term used, unfortunately, in the report of the Special Commission. However, neither the Wastewater Collaborative nor the CC Commission of the County has the authority to build anything. All decisions must be made locally in towns. There are economies of scale, however, and there is a greater likelihood of federal revenue if towns band together.

14. What about inter town cooperation? How do towns begin to talk with each other?

Answer: Many decisions need to be done on the basis of a watershed area to have the solution make sense. There are 57 watersheds on the Cape, 32% of them cross town boundaries. There are various models for inter-town conversations. For example, “Open Table” meetings between/among towns, often lead to “Closed Table” meetings with representatives from the Open Table. This is an approach they are taking in Colorado to manage their river basins-we have been exploring this approach at the Commission.

15. What is the influence of the town meeting form of local government?

Answer: Town Meeting is often viewed as the most democratic form of local government. However, when attendance at TM is minimal, there can become a tyranny of the minority. In this case, those who fear the high financial costs and loss of local autonomy can dominate the discussion and are under no obligation to deal only with the facts and scientific data. They are reluctant to confront the problem as a whole and the urgent need to address it now. The answer

to this is a better informed town and more persons willing and informed enough to speak in favor of solutions.

16. What can the county do?

Answer: The Cape Cod Commission is developing software to help the towns plan. The software will include the probable costs of various methods of wastewater treatment and information about what conditions make a particular solution workable. The software will also consider any consequences.

The County's tool will map not only the watersheds and their conditions, but also what happens to them given the application of different kinds of solutions, along with the relative cost of each solution. These possible costs would be a range rather than a specific. The tool would NOT constitute a scientific center for technical assistance. Andrew Gottlieb of the Cape Cod Water Collaborative and Paul are looking at what can be done to push various solutions, realizing that a variety of solutions will be appropriate for different places on the Cape. The Cape Cod Commission has regulatory authority only. All it can do is state whether or not a plan meets the regs. The County will continue to advocate solutions based on watersheds.

17. What other role can the county play? Can it help secure funding?

Answer: If the region can agree to action regionally, the County may be able to help secure federal and state money to help fund the projects. Paul only sees money coming to "Cape Cod" at this juncture. The goal would be to have 50% funding come from state and federal sources rather than property owners. Our elected officials have to be courageous enough to compete very hard for state and federal money.

18. What are the towns currently doing?

Answer: All the towns are working on wastewater from some and varying aspects. Some towns have plans ranging from those well underway (Chatham) to plans recently defeated at Town Meeting (Yarmouth) to Sandwich, which is just beginning.

19. What about the federal role?

Answer: The Cape is a national treasure – a great asset, similar in many ways to the Chesapeake Bay and the Great Lakes. The Cape also has the National Seashore and Mass Military Preserve. The state and Feds need to see the Cape as a priority; our legislators need to work hard.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP POT LUCK SUPPER AND PROGRAM

October 4, 2012 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

Cobblestone Landing Clubhouse in Hyannis, MA

The new season begins with a pot luck supper and our first general membership meeting. This is a great opportunity to greet each other and our newer members. The supper will be followed by a discussion of current League activities and ways to be involved. We are also interested in your ideas about ways to be responsive to local needs and issues.

We are especially pleased to have Dr. John Cox, new President of Cape Cod Community College join us for a conversation the rest of the evening. The 4C's has always been a good friend to the League and we are delighted to have this opportunity to welcome Dr. Cox. Dr. Cox is coming to the College after serving as Vice President for Finance, Operations, and Government Relations at Hartford Community College in Maryland. Dr. Cox has been a leader in the national sustainability movement and facilitated substantial expansion of environmental sustainability initiatives at Hartford College. We look forward to getting to know him!

This is a good time to invite friends to learn about our activities and participate. There is no charge for this event. In order to plan for the pot luck please register your attendance with Phyllis Walsh at walshpf@comcast.net. More details will be forthcoming.

Directions from Rt. 6, Exit 6:

1. Drive 1.4 miles south on 132 toward Hyannis until you reach Phinney's Lane on your right.
2. Turn right onto Phinney's Lane.
3. Drive .3 miles to a development on the left called Cobblestone Landing, Nantucket Village.
4. Turn left into the entrance and follow Sunnywood Drive bearing to the right until it ends at Centerboard.
5. Turn left onto Centerboard and go .1 miles to Clubhouse Drive on the right.
6. Turn right onto Clubhouse Drive and the Clubhouse will be at the end. Park your cars perpendicular to the lawn so there will be ample parking for everyone. The Handicap accessible entrance is on the left.

Directions from Rt. 28 and Phinney's Lane in Centerville:

Driving east on Rt. 28 after the Bell Tower Mall, turn left at Phinney's Lane stop light. Drive 1/6 miles to Cobblestone Landing, Nantucket Village.

Turn right off Phinney's Lane into the Cobblestone Landing, Nantucket Village entrance and follow Sunnywood Drive bearing to the right until it ends at Centerboard.

Follow steps 5 and 6 above.

SPECIAL SECTION

Barnstable County News

We take this opportunity to provide you with information on recent activities of the Regional Government of Cape Cod, known as Barnstable County. You may be surprised to know that that is the official name of this county! For many citizens, the programs of our county are a mystery. The two articles in this section, both published in the Barnstable Patriot this summer, were selected to help spread current information.

This article was published in The Barnstable Patriot July 13 2012

Barnstable County Matters: Three innovations aided by Barnstable County

Written by County Commissioner Mary Pat Flynn

Have you ever asked the question, "What does county government do?" If not, and even if you have, please take a few minutes to read this. You will find out that even with a county budget just under \$24 million, lower than any town operating budget on Cape Cod with the exception of Eastham, Truro and Wellfleet, county government is working for you. In addition to the services provided to towns and town agencies, the county leverages its resources to bring in additional monies through federal and state programs and grants that directly benefit residents of Cape Cod. Currently, there are three outstanding efforts receiving a lot of attention: Open Cape, wastewater, and E-permitting.

OpenCape

With a \$50,000 grant from the Cape Cod Economic Development Council and approved by the county commissioners, OpenCape was able to secure \$32 million in federal ARRA monies through a grant process, \$5 million from the state broadband initiative funding, \$2 million of private investment from CapeNet, and an in-kind grant from the county to use a section of the Public Safety building on the county campus previously occupied by the Barnstable County sheriff. Under the expert leadership of Dan Gallagher, OpenCape CEO (now retired), OpenCape has a fiber highway under construction Cape-wide and beyond that will be completed by January 2013.

The next step is developing the RAN (Regional Area Network), which is already under way. A major element of this aspect of the project is the creation of a Strategic Information Office, also under way, with the expert assistance of IBM Corporation.

Having access to high-speed Internet capability (1 gigabyte per second) is transformational for the towns, their citizens and businesses and will forever change the way we live and work on Cape Cod. And Barnstable County government helped make this happen.

WastewaterThe major role of county government in the area of wastewater is planning and technical assistance. The Cape Cod Water Protection Collaborative and the Cape Cod Commission have been working together to create an interactive tool that will allow users (the towns and other interested parties) the ability to explore the various components of wastewater planning options and their scientific and financial implications to "achieve successful wastewater management in any selected area of Cape Cod." This tool, Watershed MVP (Multi-variant Planner,) "combines interactive mapping, land use data, water quality data, and cost data in a flexible application." Please go to the Cape Cod Commission website and locate the Watershed MVP to learn how you can use this application in your community.

Wastewater planning has evolved from thinking “big pipes” or sewerage to exploring other alternatives and adaptive management to reduce nitrogen loading of our ponds and estuaries that may be less costly and may achieve similar or better results. The state budget for 2013 has \$350,000 designated to complete the development and approval of this tool. The state has been an exceptional partner in these efforts both financially and technically and we need to thank our state senators, Therese Murray and Dan Wolf, for shepherding through the funding for this project. And Barnstable County Government helped make this happen.

E-permitting

What a great idea. We give lots of credit to the Town of Yarmouth for exploring the feasibility for local residents to obtain permits on-line from their respective town for building permits, beach stickers, transfer station stickers, and any number of permits that can only be obtained now by making a visit to town hall. In your future lies a new experience.

Just imagine waking up at two in the morning and realizing that all the family members who arrived the previous evening are going to want to go to the beach in the morning and you forgot to get your beach sticker. With town hall closed on Saturday, there is no possibility to get that sticker until Monday. But with e-permitting, that won't happen. You will be able to get on your computer, go on the town's website, click on permits, complete the application for a beach sticker, pay the fee, print out your new beach sticker, and in the morning everyone goes to the beach.

With 13 additional towns signing on to the application for funds from the state's Regional Innovative Challenge grant, a grant award was made to the county through the Cape Cod Commission in the amount of \$500,000, the largest award granted and \$100,000 more than the City of Boston. And Barnstable County Government helped make this happen.

League members enjoyed participating in this tour of the county Cooperative Extension Service

THE BARNSTABLE PATRIOT August 17, 2012

County tour finds growing concerns all over



Written by Ellen Chahey



BUY FRESH, BUY LOCAL – That’s the advice of county extension nutritionist Sue Bourque. She and colleague Kim Condra have put together resources, including a cookbook, to help Cape Codders make the most of fresh local food.

Extension service bus visits Dennis, Chatham and Harwich

From shellfish to zucchini, from destructive insects to hazardous waste, from local food to beautiful beaches, it was time to board the bus behind Superior Court Aug. 8 and take the annual tour offered by the Cape Cod Cooperative Extension hosted by the extension's director, Bill Clark.

Clark has been leading these tours for years now. They are meant to give county officials and media a look at what the Extension does all over Cape Cod. In recent years, members of the League of Women Voters also go on the ride.

Each year Clark chooses a different area of the Cape as his focus. He has arranged tours to the Upper Cape, the Cape's tip, and everywhere in between. Lunch is part of the package, and has been served at Coonamessett Farm in Falmouth, Cromwell Court in Hyannis, various community centers, and under the trees at the county farm in Barnstable Village. Sometimes hosts offer snacks, once, memorably, of freshly shucked littlenecks

This year's trip included sites in Dennis, Harwich, and Chatham. About 15 people joined Clark for the tour.

This year's bus driver had an especially interesting story to tell the early arrivals. He grew up as the only hearing member of a deaf family. Mother, father, and siblings all spoke only sign language. "I was 28 years old before I learned how to speak English," he said. But even though his mother can't hear music and now uses a wheelchair, she loves to dance and happily goes out onto the floor as he pushes her in time to the rhythms.

The first stop was the Aquaculture Research Corporation (ARC) in Dennis. "It's extremely important to the Cape's economy," Clark said on the bus, because "out of 235 shellfish farms on the Cape, 90 percent get their seed from ARC." The plant, whose infrastructure is in terrible shape (leaking roofs, rusty old fans, boards to help people cross over puddles on the floor) was originally designed as a processing plant, not a hatchery.

ARC would like to sell its property, which includes nearly 40 acres of beautiful shoreland, to the county. The wild territory is "alive with birds," Clark said. From one window, herons were visible on the marsh.

The county is interested, according to Clark. Not only does ARC provide shellfish seed that supplies many Cape Codders with a livelihood, but they directly employ 18 people and they do wholesale business only with Boston and other off-Cape restaurants so as not to compete with Cape shellfishers

and their customers.

One way the business would like to reduce its costs is to build a wind turbine to generate electricity and possibly sell back some energy to the grid, but many neighbors don't like the idea. The bus, on its way to ARC, passed a neighborhood where some people displayed anti-turbine signs. One woman came out to the curb and yelled something at the bus; her sign said, "Make shellfish, not electricity."

Elsewhere in Dennis, Steve Spear grows blueberries and he invites people to his farm to come and pick them. But right now, there's a "Closed – Ripening" sign. Not only berries are ripening. So are some invasive insects that can ruin the blueberry crop.

Spear is working with an old friend – county entomologist Larry Dapsis – to figure out a way to deal with the pests. The blueberry farm has become "a surveillance site" for a type of fruit fly that came from the Orient via California and has invaded crops here.

"My office looks like I'm having a Tupperware party," said Dapsis of all the food containers that hold various stages of the lives of the insects that are ravaging Spear's blueberries. "Basically, we're in hand-to-hand combat."

In Harwich, the transfer station and the Family Pantry offered ideas of how to keep materials moving. The station recycles organic cuttings and welcomes Harwich gardeners to claim compost made from it.

The site offers a whole Dumpster devoted to "junk mail" and another where people with handicaps can recycle conveniently from their cars. Mike Kiernan, station manager, and Mike Maguire and David Quinn from the county offered a statistic: based on a study in which researchers actually ripped open trash bags and analyzed their contents, about 60 percent is textiles, meaning clothes, shoes, stuffed animals, and other everyday products.

Maguire said, "You can repurpose stuff like that other than to pay to have it taken away." He said that the county is capturing less than 10 percent of textiles from the waste stream.

At the Family Food Pantry in Harwich, there's a photo of the late Speaker of the House, Tip O'Neill, who loved the charity. Under his picture sits a bowl of fresh zucchini salad made by county extension nutritionists. The zucchini is cut in ribbons like noodles, except that there is no boiling water because the vegetable stays raw. The kitchen stays cool and the salad is delicious.

After lunch there is one more stop: the upweller in Chatham's Stage Harbor.

Chatham is one of the bigger shellfish propagators on the Cape. Renee Gagne, the town's shellfish constable, said that commercial permits, with a voluntary increase in the fees, "sustain the industry" – except with help from the county, she said.

Much more information is available at capecodextention.org or at 508-362-6690.