

THE CAPE COD VOTER

VOLUME 53 ISSUE 9

MAY 2013

CALENDAR

**Tuesday, May 7
9:30 am**

**Board Meeting
Cape Cod 5 Dennis**

**Thursday, May 9
5:00 pm – 7pm**

**LWVCCA Annual Meeting
Cobblestone Landing Clubhouse**

**Thursday, May 16
1:30 pm**

**Environment Committee
Cape Cod 5 Dennis**

Friday-Saturday May 17, 18

**LWVMA Convention
Boston Peabody Marriot Hotel**

WHAT'S INSIDE: Section 1:Page 2: President's Message, Board Notes, Money in Politics Report, County Government Committee Dues Renewal, Annual Meeting Registration

Section 2: Page 8:Annual Reports: Vice President, and Committee Chairs

Register for Annual Meeting! Send your registration and check to Ira Seldin using coupon on last page. This is a great opportunity to bring friends and prospective members to get acquainted with our League. Deadline for reservation is Thursday May 2!

PRESIDENTS'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Thank you! We have had a very active year and I would like to thank each of you who have led or participated in our many activities. Thank you to so many for helping to register voters and for supporting candidate nights. Thank you to Emily Hanna, Joan Craig, Florence Seldin, Judy Thomas and Michael Gradone for serving as moderator at special town issue discussions, forums and candidate nights. Thank you to Judy Thomas for organizing our legislative breakfast and our legislative directory. Thank you to Phyllis Walsh for her organization of our venues, food arrangements and her hospitality with style and graciousness. Thank you to all of our committee members and to our committee leaders: Barbara Wellnitz, Jari Rapaport, Nancy Curley, Judy Thomas, Renate Sands, Joan Bernstein, Betsy Bray, and Joan Grant. Thank you to our outgoing Board Members who have given many years of dedicated service: Phyllis Walsh, Betsy Bray, Debbie Aikman, Dottie Kelly, and Joan Grant and Renate Sands. Thank you to our Town Liaisons: Nancy Erskine, Kathleen Vogt, and Renate Sands. Thank you to Jari Rapaport and Terry Chesney for their preparation of the Voter. Thank you to Karen Miller and to Mary Hunter-Utt for their assistance with membership mailings. Thank you to Judy Thomas and Phyllis Walsh who have served as unofficial consultants and mentors to me as a new president. Thanks to all of you who have made phone calls to help us reach out to our members. Thank you to Renate and Chuck Sands for sound system support. **Our organization is strong because so many of you contribute in some way to helping us accomplish our work. Thanks to each and every one of you.**

Now it is time to celebrate! Come to Annual Meeting, Thursday, May 9 from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. This will be a catered event at Cobblestone's Landing in Hyannis. It is a time for us to mingle and socialize. Our only program will be to vote on the business within the Annual Meeting Workbook: approval of the program for next year, approval of the slate of officers, and approval of the budget. If you have not yet sent in your check please do so ASAP and e-mail Phyllis Walsh (walshpf@comcast.net) to let her know you will be coming.

Please renew your membership now. You may use the Membership slip located at the end of The Voter to send your membership check. Thank you. And invite others to join.

Looking back - Summary reports from our committees are contained within this issue of the Voter. This is a good way to review the year and see the ways that we contribute to democracy in action!

In League,

Karen Mazza, President

BOARD MEETING NOTES APRIL 2, 2013

- The following members will be attending the **LWVMA Convention** May 17, 18 as voting members: Judy Thomas, Jari Rapaport and Karen Mazza.
- The **Annual Meeting** will take place on Thursday, May 9 at Cobblestone Landing Clubhouse in Hyannis from 5:00 to 7:00 PM
- **The Sandwich Unit** will hold a forum on “The Power of Civic Engagement, What Steps Can You Take?” at the Sandwich High School Library on April 29, 2013t’
- **Environment Committee:** Coast week needs to be planned and will be put on the agenda for the annual meeting.
- **County Committee:** The County Committee will plan for the appropriate time to bring forward the League’s consensus on county structure.
- **Legislative Committee:** Inclement weather prevented many members and some legislators from attending the event. However, the smaller number and new format led to a very successful and informative event. .
- **Youth Outreach Committee:** The committee plans to meet with Social Studies Department Heads individually to learn about their present assets for civic and service learning and to hear their interests in potential ways that community groups like the League could support their work and that of their students.
- **Program Committee:** The committee will meet to plan a program for the general meeting in September. No date has been set.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

The Committee worked with our president, Karen Mazza, to prepare a My View piece for the Cape Cod Times which includes the League position on county structure recommendations and supports the newly appointed Charter Review Committee. We also urge the committee permit an open-ended discussion of all suggestions an order to reach consensus on any proposals on structure to be presented to the legislature. This appears to be the most likely route to action on this issue within the next few years. Without such consensus the legislature may not act

Members will observe the work of the Charter Review Committee throughout the process. We include here the League position concerning county structure:

The LWVCCA consensus supports the recommendation for a strong appointed County Administrator. We also support the recommendation for a new and smaller (number unspecified) legislative body, merging the Board of Commissioners with the Assembly of Delegates to form a legislature to be elected regionally.

Jari Rapaport, co-chair,

Money in Politics-The April Forum

Our April forum was all it promised to be in defining the critical issue of campaign financing and sparking action. Our member Theresa Martin also doubles as a reporter and covered the Forum for the internet newspaper Cape Cod Today. We thank her for this great coverage. A link to the full article is attached to this email. We are printing here a few highlights:

“The forum focused on what has happened and how we can respond to the influx of money into the political process triggered by the Citizens United Supreme court decision, and touched on topics ranging from corporate governance to term limits.

The 2010 Citizens United Supreme Court decision gave the nod to political spending by corporations, unions, and other organizations, saying that paid political spending by these entities constituted a form of First Amendment-protected free speech- and that the corporations have the same constitutional rights as people.

“Slavery is the legal fiction that a Person is Property. Corporate personhood is the legal fiction that Property is a Person” said panelist Mary Zepernick, starting off the debate of the morning. “Corporations are not people and money is not speech” she said.

But the Citizen’s United decision ripped away the past several decades worth of attempts to bring balance between interests and overhaul campaign finance.

“Money and politics is not a fringe issue” said panelist Tyler Creighton, assistant director of Massachusetts Common Cause, explaining that it needs to be a top priority because all other issues hinge on Congress making decisions based on the merits or on the public will – not on who wrote the biggest check or had hundreds of lobbyists deployed.

“Citizens United is really a symptom of a longer term issue, “Sen. Wolf said, challenging attendees to imagine how it would be if the first goal of the food industry...The goals and structure of many corporations reflect shareholder value, profit, and returns. In contrast, government is the civic expression of our collective will. Citizens United is an insult to that,” he added with emphasis.

Panelist Wolf publicly switched hats and put on his Cape Air CEO cap to point out that profit is not a dirty word, and that we should start by looking at changes that can happen within the existing structures. Instead of weakening corporations, the panel as a whole suggested strengthening government - or at least letting government do what it is already empowered to do. Common Cause’s Creighton pointed to the fertilizer plant explosion that decimated a Texas town this week as an example where a “defanged” agency lacked the power to prevent the disaster.

The session wrapped up with questions about what people can do at a local level to press the issue. Some ideas:

-Massachusetts has disclosure legislation proposed to close the Citizen’s United loopholes – work to help it pass.

-Support efforts to repeal Citizens United through local referendums.

-Talk about corporate governance. Ask for a shareholder proxy vote before a corporation spends politically.

-Support the election reforms voted for in Massachusetts but never implemented by the legislature.”

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Please print your contact information clearly so that we can improve the accuracy of information in our member handbook.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town: _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Membership dues are \$35 for first time members and \$55 for renewals.

Checks are payable to: LWVCCA

Mail to: Ira Seldin

321 Deer Meadow Lane

Chatham 02633

ANNUAL MEETING REMINDER

RESERVATION DEADLINE IS THURSDAY, MAY 2.
(See reservation coupon below.)

ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, May 9, 2013, 5:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M.

SOCIAL AND BUSINESS

Cobblestone Landing Clubhouse in Hyannis

(Where we had September Opening Meeting - Directions below)

Our annual meeting will be a light supper of finger foods, wine, non-alcoholic beverages and dessert. This will be an opportunity for our members to both socialize and conduct business in a comfortable, informal setting. We are responding to your request for more social opportunities.

The charge will be \$15/person for catered food. A reservation is required. The **deadline** is **Thursday, May 2**. Please respond by the **deadline**. Send the coupon below to:

Ira Seldin, 321 Deer Meadow Rd., N. Chatham, MA 02633

Coupon

_____ **YES! I'll be there. My \$15 check is enclosed.**

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 and drive 3 miles to a development on the left called Cobblestone Landing, Nantucket Village.
3. Turn left into the entrance and follow Sunnywood Drive bearing to the right until it ends at Centerboard.
4. Turn left onto Centerboard and go 0.1 miles to Clubhouse Drive on the right.
5. 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.

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

1. 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.
2. Turn right off Phinney's Lane into the Cobblestone Landing, Nantucket Village entrance and follow the directions above within the development. .

SECTION 2

ANNUAL REPORTS 2012-2013

Vice-President's Report 2012/13

My role during the year was to arrange venues for our Opening Meeting, the October and April Forums, the Christmas Brunch, the Legislative Breakfast and the Annual Meeting. I also arranged videotaping of the forums.

Public Forums

- Health Care on Ballot Question 2 - Barnstable Senior Center - October 20, 2012 - We had 110 attendees.
- Money in Politics - Harwich Community Center - April 20, 2013 - We had sixty-one attendees.

Membership Meetings/Social Programs

- Opening Meeting/Membership Social - Cobblestone Landing, Nantucket Village, Hyannis - October 4, 2011 - Dr. John Cox, new President, of Cape Cod Community College, was our guest speaker. Twenty-six members and four guests attended.
- Annual Meeting - Cobblestone Landing, Nantucket Village, Hyannis - May 11, 2013 - This will be a membership social/business meeting.

Brunches

- Holiday Brunch - The Riverway Lobster House, South Yarmouth, December 8, 2012 - Jan Hively, LWVCCA member and former Planning Director and Deputy Mayor of Minneapolis, MN., was our guest speaker. We had 33 paid attendees.
- Legislative Breakfast - Cape Cod Community College, Lorusso Applied Technology Building, March 20, 2013 - We had thirty-eight paid attendees plus twelve guests. However, due to snowy conditions, we had twenty-four total attendees.
- Videotaping
- Channel 99 videotaped our forums which were rebroadcast on this channel. In addition, we have several DVD's of our forums for use on our web site and by the committees.

All of the events mentioned above received an enthusiastic response from our members and the Cape Cod community based on positive feedback and the outpouring of attendees for each event.

. Phyllis Walsh
Vice President

Program Committee Report 2012-2013

Program Committee members Joan Craig, Jane Texeira-Henry, Renate Sands, Phyllis Walsh and Karen Mazza met three times this year to consider planning for a forum which was held on April 20 on Money in Politics. This forum was part of a state wide initiative by LWVMA to educate the public about the impact of corporate money on the electoral process and on elected officials. The presenters were Mary Zepernick from Move to Amend, State Senator Dan Wolf and Tyler Creighton from Massachusetts Common Cause. Information was discussed about the process of supporting a constitutional amendment to overturn the impact of the Supreme Court Decision known as Citizens United. Legislative pathways to mitigate the impact of this court decision were also discussed.

We also reviewed possibilities for showing documentaries related to League program issues but we were not able to initiate that this year. We did co-sponsor the showing of the documentary, "The Invisible War" which was initiated by the Cape Cod branches of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and Veterans for Peace. This documentary revealed the problem of sexual abuse within the military and the abuse of power that has denied victims access to a fair judicial process. The failure of the military to hold perpetrators accountable and the culture of cover up have left both women and men vulnerable to continued abuse. Congress is reviewing actions to address this situation and the documentary urges all those who care about abuse to encourage their congressional representatives to take action.

Supporting Youth Committee 2012-2013

The Supporting Youth Committee continued its work in support of the Strategic Plan to Support Youth Success initiated by the Cape Cod Foundation. Karen Mazza, as Committee Chair, has continued to serve as liaison from LWVCCA to the Steering Committee of the strategic plan. Committee members include Jane Hinckley, Bea Auty, Claire Gradone, Jan Hively and Christine Hart. The LWVCCA Supporting Youth Committee met twice this year to consider our role within the strategic plan focused on supporting civic education in schools. We have begun the process of contacting school district representatives to explore how we can support their civic education activities. After interviewing school representatives we will develop a map of existing school and community resources for civic education and collaborate with schools about ways to enhance those efforts. Jan Hively initiated contact with town clerks to ask them to take over the role of sending letters to youth turning 18 encouraging them to register to vote. Several town clerks have assumed that responsibility, while others are supporting registration information at the high schools. Linell Grundman has invited the Sandwich High School Social Studies Department Head to be a part of the Civic Engagement Forum in Sandwich on April 29, 2013.

Voter Service Committee 2012-2013

Participating in National Voter Registration Day, this year LWVCCA held registration drives at two sites and another drive at Cape Cod Community College. Thanks to our members who staffed these drives! We held one debate for the general election in the fall which featured two races: the 5th Barnstable District and the Plymouth Barnstable Senate District. The debate was held at the Sandwich High School and co-sponsored with the *Cape Cod Times*. We commend the League's Health Committee for sponsoring a forum on ballot question dealing with death with dignity. This forum was definitely a voter service. On October 17th we held a televised only debate for the County Commissioner election. This debate was held at the Cape Cod Community Media Center in Dennis. I am grateful for the valued support members give to voter service debates for moderating, timing, collecting and sorting cards and "hosting" – all of which make our forums a good experience for the public. In January, new chair Barbara Wellnitz assumed responsibilities cheerfully and very responsibly.

Judy Thomas, chair (June through December 2012)

Voters Service Report – January to May 2013

This has been a very busy season for our LWV Voter Service volunteers: moderators, timekeepers, and card sorters, from Sandwich to Eastham.

LWV Cape Cod Area members have moderated a forum sponsored by the Eastham Water Action Committee in early March, a School Committee candidates' night in Sandwich on April 8th, a candidates' night in Dennis on April 24th, and a candidates' night in Chatham on April 29th. In addition, we supplied a moderator for the Chatham Solid Waste Forum on April 25th. Our LWV members served as card sorters and timekeepers for most of these events as well. And, some of our most experienced timekeepers will provide their services for the Eastham town meeting on May 6th and again for Chatham town meeting on May 14th – the latter two events won't require our moderators.

To help sustain the League's non-partisan position, moderators cannot serve in their own towns, although timekeepers and card sorters do sometimes serve in their own towns.

In addition to these forums, we also held a moderator training session, led by Judy Thomas. Four of our members were trained on April 3rd. There also are three others who have indicated their interest in becoming moderators, so we will likely schedule a second training session sometime later this year (likely in the Fall). The Voter Service Committee always welcomes new members, and we look forward to scheduling a committee meeting soon.

Barbara Wellnitz, Chair

Voter Service Committee (January 2013 to present)

Legislative Activity

Following the general election in the fall, a major activity in early winter was the total revision of our brochure "Directory of Elected Officials." New, sharp formatting was used, an attractive cover, and funding secured for the production. Distribution began in late March-early April.

Three members attended LWVMA activities in Boston for the "Day on the Hill." Our Legislative Breakfast was held on a very inclement March 22 which reduced our attendance, including two legislators. Those who were able to get to 4Cs for the event found the new format informative and useful. The work of Phyllis Walsh and her team in handling all the event arrangements was much appreciated. The March *Voter* included an article on "Advocacy – what you need to know." An article, "How a bill becomes a law" is planned for the June 2013 *Voter*. As anticipated new chair Helen Bresnahan takes over, I wish her much success in this position.

Judy Thomas, chair

Environment Committee 2012-2013

Over the summer, members attended and reported on four of the information meetings the Cape Cod Commission held in each Cape town titled, "Losing Cape Cod." Our report was summarized in the September *Voter*. Coast Day was held Sept. 15 at the Highland Center in Truro where Cathy Skowron with the CC National Seashore gave an introduction and overview of the Atmospheric Radiation Measurement mobile facility. All other work of the committee has focused solely on the wastewater issue on the Cape. In January, Renate Sands became a much appreciated co-chair of the committee. Also in January the committee met with Rob O'Leary to hear of his work with the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce on wastewater. Jari Rapaport and Judy Thomas attended focus groups of the Cape Cod Commission as part of its process for developing a new wastewater management plan.

Judy Thomas and Renate Sands, co-chairs

Health Committee 2012-2013

On October 20th the Health Care Committee conducted an educational forum on ballot question #2, "Prescribing Medication to End Life", a "Law Proposed by Initiative Petition" which was narrowly defeated Nov. 6th. About one hundred people attended.

An outstanding panel of experts addressed the medical, legal, and medical ethical issues involved. Rebekah Gewirtz, Director of Government Relations for the National Association of Social Workers, represented Dignity 2012, the sponsor of the ballot measure. Dr. Maryanne C. Bombaugh, who practices in Falmouth and Chairs the Committee on Legislation of the

Massachusetts Medical Society and former president of the Barnstable Medical Society presented the Massachusetts Medical Society's position. David Rehm, president and CEO of HopeHealth discussed the intersection of palliative care and death with dignity. Dr. Marc D. Silverstein, recently retired as Chief Decision Scientist at the Institute for Clinical and Economic Review at Massachusetts General Hospital and currently serving on the Ethics Committee of Cape Cod Hospital, analyzed the decision process involved in medical ethics..

Following their presentations, the panelists answered questions from the audience submitted in writing for about 45 minutes. The Cape Cod Community Media Center taped the forum and broadcasted it several times before the election on Channels 99 and 19.

Joan Bernstein

Chair

County Governance Committee

The Committee has continued to observe meetings of the County Commissioners on a weekly basis as well as the meetings of the Assembly of Delegates which meets twice a month. We are the only group in attendance, aside from the press, which in any way represents the citizens they serve. For that reason we encourage our members to join us when possible, for it demonstrates each week to our elected officials an interested and concerned public to whom they are responsible.

A major interest is the compliance with the Open Meeting Law which requires transparency in the work of public officials. The League has addressed the Commissioners frequently calling attention to failures to comply, and the Barnstable Patriot filed a complaint with the Attorney General. We have also urged further work in providing essential information in their agendas and records of activity each month. Procedures have improved considerably. We continue to ask for action to inform the public on county services including a user friendly website and are pleased to report that work has begun on this front.

We have continued to follow implementation of the recommendations made by several organizations for a more effective form of county government, following the League's own consensus on this subject last spring. We have been troubled by lengthy delays in dealing with these recommendations, and by the resolution passed by the Assembly recently calling for a 5 member Board of Commissioners and retaining the 15 member Assembly. The Assembly has appointed a new Charter Review Committee to study all recommendations and prepare legislation for potential action by the state legislature next session. The Committee will monitor these sessions as well. We will be publicizing our concerns and our position on the need for a more effective governing structure in the coming months.

Jari Rapaport, Nancy Curley

Co-Chairs

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Five new members have joined the League this year. Thanks to Sandwich member Karen Miller for sending the welcome letter and Membership Directory to the new members.

Karen also assisted writing the new member biographies for inclusion in The Voter. The Board also decided to continue the introductory rate of \$35 for first time members.

Are you a new 50 year member? We would like to honor you at our upcoming Annual Meeting. Please contact: Betsy Bray at braybetsy@gmail.com or 508-432-4824

Betsy Bray and Joan Grant, Membership Co-Chairs

THE HELEN S. AARON EDUCATIONAL TRUST

Two Board meetings were held this year. At the September meeting an orientation was held for new Board members. The Ed Trust helped fund this year's Directory of Elected officials as well as "I can help you register to vote buttons". The Board has elected (pending LWVCCA Board approval) Judy Thomas, Chairman, Nancy Curley, Secretary and Florence Seldin for 2 year terms.

Betsy Bray Chairman

On a personal note, it has been a pleasure serving on the Board these past 4 years I hope to remain involved as a League member.