

THE CAPE COD VOTER

VOLUME 52 ISSUE 7

MARCH 2012

CALENDAR

**Monday, March 5
2:00 pm**

**County Committee
Cape Cod 5 Dennis**

**Tuesday, March 6
9:30 am**

**LWVCCA Board Meeting
Cape Cod 5 Dennis**

**Tuesday, March 6
11:30 am**

**Voter Service Committee
Cape Cod 5 Dennis**

**Monday, March 12
2:00 pm**

**Environment Committee
Long Pasture Sanctuary**

**Friday, March 23
7:30 am**

**LWV Legislative Breakfast
Tech Building, Cape Cod
Community College**

LOOKING AHEAD

SAVE THESE DATES

Day on the Hill

Wednesday, April 23

Climate Change Forum

Saturday, April 28

Dear League Friends,

I try to make it a daily habit to take a forty minute walk – usually through the quiet streets of my neighborhood. Here and there I always see homes under some form of repair or renovation. Sometimes it's just new shingles or a fresh coat of paint; sometimes a major redo is in progress like adding a second floor. We all know if the value of our property is to be maintained or strengthened (whether we are the owners or someone else), such upkeep is essential.

Recently, reflecting on this, it occurred to me that something similar is true of organizations as well. To maintain their “value” they too must assess, “modernize” and renovate.

Along with its outwardly visible work – forums of all sorts – the Cape Area League has also pursued internal “renovations.” We've had summer focus meetings where we brainstormed new ideas. We've revised our by-laws and job descriptions to make them conform more to what actually happens or what we believe should happen to guide and refresh our leadership. The Helen S. Aaron Educational Trust, under Betsy Bray's leadership has re-found its buried bylaws and its board will be considering soon a much needed rewrite of the original 1985 by-laws. The goal has been simplifying and clarifying much of the language while retaining all the original intent as well as the original document in an historical appendix. And under Karen Mazza's leadership a small group of newer board members have been looking at the functioning of our committees and units. The question is how do we fulfill our mission effectively, expediently and in a manner attractive to women and men of the new or newer generation of Cape residents. We need to be purposeful yet find great pleasure in what we do. Karen's committee's final recommendations will be ready by April.

The end result of all this we trust will be an organization of greater value, structured to meet the needs and to use and develop the skills of current, new and prospective members.

Stay tuned! Involve yourself whenever your interests and time allows. You just might be inspired to make the League a greater priority in your life when you see our renovated product!

Don't miss the work of our County Committee that you'll find on inside pages. As you'll read, we have been impressed with the work of the Special Commission of County Governance. Once we have their final recommendations, we hope to have a general membership meeting to further discuss and refine our own response. As I said: Stay tuned!

In League with you,

Judy

BOARD NOTES, February 2012

- The board discussed the challenges put forth by the LWVUS for the current year. The general feeling was that we were meeting most of the challenges but some additional ideas were generated.
- The Annual Meeting will be held at the Riverway restaurant on Rt. 28 in South Yarmouth on Saturday, May 19, 2012.
- Cancellation procedures for League events were discussed.
- The Health Care Committee was congratulated on their successful forum.
- The County Committee has been actively monitoring the Special Commission on Governance. The Special Committee is in the process of finalizing their recommendations. In order to include the membership and not just the board we may hold a general meeting or unit meetings in March.
- The Legislative Breakfast will be held at Cape Cod Community College in Building 10 on Friday, March 23, 2012 at 7:30 AM. Please see the Voter for further information.
- The 'Directory of Elected Officials' pamphlet has been completed and distributed.
- The Supporting Youth Committee continues to work with Cape Cod Foundation. League involvement in this effort will be through voter service, civic education and publicity.
- The Environment Committee is finalizing plans for the forum "Climate Change and the Future of Cape Cod" to be held on April 28, 2012 at the Harwich Community Center.
- The Voter Service Committee is canvassing high schools to see what voter registration programs currently exist.
- The 'New Member Gathering' will be held May 6th at Joan Bernstein's house.
- The Sandwich Unit is working with the town of Sandwich to produce a similar schematic map as the one that was developed for the Barnstable County Government. The Sandwich Enterprise has agreed to circulate 3000 copies and print another 3000 for distribution.
- Jari's idea of starting an editor's blog in the Voter was well received.
 - Day on the Hill is April 25, 2012.

Renate Sands, Secretary

2012 LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

FRIDAY, MARCH 23

Make sure you clip the coupon on the next page and mail in your reservation for our Legislative Breakfast! It's your chance to see our legislators respond to our issues, and remember, all are facing election in the fall!

You are cordially invited to attend the
League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area

ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

FRIDAY, MARCH 23, 2012

7:30 AM

CAPE COD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

LORUSSO APPLIED TECHNOLOGY BUILDING, ROOM 213

*This is your opportunity to meet with
the legislators who represent you.*

Bring your questions and your appetite! Bring a friend!

The breakfast, including tax and gratuity, is \$15.00 per person. Please make check payable to LWVCCA and return the coupon below with your check, no later than March 16th, to:

Debbie Aikman 78 Water St. Chatham, MA02633

*For additional information, contact Joan Craig at 508-259-5357. See
Directions to the site on last page*

_____ YES! I'll be there.

Please print clearly

_____ YES! I'm bringing a friend.

Please print guest(s) names clearly

Unfortunately, I'm unable to attend, but I wish to contribute to the breakfast.

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$_____ payable to LWVCCA.

**DIRECTIONS to: Lorusso Applied Technology Building
Cape Cod Community College
Route 132
Hyannis (Barnstable)**

Take exit 6 off Route 6. Go north on Route 132 (opposite direction of retail malls). Take first right into Cape Cod Community College. Continuing right (this is a one-way circular drive around the campus), park in parking lot 10 directly across from Lorusso Applied Technology Building (overflow parking in lot 11).

Crossing the one-way drive, Lorusso is directly in front of you. Walk the uphill path, which brings you to the back of the building. Enter the double doors and take the stairs or the elevator to the 2nd floor upper lounge.

HANDICAP PARKING: For those in need of a handicap parking space, we suggest you take a left into the handicap parking entrance directly across from Parking Lot 9.

For additional information, go to www.capecod.edu and search for maps. This will give you the layout of the college, and by clicking on building #10, you can view the Lorusso Applied Technology Building.

COUNTY COMMITTEE

The Special Commission on County Governance has nearly finished its study and recommendations for a more responsive and efficient government. A meeting is planned for Wednesday, February 29th, but it is possible that another meeting will be necessary to complete the work. However two significant issues have surfaced and the County Commissioners have already acted on them. They are judged to be the two most substantial and important areas, aside from government structure.

Wastewater

At the February 16th meeting the Commission approved a recommendation for a regional wastewater authority in order to move ahead on dealing with regional wastewater problems. To date the Wastewater Collaborative, a body composed of representatives from each town and charged with developing a plan to meet the issue, has not come forward with agreement on such a plan. There is also concern that the state or the federal government will impose arbitrary solutions that do not take into account the cape's actual situation and need if we have not acted locally within the next year. Failure to address the issue is seen to threaten both the environmental and economic health of the Cape.

The County Commissioners did not wait for the recommendation to be presented, but at their Feb.22nd meeting moved "to direct the Executive Directors of the Cape Cod Commission and the

Wastewater Collaborative to undertake an evaluation of the options for regionalization and to develop draft legislation to implement any required changes....” The directive also called for the process to include public input.

On Sunday the 26th, The Cape Cod Times published an article announcing the formation of a group tentatively called “The Coalition Against an Undemocratic Regional Wastewater Authority”. This underscores the very complicated issues and fears that apparently have dogged all past efforts at a regional plan.

Regional Umbrella Services System

This refers to the new county capability, made possible by the Open Cape Project, to host public regional area network services. The Special Commission has also recommended that the county move promptly in this area. It would be housed in the Open Cape structure on the County campus in Barnstable. Because of the Open Cape broadband infrastructure throughout public entities on the cape, this network can be used to compile data and distribute it accurately and quickly. It would be used to help each town with many existing services such as assessing, permitting, etc with financial savings. There are many potential services of value. The County Commissioners also took the initiative here and moved at the Feb. 22nd meeting to direct The Executive Director of the Cape Cod Commission to form a small group to plan for implementation. Some funds have been placed in the County Budget for 2013.

Government Structure

The Commission has not yet voted on a recommended structure. There are several differences of opinion at this point. Some feel that a new structure is needed to deal with administrative recommendations as to county departments. Others feel that the process to change the structure would take years and distract the county from taking steps to carry out recommendations that could be accomplished administratively. See next page for LWV recent comments.

The League of Voters of the Cape Cod Area

Communication to

The Special Commission on County Governance

February 29, 2012

As the Special Commission nears the completion of the charge given it by the County Commissioners, we wish to applaud you on the hard work, diligence, thoroughness you have given to your task. We have been able to observe most of your meetings and have appreciated the document sharing which has occurred. We have learned along with you.

Based on testimony given and discussion we have heard, and, in the case of increased communication with the fifteen towns, not heard, we offer you the following:

Regarding governance and the executive branch:

- We continue to believe that a single strong executive will strengthen the functioning of county government as we stated in our testimony of Nov. 30, 2011.
- At this time we continue to support the election of this executive rather than appointment. However, we recognize the validity of several of the claims of those

who advocate for an appointed official. Our primary concern with an appointed official is the independence and ability of someone to be an effective leader when the position is subject to the approval of those few who appointed him/her. We prefer approval be subject to the voters. And we reiterate that we believe an elected position would give rise to greater visibility and discussion of the issues before the county.

- We continue to believe that the county governance structure is of **primary importance** and trust that it will remain under active consideration even as other recommendations are acted upon in a more immediate manner.

Relationship to the fifteen towns:

- We highlight again our Nov. 30th comment of the need for much improved communication with the towns and the people of Cape Cod. This will be of growing importance with the acceptance of your recommendations. Therefore, before you conclude your work, we strongly urge that you take up this topic in order to consider a recommendation for some form of an office of public information.

Name Change:

- The League has no position on changing the name of Barnstable County at this time. However, in the past we have spoken about the confusion caused by other name similarities within the County – namely the three County Commissioners and the Commissioners of the Cape Cod Commission. In that situation we have recommended name change. Thus, support for eliminating the confusion caused by having the county and a town within the county sharing the same name seems a logical extension of our previous position. We are likely to formally address County name change at a later time.

What Happens Next?

- We wonder if your Commission might consider as part of your recommendations that the County Commissioners establish a task force to further the implementation of any of your recommendations which the County Commissioners might accept. The work you have done is too significant and too important to have it come to naught or simply get bogged down under various political and or special interest controversies.
- Finally a word for the County Commissioners themselves who will receive your work – we pose three questions:
 1. How will the report be reviewed?
 2. Will the public be involved? We hope so.)
 3. Will a time frame be established for the review and your response?

Thank you for your attention.

Judy Thomas, President

VOTER SERVICE

The Voter Service crew, who have been working on school contacts and other projects, will meet on March 6th at 12:00 pm at the Cape Cod Five in Dennis after the regular Board meeting. We will hear their reports, and exchange ideas for other activities. With local town elections approaching, we will certainly be involved in hosting candidates forums and will be planning for those.

We would welcome other Leaguers who have an interest in participating in these important debates. We need timers, ushers, and moderators. If you have an interest in moderating, but have never done so, we offer a training session with a League certified trainer.

And, by the way, you are also encouraged to come early, at 9:30, to observe your Board members in action. It's a great way for newer members to get acquainted with the full scope of League concerns.

If you plan to attend both meetings you might want to bring a bag lunch or at least a snack to see you through. We expect to end at 1:00 p.m.

Elizabeth Levy, Chair

APRIL PREVIEW PLAN TO BE THERE!

Climate Change and The Future of Cape Cod–

Forum on April 28, 2012, 9:30 – 12 Harwich Community Center

Cape Cod is especially vulnerable to climate change. Our quality of life, our economy, and our natural environment is dependent on the waters surrounding us. This Forum gives us an opportunity to learn about the ramifications for our lives and the lives of our children and grandchildren. The speakers are:

Eric Davidson, *Executive Director of the Woods Hole Research Center;*
Megan Tyrrell, *National Seashore's Research and Monitoring Coordinator;*
Lauren McKean, *Director of the National Seashore's Climate Friendly Parks Program*
Paul Niedzwiecki, *Executive Director of Cape Cod Commission*

SAVE THE DATE!

DAY ON THE HILL

Wednesday, April 25, 2012

This is an opportunity to mingle with League of Women Voters members from all over Massachusetts and to meet your legislators at the State House for small group discussions on the important issues and hot topics. Mark your calendar for this important event.

From LWVMA: "If you've never been, here's what happens. In the morning, well-known speakers from inside and outside the state government will address this year's theme of **money in politics.**

Then the state League's legislative specialists will outline the major bills they are following and that they would like you to discuss with your legislators. You'll get a description of the legislation, complete with talking points, in advance of Day on the Hill so you will be prepared.

The presentations end around noon, and then you are encouraged to stop by the offices of your Senator and Representative and ask them to support League-backed legislation. It's helpful to contact your legislators in advance and make an appointment to see them that day, after about 12:30. You can make a day of Day on the Hill with a late lunch at one of the many restaurants in the State House area.

Lobbying the state legislature is one of the key activities of the League of Women Voters and everyone who shows up in person makes an enormous difference in the success of our legislative efforts. Get together with friends in your League and plan to participate in this year's Day on the Hill."

Carpool plans are underway, as well as meeting time and place for LWVCCA to meet with our legislators. If you are interested in joining your League sisters for a Day on the Hill, please contact Legislative Liaison Joan Craig at 508-259-5357. More information will follow.

NEWS FROM LWVUS

The LWVUS recently announced two new campaign finance reform initiatives.

- Campaign Finance Reform Task Force
- Campaign Finance Reform Legislation

Campaign Finance Reform Task Force - the following was taken from the LWVUS Leader's Update dated February 2, 2012, President's Corner. "The Task Force will be charged with exploring interim and long term solutions for the purpose of educating our members and the public as well as informing our advocacy at all levels of League. The 2012 election provides an ideal opportunity to raise awareness of the implications of unlimited money in elections and to advocate for the reforms that can be achieved legislatively, including improved disclosure and tighter limitations on what constitutes an "independent" expenditure. most of the special interest big money flowing into elections this year is for so-called "independent" spending.

The LWVUS Board determined that the League is not in a position, at this time, to support a Constitutional amendment in this area or the efforts currently underway to encourage state legislatures to adopt resolutions in support of a Constitutional amendment. The Board concluded that too many questions about this approach remained unanswered. The Supreme Court in Citizens United used several well-established legal concepts to create an elections funding formula that leaves a legal tangle among "independent" expenditures, so-called corporate free speech, freedom of the press and the meaning of "person" under the Constitution. Constitutional solutions will have implications beyond campaign finance, and we need to build on our solid reputation among lawmakers for proposing well-considered solutions to difficult policy problems."

Campaign Finance Reform Legislation - The information below was taken from The LWVUS Leader's Guide dated February 16, 2012.

The LWVUS lobby corps is "asking House Representatives to cosponsor H.R. 4010, DISCLOSE 2012, introduced by Rep. Chris Van Hollen. The legislation provides essential new disclosure requirements to cover the hundreds of millions of dollars in secret contributions being injected into federal elections by non-profit groups and other entities. The legislation also ensures that there will be timely disclosure by Super PACs. The League and coalition partners also sent a letter to the House in support of H.R. 4010. "The coalition partners are "Americans for Campaign Finance Reform, the Brennan Center for Justice, the Campaign Legal Center, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, Common Cause, Democracy 21, the League of Women Voters, People For the American Way, Public Campaign, Public Citizen and the Sunlight Foundation." The coalition letter can be seen on the LWVUS web site. On the home page, enter Disclose 2012 in search. Then click on More and the letter will appear.

"The February 23 Leader's Update reported that Elizabeth McNamara was invited to a meeting with Nancy Pelosi and the DISCLOSE bill sponsors and used the League's voice effectively to stress the importance of concentrating on this approach to Citizen's United, even though long term solutions are being considered."

EDITORS BLOG:

To contribute, just email to your editors your ideas and we'll add them to this page and print it in the next Voter issue. We'll keep this going a few more times and see what happens!

Jari Rapaport -Agriculture as well as aquaculture is becoming a more vibrant part of the Cape economy. And more than cranberries! Maybe we could repeat the local farm tour that we sponsored a few years back. Any interest? Jan.29

Sue Pellowe - I like the tour of farms idea. Let's think also about a closer look at bees and their role in farms on the cape. Feb.3

Jari -There are some great places to learn and look at bees up close- well protected of course! Feb.29

