

THE CAPE COD VOTER

VOLUME 52 ISSUE

APRIL 2012

CALENDAR

Monday, April 2
1:00 pm

Helen S. Aaron Ed.Trust
Cape Cod 5 Dennis

Tuesday, April 3
9:30 am

LWVCCA Board Meeting
Cape Cod 5 Dennis

Thursday, April 5
2:00 pm

County Government Committee
Cape Cod 5 Dennis

Wednesday, April 18
9:30 am (coffee 9:15)

Chatham Warrant Meeting
Park Place, Chatham

Friday, April 20
Afternoon

Health Committee
Place TBA

Monday, April 23
1:00 pm

Environment Committee
Long Pasture Sanctuary

Monday, April 23
7:00 pm

Candidate Forum
Sandwich Town Hall

Wednesday, April 25
9:30 am to Noon

Day on the Hill
State House, Boston

SATURDAY, APRIL 28

9:30 AM coffee; 10:00 am FORUM

CLIMATE CHANGE FORUM

Harwich community Center

SAVE THIS DATE
LWVCCA ANNUAL MEETING
SATURDAY, MAY 19

Dear Members,

I'm delighted to report to you that the **first phase** of our **current** study of the structure of the Regional Government of Cape Cod has come to a fruitful conclusion.

About two-thirds of our active membership was able to attend either the afternoon or evening meetings on March 29. Both meetings had thoughtful discussions of the issues. Member Sheila Lyons (also one of the County's three County Commissioners) was helpful in the afternoon meeting providing more background on county government, particularly the executive and administrative areas. The evening session included Mary Lou Petitt, Special Commission member and "retired" 14 year member of the Assembly of Delegates. Mary Lou also answered numerous questions about the Special Commission and the Assembly.

The results of the discussions in both groups revealed that the League had consensus and supports the Special Commissioners' recommendation that asked for a single, strong executive who would be appointed. (For further details on the Commission's recommendation, I refer you back to one of the documents Jari emailed you which included the full recommendation.)

In both groups, the second recommendation for a reduction in size of the legislative body [but which would merge the current Commissioners and the Assembly of Delegates] from the current 15 with representatives from each town, with a weighted vote to a new configuration of 7 legislators, five elected on a regional basis and two elected on a cape-wide basis drew the most discussion. The League agreed in principle with a significantly reduced size of the legislative body to be elected regionally, but it could not quite reach consensus on the number of legislators or whether or not that number should include two legislators elected Cape wide. The League felt that more study and discussion are needed on the size and composition.

Finally, there was strong support that the League continue to advocate for change to create a more responsive, efficient regional government.

Our County Committee and the Board will now review notes from the meetings and some of the concerns and comments that came out of the consensus discussion. From this review, will emerge our plans for **Phase Two**.

I am tremendously proud of the work done by our County Committee. The hours they have spent observing county government, reflecting in very thoughtful ways about what they have seen and what they perceive to be the needs of the county today and in the future, and then preparing for this study and consensus, are enormous. Jari Rapaport, Nancy Curley (co-chairs) and Renate Sands who is helpful in dozens of ways are simply amazing!

But County stuff is not all the League is doing! The environment committee under the direction of Rory Marcus has a superb forum planned on Climate Change, particularly as it related to the Cape. DON'T MISS IT – SATURDAY, APRIL 28! See inside for more details.

Warm regards,

Judy

FORUM: CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE FUTURE OF CAPE COD

What in the World is happening to our World! It seems like every day the weather news makes one wonder, and worry! Cape Cod, surrounded by water, on the edge of the continent, is very vulnerable. Our Environment committee has met this head on and offers us this wonderful opportunity to learn about climate change and Cape Cod from a truly expert panel. It will be held on April 28th at the Harwich community Center. The speakers are:

Eric Davidson, Executive Director, Woods Hole Research Center
Megan Tyrrell, National Seashore Research and Monitoring Coordinator
Lauren McKean, National Seashore Park Planner and Green Team Leader
Paul Niedzwiecki, Executive Director, Cape Cod Commission

This will obviously interest many friends and neighbors, so make sure to let them know about it and take advantage of the presentation and also get to know the League. The **Flyer** is attached to this issue and can be shared widely.

BOARD NOTES, March, 2012

- Elaine Bono is continuing to improve. Please send her messages of encouragement.
- A fall forum was discussed and several topics were mentioned. It was decided to see how some of the issues that we are following evolve over the next few months.
- A newspaper column in local newspapers is still under consideration. We need to come up with a strategic plan and ideas for the column.
- Two more positions have been filled by the Nominating Committee. Phyllis Walsh has agreed to stay on as Vice-President and Joan Craig will be Secretary.
- League members who have town or county positions will be asked to share their experiences at the Annual Meeting.
- The Field Service Arm of the LWVMA has been revitalized. Phyllis Walsh will continue to participate in the program.
- Chatham's 300 year anniversary is approaching. Judy Thomas and Sally Cahill have volunteered to carry the LWVCCA banner in the July 4th parade.
- Our League's President, Judy Thomas, has urged us to contact our legislators to express our views on current legislation.
- The Supporting Youth Committee will continue to monitor the progress of the strategic planning effort led by the Cape Cod Foundation.
- The Environment Committee has completed its plans for the forum on "Climate Change and the Future of Cape Cod" to be held Saturday, April 29th. (See attached flyer) Please help advertise the forum.
- Three students from Cape Cod Community College attended the Legislative Breakfast held at the College on March 23rd.
- Two consensus meetings on the recommendations made by the Special Commission on Governance to the Barnstable County Commissioners to be held on March 29th.

Renate Sands, Secretary

NEW MEMBERS WINE AND CHEESE

A new and prospective member wine and cheese will be held at Joan and Mert Bernstein's home in Brewster on Sunday, May 6 at 3:30 pm. This is a wonderful orientation for prospective members as well as for those who have recently come aboard. All new members who joined the League this year will receive invitations. If you know of anyone who might be interested in joining the League please email Betsy Bray, Membership Chair braybetsy@gmail.com with contact information so she can send them an invitation.

VOTER SERVICE

At present we are preparing for four candidates' nights for local offices, staffing with moderators, timers, and ushers who distribute and collect question cards. The schedule:

Sandwich, April 23
 Orleans, April 24
 Dennis, April 26
 Chatham, April 30

As League members you will certainly attend your own town debate, but it isn't too late to participate in this important voter service activity. If you would like to assist, let us know.

Elizabeth Levy, Chair

LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST SUCCESS

Thanks to all Leaguers who helped to make the 2012 Legislative Breakfast such a success. The "solarium" of the Cape Cod Community College's Technology Building was the perfect venue for our gathering, held on March 23rd. Our legislators (Sen. Wolf, Rep. Atsalis, Rep. Hunt, Rep. Peake, and Rep. Turner) and aides (Lori-Jo Joyce for Rep. Madden, Sue Rohrbach with Sen. Wolf, Jackie Horigan and Monica Mullin for Sen. Murray) were very impressed with the turnout and appreciated the many questions posed to them from LWVCCA. A special thanks goes out to Kathy Schatzberg and her staff at the 4Cs for their assistance in making it a perfect morning. We also offer our appreciation to Elizabeth Levy, who was unable to attend but was most generous in sponsoring three college students who attended the breakfast. THANK YOU!

Joan Craig, Legislative Chair and Phyllis Walsh, Vice President

IN MEMORIUM

We report with sadness the loss of our long time member, Doris Sperber. She passed away on March 13th 2012 at the age of 98. Until she moved to Boson a few years ago, she was a vital member of our League, and contributed actively to our discussions and committee work. As was said in the obituary, "She was the epitome of energy and strength" and a delight to all who knew her.

CHATHAM UNIT TOWN WARRANT MEETING

The Chatham Unit will hold its annual "Conversation With the Town Manager" (warrant meeting) on **Wednesday, April 18th at 9:30am at Park Place** (kindness of Jean Mangiafico). This will be our first opportunity to "officially" welcome our new Town Manager Jill Goldsmith and hear both her impressions of Chatham after just over six months in the job, and her hopes and expectations for the near- and long-term future. Guests are welcome ~ indeed encouraged! ~ including LWVCCA members from other towns. Please join us for coffee at 9:15.

Nancy Erskine, Chair

COUNTY COMMITTEE REPORT

Lots to know about, lots to think about, now that the Special Commission on Governance has given its final report to the Board of Commissioners and the Assembly of Delegates. Here's a brief update: (You can now find the full set of recommendations on the Barnstable County Website. Click on commission on Governance on the right hand side.) They cover a multitude of areas, ranging from transportation through health and environment, and economic development to wastewater and structure. The Commissioners are taking a one by one approach to exploring each area. Our Committee will try to keep abreast of this approach. Of importance to us right now are two actions the Commissioners have already taken. They are reviewed again here

First tackled was the **Wastewater** Issue. The Commissioners have charged the Directors of the Cape Cod Commission and the Wastewater Collaborative "to undertake an evaluation of the options for regionalization and develop draft legislation (if required)and undertake this task by fully involving the public in their work" They are expected to report periodically and complete the work by the end of the year. The League will want to follow this closely. Our membership has already supported priority for this in communications to the Board.

The second was the development of the **Regional Umbrella Service System**. As Open Cape completes laying the broadband infrastructure it will now be possible for the county to develop this new capacity to assist towns in such areas as regional permitting, licensing, etc. The Commissioners have placed the responsibility for the initial work in the Cape Cod Commission and have approved an Office of Strategic Information within that department. Its mission is to develop and deliver regional information technology solutions and services in support of Barnstable County, municipalities, school districts, libraries and other public sector entities. Here too we want to follow this potential for effective regionalization and government efficiencies.

Our Committee is awaiting the results of the Commissioners meeting on April 4 when they will discuss the recommendations for governance structure. The LWVCCA held consensus meetings on the structure recommendations at the end of March and results are reported in the President's message in this Voter issue.

The Committee encourages all interested members to join us and get a first-hand look at our government through our Observation Program. See the Quiz posted in this issue and take the test! We hope to see you at our meeting on April 5th.

Jari Rapaport, Co-Chair.

DAY ON THE HILL:

Let's use this opportunity to strengthen our ties with our state legislators!

April 25, 2012 - 9:30am - Noon

Democracy in Danger: Money, Media and Manipulation

All League members are invited to attend our annual Day on the Hill program on Wednesday morning, April 25, 2012, at the Massachusetts State House. Registration starts at 9:30am in Gardner Auditorium with the program beginning at 10:00 am and ending at noon.

We are very excited to welcome the following speakers whose extensive knowledge and experience should generate many questions from our attendees: Pam Wilmot, Executive Director of Common Cause, Robert Kuttner, Journalist and Boston Globe columnist, and Jay Kaufman, Massachusetts State Representative.

Following the speakers, LWVMA Specialists will update us on legislation of interest to the League. After our program, plan to meet with your Senators and Representatives. **We will distribute details on the bills and specific talking points on our website and through email to all LWVMA members soon.** Lobbying the state legislature is one of the defining 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!

FYI - The League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area will meet with our legislators after the morning events. Room 437 has been reserved from 12:30 to 1:30 for Leaguers and legislators to meet. We are making plans for carpooling as a group. Please contact Joan Craig at joanmcraig@comcast.net or at 508-259-5357 if you wish to attend.

RENEWAL TIME

It is time to renew your LWVCCA membership! Please send your check made out to the LWVCCA to the treasurer:

Debbie Aikman 78 Water St. Chatham, MA 02633-2453.

Renewal dues are \$55 for individual member and \$85 for joint membership same household.

QUIZ TIME: Do you know your voices in county government?

Name your town's representative on these County related Committees and entities:

1- Assembly of Delegates (elected): _____

2- Cape Cod Commission (planning agency)_____

3- Cape Cod Water Protection Collaborative_____

4- Cape Cod Home Consortium (housing funding)_____

5- Cape Compact Light (energy)_____

6- Cape and Vineyard Electric Cooperative_____

7- Cape Cod Regional Technical School_____

or Upper Cape Regional Technical School_____

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

NEW

Renate Sands 3/30 12

I have a couple of web sites that might interest people. I received the information from Randy Hunt at the Legislative Breakfast

To check on the progress of a bill: Go to www.malegislature.gov (click on 'bills')

For info on state expenses: Go to www.mass.gov/opencheckbook

