

THE CAPE COD VOTER

VOLUME 55 ISSUE 3

NOVEMBER 2014

CALENDAR

Tuesday November 4 (Election Day) 9:30am	Board Meeting Cape Cod Five, Dennis
Tuesday, November 11	Veterans Day
Thursday, November 13 2pm	Healthcare Committee Home of Joan Bernstein
Thursday, November 20 10am	Third Thursday Coffee Chocolate Sparrow, Orleans
Monday, November 24 1:30pm	County Committee Meeting Cape Cod Five, Dennis

LOOKING AHEAD...

Tuesday, December 2 9:30am	Board Meeting Cape Cod Five, Dennis
Saturday, December 6 9:30 - Noon	Winter Social Location tba

CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

It was great fun to see members at our opening meeting in September. With 40 members attending this was one of our largest dinner turnouts in recent years. Diane Turco of Cape Downwinders presented issues about the safety of the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant. As you may have read in the paper, she continues to find ways to bravely give attention to this issue. As a Board we have begun to discuss what we might do to study this issue further and we will let members know in the event that you might like to participate in a study. Thank you to Kay Bryce for making the arrangements with the restaurant and providing the lovely floral arrangements.

Election season is in its final push before the November 4 election date and once again we can see the influence of money in politics. Big business is overpowering in its ad campaigns against the bottle bill and for the casino bill. Comparatively little money is available to support a YES vote on the bottle bill and the casino bill. The League continues to play an important role in educating the public through moderating candidate debates and providing information. Please see our website, lwvcapecod.org under voter information for lists of candidates in Cape races, links to LWVMA voting guides regarding candidates for state offices, for videos of the debates we sponsored for the 1st Barnstable District State Rep seat and Plymouth, Barnstable State Senate seat. Also provided in that section of our website is a link to the Cape Cod Times and its election coverage. They have provided a summary page that lists all election related articles from the past weeks.

Congratulations and thank you to Joan Grant and Chris Meade for their energetic and far-reaching efforts to register voters and inform the public through all the efforts they have led as Co-Chairs of Voter Service. Thank you also to all members who helped out at registration and debate events.

All-Cape Civic Education Conference for Teachers

On October 10 we organized and facilitated a conference for teachers entitled, "Resources and Models for the Active Civics Curriculum", held at Cape Cod Community College. For a first event of its kind it was a success and an excellent beginning to a League-supported network of Cape area civic educators. Read more about this event and future plans in our Youth Support Committee report.

Third Thursday Coffee - November 20 in Orleans

Twelve League members met for our opening Third Thursday Coffee in October at Panera's. It was nice to enjoy some casual social time with our members and several people commented that they enjoyed the opportunity to talk about things other than League business. Great conversation and great coffee!

Our next Third Thursday Coffee will be November 20 at 10:00 AM at the Hot Chocolate Sparrow in Orleans. We hope to see members for whom this time and location are convenient to share some pleasant conversation and company. Please join us.

Our December Social/Program will be a brunch, on Saturday, December 6, 9:30am to noon, location yet to be determined. We are excited that Elisa Zawadzka will be our speaker. As you know we do not endorse candidates, but this date is post-election and we felt it would be informative to hear about Elisa's experience as a young woman running for state office, win or lose. Please plan to join us for convivial conversation and good cheer. We will also share updates on League work.

Fall Annual Appeal to Support the League

You will soon be receiving two fundraising letters asking you to support the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area and the Helen S. Aaron Educational Trust of the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area. Please review this information carefully and if you are able, please consider our organizations as you think about your charitable giving this season. We thank you in advance.

MY VIEW

This article was submitted to the Cape Cod Times as a My View piece on behalf of the LWVCCA Board relative to Ballot Questions 1, 2, and 3. LWVMA has no position statements relative to Ballot Question 4 and therefore has not taken a stand on that issue.

RESULTS AND CONSEQUENCES

The LWV of Massachusetts has taken positions on the first three ballot questions before Massachusetts voters and the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area would like to share that information. Simply put, the first two ballot questions are about making the commitment to achieve the results that we want. The third ballot question is about avoiding the consequences that we don't want.

Ballot question 1 seeks to repeal gas tax indexing. LWVMA recommends a NO vote so that we make the long-term commitment to repair roads and bridges and improve the transportation infrastructure needed for our safety and economic development. Those who wish to eliminate the automatic indexing feel legislators should vote on this yearly. Such a position fails to make the continuing long-term commitment necessary to get the job done. Our roads and bridges are in the present state of deficiency because of this lack of sustained financial commitment. We need a consistent source of revenue to achieve the results that we want.

Ballot question 2 seeks to expand the beverage container deposit law by including water bottles and some non-carbonated drinks. LWVMA supports a YES vote on this question. The bottom line is that 80% of bottles and cans with a deposit on them are recycled, while only 23% of containers without a deposit are recycled. The rest of those containers become litter that town governments pay to clean up or they end up in landfills and incinerators. Let's have the will to achieve the environmental results that we want.

Ballot question 3 seeks to prohibit casinos, any gaming establishment with slot machines, and wagering on simulcast greyhound races. LWVMA supports a YES vote on this question. LWVMA has long opposed casinos in Massachusetts, arguing the costs in services and social impact outweigh projected gains in tax revenue and employment. This is a matter of avoiding the consequences that we don't want. Voters are encouraged to weigh these issues on the balance scale.

Wherever your thinking lands on these issues, it is important to be a thoughtful voter and get out and vote.

Submitted by
Karen Mazza and Marilyn Gullett
Co-Presidents, League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area

VOTER SERVICE REPORT

Submitted by Joan Grant and Chris Meade

We held sixteen voter registration and education events in ten towns. They were conducted at key shopping locations, school events, candidate forums and town events. We assisted with 38 actual voter registrations, provided a number of absentee ballot applications and offered general election information. Voters were very interested in the four ballot questions.

Four candidate forums were sponsored or co-sponsored by LWVCCA. The first two of these were in the primary race for 1st Barnstable District Representative: one televised live from the Cape Cod Community Media Center, moderated by Joan Craig and the second held at Heatherwood in Yarmouth Port, hosted by Elaine Bono and moderated by Barbara Wellnitz.

On October 8, we moderated two forums at Cape Cod Community College, co-sponsored with The Cape Cod Times. The first, between the Elisa Zawadzka and Tim Whelan, the two finalists for 1st Barnstable District, was moderated by Joan Craig. The second, featuring Matt Patrick (D), Vinny deMacedo (R) and Heather Mullins (L) was for the Plymouth-Barnstable Senate seat and was moderated by Nancy Carapezza from the Wayland LWV.

The last two forums are available to watch on the LWVCCA website, lwvcapecod.org under "Current Issues". You can also access the Cape Cod Times election information on our website under "Voter Information".

Once again we want to thank everyone involved in all of these voter service events. Your time and dedication to the mission of the League is invaluable.

EDITOR'S NOTE: LWVCCA and the voting public owe a great debt of thanks to Chris and Joan for the huge investment of time and energy they put into organizing these events so successfully.

COUNTY COMMITTEE

By Jari Rapaport, Co-Chair

We have been following the work of County Administrator Michael Brillhart and are impressed with his extensive, thorough work plan. It is complete with goals and implementation time line. Of particular interest is his emphasis on county departments working cooperatively on goals and eliminating overlap and duplication of effort. We look forward to the Board of Commissioners' review of their strategic plan in November. At this point the Commissioners and the Assembly of Delegates are not taking up any new initiatives as they await the outcome of this month's election which will bring new members to both bodies in 2015.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Submitted by Renate Sands

The 2013-2014 legislative session has run its course. The new session will begin in Jan of 2015.

Since Diane Turco OF Cape Downwinders gave a presentation about the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station at our membership meeting, I decided to check what bills had been filed in the last session regarding the plant.

The bills were:

H. 2137 An Act relative to the Plymouth Nuclear Power Plant – weekly testing of its alarm system

H.2180 An Act relative to emergency planning – Assess and report on preparedness plans for radiological accident at the Pilgrim and Seabrook Nuclear Power Plants.

H.2046 An Act relative to radiological air monitoring.

H.2045 An Act increasing nuclear power plant protection to a twenty mile radius.

H.1906 Increase power plant safety preparedness by the Department of Public Health to 20 miles.

All the above bills have been referred to the House Committee on Rules. They are all accompanied by a study order, so they are dead for this session. Sarah Peake was a sponsor to most of the bills and she was very helpful in answering questions.

Any bills calling for the closure of the plant would be unconstitutional if enacted. All nuclear plants are regulated under federal statutes and regulations so a state cannot regulate whether a plant is licensed, remains open or is forced to close. The state can only work on issues such as emergency management planning, radiological monitoring and emergency planning zones.

H.4065 An Act Promoting and Planning and Development of Sustainable Communities (updating zoning laws) was moved out of committee with a positive recommendation. Dan Wolf and Sarah Peake tried to get it to the floor for a vote but were unsuccessful. This is the farthest the bill has ever progressed and it will be re-filed in January.

S.254 (S.2027) An Act to Involve Youth in Civic Engagement received a positive recommendation from the Education committee and was moved to the Senate Ways and Means Committee on 3/6/2014. I contacted Therese Murray's office and was told that it would be filed again in the new session.

LWVUS ACTION ALERT: The EPA has extended the deadline for public comment on the proposed regulation to cut carbon pollution from existing power plants to December 1. Comments can be sent the [LWVUS action alert!](#)

YOUTH SUPPORT COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Submitted by Karen Mazza, Chair

On October 10, our organization presented a full day conference for civic educators through the All Cape Professional Day, sponsored by the *Cape Cod Collaborative* and open to all school districts across the Cape and Islands that are members of the Collaborative. Our workshop was titled, "Resources and Models for the Active Civics Curriculum," and was held at Cape Cod Community College. While our attendance of eleven civics teachers was small, they represented a good cross-section of experience from the middle school, high school and college levels--including Cape Cod Community College and five school districts: Nauset Regional, Monomoy Regional, Falmouth, Bourne and Martha's Vineyard. Thank you to League members Betsy Bray, Jan Hively, Chris Meade, Pat Ryle and Marilyn Gullet for assisting at the meeting. A Falmouth League member was also able to join us.

The conference featured staff from the *Edward M. Kennedy Institute* who previewed the programming in civic education which will be available at the institute when it opens in March on the campus of UMASS Boston. Their resources will use interactive technology to allow students to simulate the experience of being a senator. They have constructed a full replica of the US Senate chamber and have developed multiple interactive exhibits that allow students to learn about historical and contemporary issues. All the curriculum materials will be accessible to teachers online so they can be used in classrooms, separate from attendance at the Institute. The Institute is non-partisan in approach and encourages an understanding of the need for bi-partisan agreements.

Following the presentation by the Institute, the rest of the day was devoted to sharing curriculum resources and strategies among the teachers. The day concluded with a discussion of what teachers would like to see to improve civic education. They agreed they would like to see civics classes required for all students, but some felt it would be better to have this be a local district requirement. They feared that if the state created a test like MCAS, it would destroy the capacity to have civics be an active, experiential course as it should be. When the State first piloted a test for History/Social Science, it was based on the memorization of facts -- and that is not what you want a civics course to do. They also felt it was important to distinguish action civics from the old form of civics that used to be taught generations ago. They all agree that our focus needs to be on learning experientially the skills of active civic engagement, rather than simply learning factual knowledge of how government is organized. They did express an interest in continuing to be a network of Cape and Island Civic Educators, inviting the districts that were not present to participate, and in influencing state policy. Our committee work will pursue supporting these ideas.

We discussed the concept, initiated by our committee, to sponsor a mini-grant program to support active civics education experiences for students. The teachers liked the idea and we discussed potential criteria for such grants. Committee Chair Karen Mazza has discussed this concept with the Ed Trust, the LWVCCA Board and with the Cape Cod Foundation; both the League and the Foundation are willing to co-sponsor such a grant program.

Karen Mazza on LWVMA Civic Education Committee

LWVCCA Co-President Karen Mazza, who recently joined the LWVMA state civic education committee, will now represent LWVMA in a working group conference on civic education being sponsored by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). This meeting is being convened as a response to the report from the state legislature's Joint Committee on Civic Engagement and Learning. Additionally, Karen has been asked to attend a joint meeting of the LWVMA Board and the board of the Daniel Scharfman Citizen Education Grant Fund in December to discuss our formative-stage work on the Cape as a potential model that the state League might consider in supporting civic education across the state.

LWVMA LEAGUE LEADERS' LUNCHEON, OCTOBER 25, 2014

Submitted by Phyllis Walsh, Southeast Regional Field Service Coordinator

On Saturday, October 25, I attended an excellent League Leaders Lunch in Marlborough. Three members from Plymouth also attended. The link to the luncheon, with a list of workshops, is below.

<http://lwwma.org/league-leaders-lunch-october-25-2014-marlborough/#Program>

I found three of the workshops particularly helpful.

3. Making the Ask - In addition to role-playing, this workshop provided suggestions for inviting people to join a local League. A two page tool, which you'll find on the link above, starts with "Practice Your Own League Story". This might be a good exercise for the board and/or membership committee.

7. Developing Leaders - This one page exercise was coupled with a five step structured approach for identifying and developing local League leaders. As part of the exercise, one of the presidents at my table went through her list of members and noted potential leaders.

8. Event Planning Checklist - Another one-page League Event Planning Worksheet coupled with a checklist. One of the presidents and I used the checklist to evaluate a recent event. As a past events person, I found this checklist to be very helpful. Some additional suggestions were: enlarging the section, "How will we measure success when planning the event" and "What was the impact or outcome when debriefing after the event?".

At the end of the meeting, LWVMA provided a handout with League Opportunities. Some were task forces, committees and other specific league level roles. Look under League Opportunities in the link above.

Lastly, the LWVMA leadership had phonathon packages for handout. Dee Ortnor of LWVMA is the contact for your local league package.

Please take the opportunity to explore the LWVMA web site www.lwwma.org under member resources for materials from the luncheon plus other helpful information.

Questions? Please contact Phyllis at walshpf@comcast.net.

MEMBERSHIP

WELCOME TO New member **Barbara Sutherland**, 757 Willow Street, South Yarmouth (508) 208-8814. Please add Barbara's information in your handbooks and look for a fuller introduction in an upcoming issue.