## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS\* OF THE CAPE COD AREA

## THE CAPE COD VOTER

**VOLUME 61 ISSUE 10** 

#### **JUNE 2022**

## **IN THIS ISSUE:**

LWVCCA PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE	1
CALENDAR	2
MAY BOARD MEETING	2
2022 ANNUAL MEETING	2
ANNUAL MEETING THOUGHTS: SUZANNE BROCK:	
President's report: Suzanne Brock:	. 3
TRANSITION IN LEADERSHIP	. 4
DID YOU KNOW-?	4
WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS	5
HEALTH COMMITTEE	6
HEALTH COMMITTEE VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE	
	6
VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE	<b>6</b> .6
VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE	6 .6
VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE Voter Service Committee's Hits and Misses The Hits:	<b>6</b> . 6 . 6 . 7
VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE Voter Service Committee's Hits and Misses The Hits: The Misses:	6 .6 .7 .8
VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE Voter Service Committee's Hits and Misses The Hits: The Misses: Spring election results 2022	6 .6 .7 .8 9

## LWVCCA PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

At our Annual Meeting on May 11 – we hope vou were able to attend - LWVCCA members voted in a new Board of Directors. As the co-presidents taking Sue's place, we are grateful for her tireless work over the last few years, and for helping us with our transitions from other board positions: Mary from Secretary and DEI Committee Co-chair (with Mati Ligon) and Jeanne from Co-VP of Programs and Planning (with Karen Mazza) and DEI Committee advisor. While many faces on the board remain the same we welcome new Co-VPs of Planning and Programs Karen McPherson and Emily Milan and Co-chairs of the DEI Committee Maureen Grandmont and Mary O'Connor. We're looking forward to working with them and with the veteran board members working feverishly on voter rights, voter engagement (education and turnout), youth services, legislation, health, membership, DEI, and communications. As well as our treasurer Amy Harris, who continues to

provide financial reports and make sure we stay within budget.

The Members Directory and Handbook, updated for 2022-2023, will be worked on over the summer, and then printed and mailed to all members in September. The *Voter* newsletter will be emailed over the summer with new member interviews, a calendar of events, and committee news and activities.

Our first board meeting under new leadership will be on June 7<sup>th</sup>, with none for July and August. However, there will be lots of activities and duties to fulfill for the Co-Presidents and committee chairs to prepare for September meetings. In addition, the Voter Services Committee will be busy engaging voters for the up-coming midterm and local elections. The national and local legislative activity and Supreme Court decisions all promise to keep us very busy with candidates' forums, advocacy for diversity, equity, and inclusion, collaboration with other MA leagues and local organizations to conduct outreach to underserved Cape communities, and protesting court and legal actions that do not meet LWV positions. As your new co-presidents, we look forward to meeting with committee chairs to review our program priorities and discuss program focus for this year.

And finally, in light of the Buffalo and Uvalde massacres, we will be working to curb gun violence by marching and by supporting gun violence prevention legislation.

If any of these activities interest you, we can always use the help. The Members Handbook and Directory lists Board members and committees, with contact info. Although our Annual Meeting was in person, some members feel more comfortable meeting via Zoom. Zoom meetings have also proved to be very efficient because of reduced travel time and increased attendance of non-board members. For now, we plan to continue

www.lwvCapecod.org

<u>lwvcca@gmail.com</u>.

http://www.facebook.com/LWVCCA/

<u>Page 1 of 10</u>

meeting via Zoom. But we're exploring the possibilities both of in-person meetings and hybrid meetings as we've found that virtual meetings can help us reach out and include people who otherwise cannot join us readily in person. Snowbirds included! We look forward to welcoming you!

Have a great summer and join us for an actionpacked fall where every vote will count!

Mary Hunter Utt and Jeanne Morrison, Co-Presidents, LWVCCA

## **CALENDAR**

**BOARD MEETING** 

TUESDAY June 7 | 9:30 a.m. **Zoom conference by invitation** 

## **UPCOMING**



Independence Day

MONDAY July 4

BOARD MEETING TUESDAY Sept 6 | 9:30 a.m. Zoom conference by invitation

To see our entire Google calendar, go to <u>https://tinyurl.com/LWVCCA-calendar</u>. Click on any calendar listing to see more detail.

## MAY BOARD MEETING

Annual Meeting updates: Wednesday May 11, 5:00 -- 7:30 p.m. Speaker: Anita Peters (Mother Bear) Mashpee Wampanoag tribal member. The Board agreed on Cobblestone Landing in Hyannis for the meeting and dinner, catered by Casual Gourmet

The Board agreed that we should require attendees to be vaccinated and tested; masking

goes without saying except when dining.

The Board discussed and voted against attempting a hybrid meeting for the Annual Meeting, although the value and practicality of hybrid meetings should be investigated.

ACLU Know Your Sheriff Forum: May 24, 5:00 -7:30 p.m. LWVCCA is the first organization to present this webinar, at the request of the ACLU. We will be reaching out to partner organizations as well. The Cape Media Center will be running the webinar (video and registration) and it will be available as a recording. The ACLU (which is partnering with LWVMA and the Mass Women of Color Coalition) will be creating flyers and press releases, which will be sent to the membership. This program, plus the What a Difference a DA Makes program, are important programs because of the upcoming DA and sheriff elections.

## 2022 ANNUAL MEETING Annual Meeting Thoughts: Suzanne Brock:



Members, this Annual Meeting was a grand one... for so many reasons. It was out first in person Annual Meeting since 2019. While it was not at a restaurant as had been the practice in years past, we did have dinner, catered by Casual Gourmet, we had wine, we had appetizers, we had dessert, we had camaraderie and we had fun. The meeting took place at Cobblestone Landing, the community center in the housing development where Jeanne Morrison lives. It is a terrific venue and may be our go to place for a while. There were about 26 members in attendance and it was so nice to see each other, mingle, have social conversations and reminisce about times past. Those of you that could not join us, not only were you missed, but you missed a good time.



Our speaker for the evening was Anita Peters (otherwise known as Mother Bear) to the Wampanoag Tribe from which she descends. Anita spoke to us from the heart about the dark history of the Native American peoples since the times of the arrival of the early settlers. As much as we don't want to

remember or think of the many transgressions that took place, "Mother Bear" reminded us and suggested that one of the reasons for the low voter registration and turn out of Native Americans is the continuing belief that their vote doesn't count or matter. Unfortunately, the truth becomes harder and harder to reconcile.

After dinner and our speaker, we got down to the business at hand. Mary O'Connor served as our Parliamentarian. She was there to lean on if needed but things went off without a hitch. We passed the budget for the next year, we approved the Program Priorities going forward and we accepted and approved the new slate of officers for 2022-2023. It was bittersweet for me to chair this meeting

Oddly, even though I served on the steering committee for two years and as President for two years, this was like my first and last Annual Meeting. On behalf of the Board, Karen Mazza presented me with a lovely glass "Sandscape" as a memento of my service. She also had one for Richard Utt, who was not there, to say thank you for his time on the Steering Committee which took place during COVID.

Upon completion of the business portion of the evening the meeting was adjourned and we said goodnight. A few of us stayed to clean up, but the extra time for casual conversation was so good. It was definitely a terrific end of the year and my tenure and a great start for the new Board. Here's to many more in person events going forward.

Much more to do so see you around in the field! Suzanne

## <u>President's report:</u> <u>Suzanne Brock:</u>

League Members and friends,

First and foremost I would like to thank all of you for supporting me so effectively and efficiently over this past year. This includes not only those who have served on the Board with me, but all of you who have served on committees who often don't receive the acknowledgement that you deserve, as well the membership at large who responded when called on to advocate for an issue. There are so many of you who work tirelessly behind the scenes and I truly appreciate all of your efforts. Keep up the great work because we all know that there is still so much to be done.

Second, I would especially like to thank all of you who have joined me here tonight, in person, to finally begin to emerge from our COVID cocoons and blaze a path toward a new beginning. Those of vou who know me better know that I have struggled to lead in isolation. I have been a risk taker throughout my whole life and while I understand the need for caution for many, remaining distant has been hard for me. This is partially because it is just harder to get some things done via zoom even though technology has been an asset at times. However, there are so many members that I have not physically been able to meet. I am sorry about that. I do hope that I will be able to meet some of you newer members in the coming year. It is wonderful to see those of you who are here and I am grateful for your ability to join me with cautious optimism.

Being your leader, both for two years independently and the two years prior to that as a co-leader, has been extremely rewarding. Sometimes you learn things about yourself when you are put into different roles that allow you to grow in ways you may never have thought possible. This has happened to me a few times throughout my life.....when I entered the Peace Corps, when I became a parent, when I entered the teaching profession, when I transitioned to my role as Guidance Counselor and then, when I agreed to serve as a leader with the League. It may sound

#### JUNE 2022

strange to say thank you for allowing me that chance to grow, but I do thank all of you.

It is amazing the ways that being a leader hones new skills. It may be debatable how well I've learned some of them, but networking, delegating, resolving conflict, making quick decisions, writing documents that may help to change direction and interacting with the public in numerous ways, were all part of the process. I will take what I have learned and use all of those skills in the future in different ways.

I introduced the Board members that I served this year with a few minutes ago, so I will not name then here again. What I will do is thank them, once again collectively, for being there, for supporting me, for pushing back when they thought it would help and for putting up with my momentary lapses in protocol or knowledge in a particular area. No one is right or wrong all the time. We all have our minutes of glory or our minutes to crash and burn. All of you have been there to cheer me on or to pick me up, as needed, and I will always remember that. Thank you, all of you, for everything.

While I am stepping down from the Board, I am not disappearing. The League of Women Voters is an organization that knows how to get things done. I will admit, in today's America, it has become harder and harder to achieve successes, but that doesn't mean that we should stop trying. I believe that our Democracy is under siege in so many ways and I will continue to try to strengthen it however I can. Working through the League will always be one of those avenues.

I feel that I am leaving you in great hands. When you elect the new Board of Directors, please stand behind them and give them as much support as you have given me. It is impossible to accomplish as much as our League has accomplished over the years without the support of all of you. You will see some new faces on this new Board. I personally salute those fledgling members who are willing to jump in with both feet. Without a changing lens we cannot learn to see what needs to be done. And God knows, there is much to be done. Once again, thank you all for being here, for being League members and for your support for the League and myself and for your continuing actions to improve our communities, our state and our nation.

With renewed hopes for Peace, Suzanne

## Transition in Leadership

## Submitted by Karen Mazza

Our May Annual Meeting marked a transition in leadership as outgoing President Sue Brock was thanked for her four years of outstanding leadership and we welcomed the new team of Jeanne Morrison and Mary Hunter Utt who will be working together as Co-Presidents. Jeanne has served energetically and ably as Co-Vice President for Program for two years and Mary Hunter-Utt has kept us all on track with her excellent organizational skills that she has put to good use as Board Secretary for several years. Jeanne and Mary have also worked together over the past two years to launch our League's efforts to implement our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion goals. We look forward to their partnership and continued leadership in the Co-President role.

In addition to Jeanne Morrison and Mary Hunter Utt as our new Co-Presidents, we also welcome these new members of the Board: Emily Milan and Karen McPherson, Co-Vice Presidents for Program, Patricia Burke, Secretary, Maureen Grandmont and Mary O-Connor, Co-Chairs for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and Madeline Zevon, Board member at large.

## **DID YOU KNOW-?**

...that according to the CDC, the 2020 maternal mortality rate for the US was 23.8 deaths per 100,000 live births? However, the maternal mortality rate for non-Hispanic Black women was 55.3 deaths per 100,000 live births, more than twice the rate for non-Hispanic White women. In Massachusetts, a bill signed by Gov. Baker in 2021, established a commission to study and make

#### JUNE 2022

recommendations to reduce racial inequities in maternal health. The commission has held four listening sessions in preparation for releasing a 2022 report. Watch a video of one of their public meetings here:

https://malegislature.gov/Events/Hearings/Detai 1/4030.

## WELCOME to NEW MEMBERS

"The League has always been a group in which I have been interested. I have always been interested in politics even as a child." Margaret Castellani

In spite of physical challenges Margaret Castellani continues to have the desire to involve herself with politics and voting rights issues. She grew up on the eastern shore of Maryland. Her family's home was in an area close to where Washington, D.C. diplomats resided in their second homes. Several of Margaret's parents' friends were prominent politicians during her childhood. Margaret definitely remembers that her parents entertained Congressman Rodgers Morton who was a dinner guest in their home. Rodgers Morton later became U.S. Secretary of the Interior. Margaret and her Dad would often have political discussions as she grew up in her parents' household. At ten years of age she helped in the campaign for Adelai Stevenson. At an early age she drifted toward The League of Women Voters: and became somewhat of a socio-political rebel within her southern family circle. She now recalls that so many unusual events were happening in the U.S. during the years of her youth: The demands for civil rights; the protests against the Vietnam War and the struggles for women's rights. She vividly remembers the Jim Crow and segregation signs that were prominently displayed in public facilities in Maryland during her childhood. More significantly, Margaret remembers how she felt about both de jure and de facto racial segregation that had existed in Maryland while she was growing up there. She clearly states even now: "Segregation was wrong. It was dumb. It didn't make sense."

Margaret started college in Roanoke, Virginia at Hollins College a small college for women. Note worthy indeed is the fact that both Margaret's mother and grandmother attended college during those times in American history when young women were expected to marry (as a priority) rather than earn a college degree. . Her grandmother was a published poet who corresponded with the celebrated author Pearl Buck. Margaret's grandfather who had moved from Virginia to New Jersey was the founder of his own pharmaceutical firm. Margaret Castellani explains that her mother wanted Margaret and her sister to be in New York City to attend Finch College (now defunct) in N.Y.C. Like Hollins College, Finch College was an all-girls school for girls from affluent families. Her last two years as she seriously completed her undergraduate degree were spent at Washington College. She graduated with a triple major: History, English and Education. After she attained two Master degrees, she pursued a teaching career in both private and public schools in Massachusetts, Florida, Maryland and Colorado.

Absolutely fortunate are the officers and members of the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area that Margaret Castellani has chosen to join as an active member.

Margaret Castellani 163 Pond View Dr Centerville MA 02632 720 202 7215 Margaretjuly16@gmail.com

"I think our democracy is under threat and the majority of Americans, who want elected officials to be fact-based and fair, need to express their will by voting. I have long admired the non-partisan, rational approach of the League of Women Voters, and would like to help in any way I can to get out the vote." Laura Lerner

Laura Lerner grew up in Malverne, New York and went to Reed College in Portland, Oregon for her undergraduate degree in chemistry. After obtaining a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering from Johns Hopkins University, she worked as an

academic scientist at the NIH and on the faculty of the Chemistry Department at the University of Wisconsin. After receiving tenure at UW, she switched from basic research to drug development and spent the rest of her thirty-five year career at various biotechnology companies in the San Francisco Bay Area, where she and her husband raised a son and a daughter. Her husband is a retired molecular biologist. They chose a retirement home on Cape Cod to be closer to their grown children on the East Coast. Besides the physical beauty of the Cape, she and her husband appreciate how friendly and welcoming their neighbors are.

#### Laura Lerner

480 Main St Centerville, MA 02632 650 274 1877 jackolerner@sbcglobal.net

Submitted by Matilda Ligon, Chair, LWVCCA Membership Committee

## **HEALTH COMMITTEE**

The LWVCCA Health Committee is reviewing current health-related bills regarding abortion, gun control, Death with Dignity, Common Start, and Medicare for All. We are assessing the health-related issues of these bills and will provide a synopsis for the next Voter newsletter. The Committee is also planning a forum on mental health to occur in November 2022 by Zoom. The forum will address the impact of Covid on mental health for youth, parents, and elementary/high school faculty or administration. The forum will provide League members and the community with both an understanding of the challenges due to Covid and how they can be addressed. The Forum's November date and panelist information will be identified in the next Voter newsletter.

In addition, the Health Committee is very interested in having new members join the Committee. If you are interested, contact Eileen Elias, Chair at <u>eileen.elias@comcast.net</u>.'

## VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE Voter Service Committee's Hits and <u>Misses</u>

So, with ALL that is going on in the world - the Buffalo shooting, voter suppression, Ukraine, abortion rights – I personally have found that keeping tuned in on our local issues, town meetings and town elections is immensely satisfying. You can actually watch as "stuff," – such as, affordable housing, school inclusion policies, waste water amelioration, land conservation – gets done. When you think of the political paralysis in Washington, it truly keeps me grounded to concentrate on what's happening in our own backyard. I really feel like I am DOING something. It's a real follow-through on the adage "think globally, act locally." A good way to keep up with what we are doing is to check out our webpage: www.lwvcapecod.org or our Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/LWVCCA

## The Hits:

During the spring election season the LWVCCA was asked to moderate 2 candidates forums. They were for the contested races in Dennis for the Water District Commissioner, and in Harwich for the Town Clerk. I want to thank Terri Bunce, Dennis Town Clerk, and Emily Milan of the Harwich Voter Information Committee for putting these forums together. Having moderated the Dennis forum and having attended as a resident the Harwich meeting, I can attest to how meeting the candidates and hearing their responses to questions posed by the audience, immensely helped me know the issues, the candidates and what's at stake for each race. For instance, we are now in our third year of drought! The town of Dennis

VOLUME 61 ISSUE 10

will be strictly enforcing their watering restrictions on even and odd days. This is to insure that our household water will continue to flow. And, of course, drought knows no political boundaries, so let's all be mindful of our sprinkler systems and water use. I want to especially thank Mary O'Connor who with grace and humor did a splendid job moderating the Harwich forum.

The Voter Service Committee would like to expand opportunities for our members to participate in this rewarding, grassroots-level of democracy. The LWV of MA occasionally holds moderator workshops, the last one was in April. We'll be on the lookout for the next workshop and let everyone know. The LWVMA has put together the Moderators Handbook with background, scripts, speaker rotation grids, etc. Check out the link:

## https://lwvma.org/wpcontent/uploads/2012/12/Moderators-Handbook.pdf

And if moderating is not your cup of tea, Voter Service also needs league volunteers who can distribute and collect index cards with questions from the audience at candidates meetings. We also need timekeepers, who let candidates know when they're down to their last 30 seconds in answering a question and then to hold up the "stop" sign when time is up. And then, in preparation for the upcoming September 6 primary and November 8 election we'll need volunteers to distribute voter information on ballot issues at events, festivals and craft fairs. Be ready to join in and act locally.

## <u>The Misses:</u>

I worked with a Chatham organization that wanted to sponsor a candidates meeting for the contested Board of Select race. There were lots of telephone tag and telephone lag, stalled e-mails and 2 conversations on the definition of non-partisan. It became a comedy of errors of mis-communications. I felt like I had missed an opportunity when the organization decided to just drop the whole thing. I am determined to do better next time.

Five days before the Chatham town meeting, I got a call that they were looking for timekeepers. Unfortunately that town meeting was on the same Saturday as the "Bans Off Our Bodies" rallies at the Hyannis and Orleans rotaries and in Boston. Complicate that with a few COVID quarantines and there wasn't a volunteer to be found. The town moderator promised he would be in touch earlier for the next town meeting, giving us more time to round up volunteers.

Submitted by Rosemary Shields Co-Chair Voter Service Committee

## **Spring election results 2022**

<b>Cape Cod Spring Election Results 2022</b>						
Ballot Question: Object to radioactive water dump						
Town	Election Date	Number Of Votes/ Registered Voters	% Registered Voters	Yes/No/Blank		
Bourne	5/24/22	2,183 / 15,525	14%	1,897 / 131 / 155		
Brewster	5/24/22	842 / 8472	10%	731 / 26 / 85		
Chatham	5/19/22	1089 / 6177	17%	957 / 61 / 71		
Dennis	5/10/22	2013 /12,643	16%	1706 / 80 / 227		
Eastham	5/17/22	808 / 4,488	18%	*Town Mtg. Yes		
Harwich	5/17/22	1,962 / 10,525	19%	1736 / 126 / 93		
Mashpee	5/7/22	1,469 / 12,312	12%	1,286 / 84 / 98		
Orleans	5/17/22	923 / 5,597	17%	801 / 83 / 39		
Provincetown	5/10/22	637 / 3336	19%	601 / 25 / 11		
Sandwich	5/5/22	2,592 / 16,655	15%	2,254 / 188 / 150		
Truro	5/10/22	2075 /674	32%	611 / 48 /15		
Wellfleet	5/2/22	764 / 3019	25%	**Town Mtg. 6/11		
Yarmouth	5/17/22	1,642 / 21,296	8%	1478 / 121 / 43		

\*Eastham voted at their town meeting to send the non-binding letter to the Governor and it was not on their ballot.

**\*\***Wellfleet will be voting on the irradiated water issue at their town meeting on June 11.

**Barnstable**, which consists of 7 villages, is not on this list because it is a considered a city and run by an elected Town Council rather than a town run by a Select Board. Barnstable never has Spring elections. In 2022, Barnstable will participate in the September 6 state-wide Primary Election and the November 8 State Election. In odd numbered years, Barnstable holds Municipal Elections and the next one will be November 7, 2023

The MA primary election is September 6 (note: the day after Labor Day). The mid-term general election is November 8.

#### JUNE 2022

## **LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

Carole Young-Kleinfeld and Renate Sands have become Envoys for the LWVMA Legislative Action Committee which will allow us to access more information regarding legislation that is pending during the last 2 months of the legislative session. We will also meet with members from other Leagues to share information.

#### The Legislative Session ends July 31st

# The following bills are still in their original committees and have received extension dates.

- Safe Communities Act (Extended to 6/24)
- Ghost Guns 3-D printing (Extended to 6/24)
- Recycling costs in the Commonwealth (Extended to 6/3)
- Medicare for all (Extended to 6/1/)
- Transition MA to clean electricity (Extended to 6/2)
- Discharge of radioactive materials (Extended to 6/30)
- Hate Crimes (Extended to 6/30)

#### The following bills are in the Ways and Means Committees

- Common Start Legislation
- Crime gun data analysis
- Parity on Board
- Preserving open space in MA
- Codifying Rental voucher program
- Antiracist, equity and justice in education
- Monitoring dry casks of spent nuclear fuel

**VOTES Act (Conference Committee)** 

Renate Sands, Carole Young-Kleinfeld, Elaine Dickinson,

Co-Chairs, LWVCCA Legislative Committee

## <u>Universal Voting—Let's Think</u> <u>About it</u>

Reasonable people disagree on many voting issues—on what type of voting technology should be used, where voters should cast their ballots, whether primaries should be "open", and who--Congress or the states—should be the final arbiter of voting rights. For more than one hundred years, the League of Women Voters has fought, as a nonpartisan organization, to protect and expand voting rights and to ensure that everyone in our democracy is represented.

In that vein, The Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law presented a recent <u>online</u> <u>program</u> about a voting policy that's been already enacted by 26 democracies around the world *universal voting*. The Center featured two leading figures in electoral policy and election administration who explore voter participation in a newly published book, <u>100% Democracy: The</u> <u>Case for Universal Voting</u>, authored by Brookings Institution Senior Fellow and Washington Post columnist **E.J. Dionne** and by the former Connecticut Secretary of the State, Common Cause President, and Harvard's Ash Center Senior Fellow **Miles Rapoport**.

The speakers "call the question": why shouldn't the U.S. require all eligible Americans to vote as a civic duty, just as we require them to perform jury duty, get drivers' licenses, or pay taxes? They highlight the advantages of an Australia-like voting system where all citizens are required to participate in their democracy or, absent an acceptable excuse, face a nominal fine (approximately \$20). Voter turnout is spectacularly high in Australia, which also features easy voter registration, flexibility in voting locations, adequate staffing of polling places in all communities, and even celebrations on Election Day. Australian voters are allowed to cast a "None of the Above" or a blank ballot. but must participate in some way. In 2019, 92% of registered Australian voters turned out to vote. In contrast, the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election attracted 66.8% of our registered voters—a 21st

#### JUNE 2022

Century record turnout for the U.S., even with Covid reforms.

Dionne and Rapoport, along with their working group of legal consultants, state that universal voting could be enacted by Congress. They explain that universal voting is a nonpartisan proposal, favoring neither major political party, and is a patriotic proposition offering the best way to protect against voter suppression and disenfranchisement of entire segments of our population. If all eligible voters are required to vote, then election officials would have to make it easy for all citizens to perform this civic duty. The authors note that campaigns would need to appeal broadly to all voters—not only to a narrow voter base of true believers—since everyone would cast a ballot.

The authors also observe that various countries tailor voting system requirements to their needs. If the U.S. required universal voting, could we offer a conscientious objector status to those who object philosophically to political participation, or a "light-touch" fine system, or community service as an alternative to a fine?

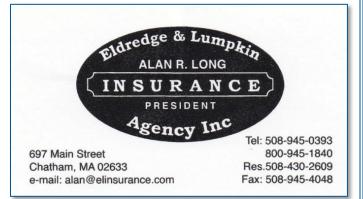
Dionne and Rapaport realize that universal voting doesn't solve many of the problems facing our electoral system—big money in politics, an outdated, undemocratic Electoral College, or the need for civics education. However, it sets our sights on what the speakers called "the North Star" of democracy—government by the consent of the governed.

And yes, a U.S. Congressman from Connecticut has recently introduced The Civic Duty to Vote Act (H.R. 7536) to Congress. So, let's see what reasonable people think.

Carole Young-Kleinfeld, Legislative Committee

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