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LWVCCA CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

May marked the closing of our first year as Co-Presidents. We wish to thank you all for a robust and successful year. We appreciate your support and teamwork; and we especially thank the board members and committee chairs who are leaving the board for their service: Renate Sands, Elaine Dickinson, and Anita Rogers. The new board is listed at the end of this issue.

On Thursday evening May 18, we held our Annual Meeting, the final of our four yearly membership meetings. The meeting opened with a social time to meet and greet the board and members, followed by our speaker Geoff Foster, Executive Director of [Common Cause Massachusetts](#), a 50-year-old organization working to make democracy more equitable and accessible. He brought his associate, Program and Outreach Manager Dev Chatterjee.

Geoff's talk -- *Article V Constitutional Conventions-Too Much at Stake!* -- focused on why nearly 250 national public interest and civil rights organizations -- including the LWVUS and Common Cause -- oppose calls for an Article V Constitutional Convention, a dangerous idea that



must be stopped. Geoff spoke on the background of the article: the 1787 convention in which the Articles of Confederation were thrown out and replaced by the Constitution, in which Article V lists two methods for amendments as: 1) ratification by three-fourths of the Legislatures and 2) conventions in

three-fourths of the State Legislatures. But where legislatures have rules for voting to approve actions, there are no rules, guidelines, or guard rails for holding constitutional conventions, and this is a big problem with the idea, especially given the risks to democracy we already face.

The [Family Table Collaborative](#) was once again the venue for a LWVCCA membership meeting, and once again, they served up a delicious meal of chicken and fish dishes with mashed potatoes and grilled zucchini plus strawberry shortcake for dessert. The dining room was set up attractively to work well with our meeting-with-dining format -- volunteers accomplished this after preparing and delivering over 700 meals that day for underserved communities.



After dinner, Jeanne and Mary presided over the business meeting that welcomed new members,

the board, and volunteers; and recognized 50+ year members. Members approved the 2023-2024 program priorities, budget, and Board of Directors; and Bylaw changes.

The turnout was very good -- we thank the 35 members who attended and hope to see them, and all of you, back for the Opening Membership Meeting in September. Stay tuned for details, and meanwhile have a great summer on Cape Cod.

Jeanne and Mary

Jeanne Morrison
Mary Hunter Utt
Co-Presidents, LWVCCA

DID YOU KNOW—?

...that quantifying the information on mass killings and gun violence can be confusing and complex. USA Today [recently described](#) three nationwide organizations that have been tracking statistics from government, health, and law enforcement agencies to provide reliable, well-organized data about all types of mass killings and their relationship to firearms.

One such project with a broad focus on all types of mass killings, the [Associated Press/USA TODAY/Northeastern University Mass Killing Database](#), has been tracking mass killings in the U.S. since 2006. Mass killings are those where at least 4 people, excluding the offender, are killed by *any* type of weapon—guns, knives, explosions, vehicles. [James Alan Fox](#), a law and public policy professor at Northeastern University, oversees the database and says that mass killings take place far more frequently in private homes than in schools, supermarkets, or churches, but that the majority of mass killings are committed with firearms.

The [Gun Violence Archive](#), an independent research group not affiliated with any advocacy organization, focuses exclusively on gun injuries and deaths—intentional, accidental, criminal, and defensive—over the last decade. It collects data from 7500 sources each day. You may see them referenced on PBS and other mainstream media.

[Everytown for Gun Safety](#)—called the largest gun violence prevention organization in the U.S.—analyzes CDC information every year since the shooting at Sandy Hook in 2012. It is also an umbrella organization for several advocacy groups in every state, exposes gun violence in communities of color, and proposes commonsense legislative solutions.

Note: The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts and the LWVCCA support commonsense gun safety legislation, including collection and analysis of gun crime data, along with banning unserialized, untraceable 3-D printed ghost guns, as proposed in the current 193rd Legislative Session. Gun violence prevention is a priority of the LWVCCA's Health Committee.

Submitted by Carole Young-Kleinfeld

CALENDAR

Board Meeting:

TUESDAY June 6 | 9:30—11:30 a.m.
Zoom conference by invitation

LWVMA Convention

"Better Together:

Building an Inclusive Electorate"

SATURDAY June 10 | 8:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Clark University and online

Information and registration at this link:

<https://lwvma.org/lwvma-convention-new-date-to-save-june-10/>

UPCOMING

Board Meeting

TUESDAY September 5 | 9:30—11:30 a.m.
Zoom conference by invitation

To see our entire Google calendar, go to
<http://lwvcapecod.org/lwvcca-calendar>.

NOTE: *Click on "Agenda" to see a list of all events. Click on any calendar listing to see more detail.*

CONGRATULATIONS to LWVCCA Co- President JEANNE MORRISON

Recently the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus recognized LWVCCA Co-President Jeanne Morrison's lifelong activism and advocacy by presenting her with its annual "Black Excellence On the Hill" award.

She was nominated by Representative Kip Diggs, and follows two of her brothers, Brian and Tony, as recipients of this award.



Jeanne Morrison (L) is accompanied by her mother Mary Morrison as she wins a Massachusetts Black & Latino Legislative Caucus' 2023 Black Excellence On the Hill Award. The ceremony was held Friday, April 14 at the Great Hall of the Massachusetts State House. Courtesy Of Jeanne Morrison

You can read more about it at this link:
[Black Excellence on the Hill Award - PDF of Cape Cod Times article.](#)

GOOD NEWS!

It has been almost two years since the proposal for siting a multipurpose machine gun range at Joint Base on the Upper Cape Water Supply

Reserve. Just recently the EPA determined that the range represents a significant potential threat to the Cape's water supply.

While this is a draft finding by the EPA, the first such finding ever issued under its authority pursuant to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act, it does appear to stop the range, but the effort does not end here. The EPA decision is subject to a 60-day comment period before becoming final. It is critically important that all of us concerned with protecting our drinking water make our support of the draft ruling known to EPA. At the beginning of this battle I sent a comment in the name of the League to the hearing commission and will once again reiterate our concerns. However, the more voices heard the greater the chances that this decision will definitely be permanent. You can direct your personal comments, by June 26 too, to R1SSAcomments@epa.gov

The Association to Preserve Cape Cod has some sample language if needed. <https://apcc.org/our-work/advocacy/machine-gun-range/take-action/>

It is becoming more and more apparent that this ecosystem of which we are all a part is indeed fragile. It is only through ongoing vigilance that we can continue to protect the air, land and water around us and preserve these resources for those that come after us.

Submitted by Sue Brock

ADVOCATES for a COMMUNITY COLLEGE EDUCATION

Advocates for a Community College Education (ACCE) is a non-profit organization that was founded twelve years ago to provide support to students on Cape Cod who are passionate about continuing their education at Cape Cod Community College and who would benefit from one-on-one mentoring and additional financial support. The single most important and unique element of ACCE's approach is mentoring to provide guidance, coaching and encouragement. ACCE also provides up to \$4,800 in scholarship

funds to each student to help with the cost of their 2-3 year educational program.

Many ACCE students are the first in their family to attend college and most are also working part-time or full-time. They are not typically "straight A" students and may not be eligible for other scholarships. ACCE identifies these students by working with counselors in the eleven high schools across Cape Cod to encourage applications. They conduct interviews and work to find those students who best match the targeted profile.

ACCE mentors assigned to students build relationships with their students through regular meetings. The mentoring meetings include non-judgmental discussion of goals, progress and challenges in a safe, positive environment based on each student's individual situation and experience. Mentors understand that their role isn't to solve a student's problems but to use their experience, insight and expertise to ask questions and offer suggestions and coaching to help students learn and move forward independently. ACCE mentors are committed to the student's successful navigation of the high school to college transition and to ongoing growth, development and academic success.

<https://www.advocatesforacommunitycollegeeducation.org/>

Submitted by Sue Brock

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Members,

Just a heads up as to the status of your Legislative Committee. Eleven members of the Committee are following 32 different bills through the State Legislature. All of these bills, except the 4 Holtec Bills, are ones that were on the list of some 68 bills selected by the State League as part of their Legislative priorities. There is one category right now that they are still waiting on for bills to appear, so we may in fact have more.

The topics that we are focusing on are Affordable Housing, Transportation, Children & Family Issues, Women's Issues, Education K-12,

Elections and Voting, Environment-Natural Resources, Gun Violence, Health Care, Immigration and Holtec. The area that we are waiting to hear from the LWVMA on is Environment-Climate Change. Locally we are also negotiating with the State League to follow a few bills having to do with Native American affairs.

Members of the Committee selected those bills that they were most interested in covering and periodically check the ma.gov website to see if there has been any progress on their bills. If they are scheduled for a hearing, the Legislative Committee will submit testimony in favor of or opposed to the bill depending on our Local, State and National positions.

We will be hard at work over the summer watching any movement and if there is a need to have more voices to move a bill forward we will send out an Alert so that you all can jump on the bandwagon. Have a relaxing summer and come back ready to work hard.... God knows, with an election year coming up we will all have our hands full.

Legislatively yours Sue Brock

Voter Service Committee

Candidates Forums

We miss Florence Seldin, and probably not for the same reasons that many of you have for missing Florence. Florence was never warm and fuzzy with us, her opinions on things we had done could be frank but truthful and were sometimes hard to take. Why we really miss Florence is because she knew how to run a Candidates Forum. Or at least, she had the "take no prisoners" attitude that got things done with no sweat showing. We first worked with Florence on the mid-term elections of 2018, the contested races of the State Senate seat (Julian Cyr vs. John Flores) and the 9th Congressional District seat (William Keating vs. Peter Tedeschi). Florence had already set up EVERYTHING for the event – the venue (Cape Cinema), the co-sponsor (The Cape Cod Times), the moderator (off-Cape League member, whose

name escapes us) and the ever-important sorter of questions (Judy Thomas). All we had to do was bring the LWVCCA banners, table tents, timekeepers and index cards. The morning of the event we looked at each other and wondered, will anybody show up? We had done nothing to spread the word for the event and suddenly panicked that there would be no audience. Oh, we of little faith. Florence was way ahead of us in that respect. 300 people attended and Florence was in the lobby of the cinema like a general stripping recruits of their badges – campaign pins and campaign posters. THIS was a non-partisan event and no one was to enter the auditorium with even a whiff of preference. This is where I got the trick that if someone was wearing a partisan T-shirt, they were directed to the restroom to turn the T-shirt inside out – genius! The Candidates Forum went off without a hitch. We learned a lot about the candidates, which is the core reason for these forums. And, this, of course, was business as usual for Florence.

Our taking over the Candidates Forums for the 2020 elections during the time of Covid proved challenging because everything was done remotely on zoom. It made everything we learned different but do-able, with Florence and Judy Thomas rooting for us in the background. And, of course, the 2022 Sheriff and District Attorney races done live continued in the spirit of Florence (see November 2022 Voter Article for the full description).

Below are the recorded 2023 candidates forums. We do this work to educate the voter, and while we are at it, we learn an awful lot ourselves. But the work needs to be expanded. What we **really need** is to develop more co-sponsors for the Candidates Forums. In 2023 we worked with the Dennis Town Clerk, the Harwich Voter Information Committee and the Brewster Chamber of Commerce. These organizations shared the work that goes into making a Candidates Forum. I would like to ask League members who have connections with non-partisan professional organizations and their own town clerks to develop them further to see if they'd be

interested in doing Candidates Forums for contested races in 2024.

So, here are the Candidates Forums:

Brewster Candidates Forum, April 25, 2023. Hosted by the Brewster Chamber of Commerce, facilitated by the League of Women Voters, and held at the Brewster Ladies Library. Video includes forums for the contested races of Select Board, Board of Health, and Recreation Commission.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nfkgP8rXlsc>

Harwich Candidates Forum, April 20. Organized by the Voter Information Committee of Harwich, moderated by the League of Women Voters. It was for the Contested Select Board seat, two of the three candidates participated.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUYb5W6gQvU>

Dennis Candidates Forum, April 18. Organized by Terri Bunce, Dennis Town Clerk, moderated by the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area and held at Dennis Town Hall. It was for the contested Board of Select Seat.

<https://reflect-dennis.cablecast.tv/store-3/2116-v1/vod.mp4?fbclid=IwAR0XyamNpPd7WGjNzGr2eCEIaIoCqdEQ2iSvRDCTFkjqcC0nBgfuaDPZ6w8>

UPCOMING VOTER INFORMATION EVENTS / **We need volunteers** to work the tables giving out information on voter registration and upcoming issues and elections.

- Sunday, June 11 – Amity Day, Mashpee Community Park (across from Town Hall) Noon to 4 p.m.
- Sunday, July 16 – International Day, Hyannis Green, Noon to 6 p.m.

Submitted by Anita Rogers and Rosemary Shields
Co-Chairs Voter Service

LWVCCA Board & Contact information

LWVCCA BOARD 2023-2024

Officers for 2023-2024

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Co-Presidents | Mary Hunter Utt and Jeanne Morrison |
| Vice Presidents | |
| Programs | Patricia Burke |
| Operations | Sue Cameron |
| Treasurer | Amy Harris |
| Co-Secretaries | Laura Lerner Debbie Winnick |

Committee Chairs:

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Membership | Mati Ligon |
| Voter Service | Rosemary Shields Lynne Pleffner |
| Youth Service | Karen Mazza |
| Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion | Mary O'Connor |
| Communications, Newsletter | Richard Utt |

Members At Large:

Madeline Zevon
Carole Young-Kleinfeld

Off-Board Committee Chairs

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Legislation | Suzanne Brock |
| Housing | Amy Harris |
| Florence Seldin Lecture Series | Karen Mazza |
| Health | Eileen Elias |

Contact LWVCCA:

LWVCCA
P. O. Box 2347
Orleans, MA 02653

Phone: 508-945-0511

Email: lwvcca@gmail.com

Website: www.lwvcapecod.org

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/LWVCCA/>