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LWVCCA CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Greetings, LWVCCA members,

December brings us to our last stretch of the year. It's been a lot of hard work with our consistent tracking of legislation, advocacy, education, and candidates' forums; the census support; redistricting and state and local elections. Not to mention welcoming 29 new members and hosting excellent member meetings. Whew! It's been whirlwind of serving and educating voters.

Thank you, LWVCCA members, for doing an excellent job educating and engaging voters! We had the 2nd highest mid-term turnout in MA history at 51.4%! Local voter turnout ranged from a high of 72.4% in Eastham to 37.8% in Bourne. All towns: 71% Orleans, 69.9% Brewster, 64.5% Falmouth, 64.4% Harwich, 63.5% Mashpee, 61% Barnstable, 65% Chatham, 66.3% Dennis, 62.8% Sandwich, 69.5% Truro, 65.4% Wellfleet, 55.4% Yarmouth, 65.5% Provincetown.

Although more than half of voters still prefer voting at the polls on Election Day, 37.4% took advantage of voting by mail. We also experienced multiple firsts. Women were elected to the highest 5 of 6 state's constitutional offices, including the governor's office and in Barnstable County the first woman elected sheriff.

Going forward we have a terrific opportunity for leveraging existing community partnerships and brokering new ones to facilitate accountability and bring voters and elected officials together through civic engagement and ongoing programming around issues of concern and topics that impact our community. We are very pleased to announce that this work will be enhanced by a recent donation of just over \$4,600 to the Ed Trust from the Cape Women's Cooperative which, sadly, disbanded this year. We and they have always shared very similar goals -- education and engagement of voters, particularly in marginalized communities.

The Nominating Committee will be looking for a slate of officers for 2023-24. We also have committees still in need of co-chairs and members. If you think you might be interested, please contact either of us and we will welcome you and get you plugged in to our work, at whatever level you wish to participate.

Finally, on Saturday December 3rd, from 9:30 to 11:30am, we will gather in person for the annual Holiday Brunch, talk by Cape Cod Times editor Anne Brennan, and book swap at the Family Table Collaborative in South Yarmouth.

We wish you a safe, healthy, and joyous holiday season. Looking forward to 2023!

Jeanne and Mary

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



CALENDAR

HOLIDAY BRUNCH

SATURDAY Dec 3 | 9:30 a.m.
FAMILY TABLE COLLABORATIVE



Board Meeting

TUESDAY Dec 6 | 9:30 a.m.
Zoom conference by invitation

UPCOMING

Board Meeting

TUESDAY Jan 3 | 9:30 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.

DID YOU KNOW—?

According to the CDC, suicide was the 2nd leading cause of death among people ages 10-14 and 25-34 in 2020. Young people who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual have higher rates of suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts compared to their peers who identify as heterosexual. In 2019, 9% of high school students reported attempting suicide during the previous 12 months. Suicide attempts and Emergency department visits were reported more frequently among girls than boys. Read more from the CDC [here](#). The CDC works with many state departments of education to implement home-based programs to highlight safe household storage of lethal items—firearms, sharp objects, medications—and to develop programs that provide *courageous conversations* about suicide, grieving, and emotional coping skills among young people. Read about one such program in Massachusetts at [Sharing Kindness](#). Also, in July 2022, the US Dept. of Health and Human Services launched the 24/7 nationwide [988 Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#), formerly called the National Suicide Prevention Hotline.

WHITE PRIVILEGE CAPE COD SYMPOSIUM

On Friday evening October 28th and Saturday October 29, six LWVCCA members attended the White Privilege Cape Cod Symposium: RACE: Our Hidden History, Reflect. Act. Commit. Educate. The symposium took place at Barnstable High School. LWVCCA participated as a sponsor and an exhibitor. Voter Services set up a voter registration and education table and reports that attendees showed significant interest in the work of the League and the upcoming election.

On opening night, the Privilege Institute's Executive Director, Eddie Moore, thanked us directly for being there and said voting was important. While he didn't name LWVCCA directly, he called us "voting people."

The Privilege Institute's national team organized keynote addresses from Debby Irving about the history and impact of race-based ideologies on shaping policies on wealth and home ownership and from Monique Clark about her experiences and challenges growing up as a CODA (child of deaf parents) and the intersectionality of race and disability.

Local and out-of-state presenters offered three sessions of a variety of workshops focused on subjects such as the history of slavery on Cape Cod, the history of the Black church, racism in schools and community, transformational conversations, dismantling privilege, and actions individuals and organizations can take.

In addition, about 25 high school students attended as hosts and participated in their own learning track, "Youth Action Project." Candida Rose, a Cape Verdean woman sang a stirring rendition of Sam Cooke's famous song "A Change Is Gonna Come."

Highlights for LWVCCA attendees include:

"Wonderful sharing a safe space to learn new things about myself and others' relationships to race. Great learning experience with my peers".

“The true story of the depth of the involvement and complicity of Cape Cod sea captains and mariners in the slave trade was eye-opening. We need to peel away the local mythology about this dark history.”

“One of my favorite portions of Monique Clarke’s presentation was the three selves: Authentic self — fully confident; Adaptive self — public person; Performative Self — masking true self.”

“I was so happy to see so many people I knew — and so many I met — at this conference. People were so thoughtful about the issues concerning DEIB (“B” for belonging) and respectful of each other.”

“An excellent balance of keynote speakers, very informative breakout sessions and most importantly ample opportunities to meet and interact with others on Cape Cod and beyond committed to DEI initiatives.”

“The values of white men (not so much white woman) have historically dominated the American culture and defined success at work, school, educational settings, etc. -- the rush to results, tell and sell approach. To transform, we need to think how groups who've been trampled think: why should I trust you? do you see me? what can I learn from you? Rosemary and I take this to heart in voter info events by trying to lead with: How are you doing today? the sheriff and DA positions are on the ballot...and the opportunity to provide more equity in the criminal justice system and how inmates are treated in jails.”

LWVCCA Attendees:

Jeanne Morrison	Rosemary Shields	J. Marie Stevenson
Mary Hunter Utt	Anita Rogers	Karen McPherson

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Changes are coming to the Legislative Committee. Suzanne Brock will be taking over my position as Co-Chair in January. Suzanne’s leadership of the LWVCCA Legislative Committee will coincide with the beginning of the January 2023, legislative session—the 193rd—and with the swearing-in of our newly elected—and re-elected—legislators. Although I will not serve as Co-Chair, I will remain an active member of the Legislative Committee.

I want to thank the committee members for their support the last 8 years, Richard Utt for his willingness to send out legislative alerts, and all the LWVCCA members who have advocated for bills with their legislators.

Thank you all
Renate Sands

Legislative Update

Massachusetts Ballot Question 4 passed due to the outstanding work done by the **Yes on 4 Coalition**. Nearly 54% of Massachusetts voters supported keeping the law that removes the citizenship requirement in order to get a learner's permit, driver's license, and auto insurance in the Commonwealth. The LWVMA and local Leagues, including LWVCCA, advocated in favor of “YES on 4” for safer roads.

Looking for new members:

This is also an excellent time for League members—both new and experienced—to join our committee. If you are interested, please contact Suzanne Brock or Carole Young-Kleinfeld for information.

Submitted by **Carole Young-Kleinfeld,**
Renate Sands
Co-Chairs, Legislative Committee

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

I’ve seen the fruit of members’ efforts to include more and diverse people into activities and the membership of our League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area. Including translations of printed material, inviting younger people to come to

events and join our chapter, and having interpreters at events are just some of the strategies I've noticed.

This is an organization wide effort and not just one of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Your liaison to the committee might help with recommendations and all of us draw inspiration from each other.

Our approaches need to be as varied as the people we want to include. We should celebrate our "wins" and avoid becoming complacent.

One thing that keeps me on my toes is change. Definitions of people and how they want to be treated evolve as more people are invited to the table.

In fact, some people are adding "belonging" to the equation/challenge. You might see headings with Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging floating around. My understanding is Belonging is being used to describe feeling accepted and truly part of a group.

How can we possibly keep up with the changing descriptions? Respectful and welcoming attitudes go a long way in each encounter. Sometimes I feel like I'm in a swirl which confuses me just when I thought I was in touch with the most respectful and welcoming way to approach people. I often need to get back down to basics. One strategy is for me to look at my family and circle of friends. I'm already dealing with them, love them, and like most of them!

Join me. Make a list of all the diverse characteristics within your circle of family and friends. How many age ranges are represented, how many races, how many countries and ethnicities, how many languages, what gender identities exist, what pronouns do they use, who is struggling with mental health or addiction issues, is anyone hearing or sight impaired? Really drill down to describe someone who is different to realize why you think they are different.

What do we do now to include people with these (and more) characteristics? What would we share with others to help them include your family and friends? Share with all of us approaches you

use. No formal survey: include suggestions when they seem appropriate.

Here are some tips that came to me:

- Accept others' presentations of themselves. When someone tells you who they are or how they feel, believe them.
- Countries and Cultures: Incorporate food and customs into discussions and events.
- Languages: Provide information in various languages to encourage people to participate and, if helpful, provide interpreters for events.
- Gender Identification: Use the pronouns a person presents as theirs. Maybe read an article in which someone uses they as their pronoun. It might be difficult if you are not used to this, but I found I can get into the flow of reading an article accurately the more I read.
- Mental Health: At minimum, share your own mental health challenges with others. One niece recently remarked I contacted all the nieces and nephews when I started on antidepressants to tell them how wonderful I found the experience. I don't remember doing this, but they do and feel comfortable talking about it.
- Addiction Issues: Share your stories or join a 12 step/support group to help deal with someone's addiction.
- Hearing Impairment: Use the microphone!! Repeat audience questions before answering them so the question is amplified.
- Sight Impaired: I don't have much experience here. Share your thoughts with me!

Thank you for inviting me to join the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area. Let's keep preparing to invite even more people.

Submitted by **Mary O'Connor,**
Chair, DEI Committee

WELCOME to NEW MEMBERS

Claire Roycroft joins LWVCCA committed to activism. Claire was inspired to join the League by Florence Seldin of Chatham and is interested in connecting with others who believe strongly in the power of the vote.

Claire attended Nauset Regional High School in Eastham before graduating from Smith College and the University of Texas at Austin with degrees in economics. She moved back to the Cape this past August, returning to Brewster where her family lives, and is working as an economist in the Boston area.

Claire looks forward to reviewing the League's calendar and learning about the Leagues' committees. She hopes to further the league's engagement with young people in the community. She recalls registering to vote with the local town clerk while living on Cape as a teenager, but never had extensive voting discussions in high school other than one mock presidential election.

In college, Claire volunteered with Best Buddies, an organization that pairs students with individuals who have disabilities. She is an avid reader who loves a good novel, and has spent many hours at the Brewster Ladies Library. She is a casual runner and plans to run a half marathon in Chicago this coming spring

Claire Roycroft

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HOLIDAY BRUNCH

On December 3, 2022, LWVCCA is sponsoring a Holiday Brunch from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. at the Family Table Collaborative, 1338 MA-28, South Yarmouth MA 02664 (formerly the Riverway Lobster House).

Our guest speaker will be Anne Brennan, Editor of the Cape Cod Times, who will speak on "Cape Cod Times Role in the Community: Operating in the Current Media Landscape."



The Family Table Collaborative. "Cape Cod's Community Kitchen," is a non-profit whose mission is to end

hunger and improve nutritional security on Cape Cod by breaking down the barriers of access to both prepared meals and education. The Collaborative has served over 94,000 meals since March 2020.

[Family Table Collaborative website](#)

There will be a book swap. Attendees who would like to participate in the book swap are asked to bring a wrapped used book from their own collection (banned or not!) , to exchange with others. Don't have a book to exchange? Don't worry--there will be extras.

VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE

"The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons."

Fyodor Dostoyevsky

Barnstable County Correctional Facility (BCCF) Update

LWVCCA made a little progress this fall in partnering with other organizations to communicate voting rights to eligible, incarcerated voters at the BCCF. We signed on to a letter sent to Sheriff Jim Cummings, and collaborated with outside agencies (Democracy Docket, Democracy Behind Bars) and the Director of Inmate Services at the BCCF. We connected the Director of Inmate Services with Assistant Town Manager in Bourne and they streamlined the voting process so that applications could be faxed to the Town Hall. We provided handouts, copies of related sections of the VOTES Act passed this past June as well as the 2020 Election Advisory sent by the Secretary of State which we thought (in error) could be used for guidance now. We don't have exact results of how many voted, and our (both outside agencies like ours and the Inmate Services team) efforts were hampered by the hierarchy and bureaucracy that is common for most municipal departments. For example, neither the Secretary of State's office

nor the Sheriff's office published guidance until it was too late, if at all. Also, amid our activities there was a COVID outbreak at the BCCF which took precedence over some of the internal efforts.

Don't despair! Here are some things make us hopeful about for 2024: BCCF's Inmate Services seemed genuinely on board with our efforts and I believe did all that they could given the situation (e.g., the Sheriff's office asked LWVCCA for copies of the red Voter booklet which is provided by the Secretary of State's office!). The VOTES Act reforms should be in place and procedures communicated by January, 2023. Last but not least, the Sheriff elect and the District Attorney elect have both pledged to expand and communicate voting rights for incarcerated, eligible voters and address the systemic racism that has plagued our criminal justice system. Please contact Anita Rogers if you have questions.

Other stuff the Voter Service Committee did:



Because of the October 25 Seldin Speaker Series on "Youth Power: Claiming Our Future With Our Vote," we were contacted the next day by Emiline Palanza of the Sturgis Charter School asking us to set up a Voter Registration / Information table at the school that Friday, October 28, which just so happened to be the penultimate day you could register to vote for the November 8 election. Talk about calling it close! Rosemary and Emiline (pictured above) set up the table with all the QR codes for voter registration, info on the Sheriff and

District Attorney races, ballot questions and much more. About 80 students stopped by the table and many of them took the blue registration "business cards" with them. Three registered right there in front of me, and two returned the cards saying they found out on-line they were already registered. The system works! The students asked good questions. Emiline was confident enough from my quick all-things-election intro to take over and talk to her peers —the best kind of information exchange. We registered one student via paper and gave him the address of his town hall where he had to deliver it by 5 pm Saturday. 5 other students took paper registration cards home. We got a positive response for all the information we provided. And Emiline brought at least 2 dozen cookies in a big Tupperware container and "rewarded" students who were registered.



And what a beautiful day, Friday, November 4 was at the Hyannis Rotary. At 11:30 a.m. there was a Get Out the Vote Rally with Grandmothers Against Gun Violence. The Grandmothers were there "to encourage others to vote for the changes they want to see." There's nothing quite like getting out on green grass and waving at cars, many of which honked back at us in approval.

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

YOUTH SERVICE COMMITTEE

Ramping Up League Support For Student Led Civics Projects

Supporting school efforts to implement the state required student-led civics projects in Grade 8 and high school, continues to be the focus of the Youth Service Committee. Our committee met in October to review the services we would offer schools. Our committee is in the process of updating the Cape Cod Civic Resource Directory for Student-led Civics Projects and it will be available by December. This directory provides resource information about government and civic organizations that can provide background information on the issues students choose to study.

Additionally, we will be offering Cape area schools an option list of ways that we can support student projects at beginning, middle and end stages of these projects. In the beginning stage, our resource guide will help schools identify sources of information and we can extend that help by offering to help students follow-up contacts with organizations that may not respond to them in a timely manner. In the middle stage, we can help students understand strategies for advocacy around their issues. In the end stage we can assist schools with presentation of student projects, either by serving as judges if it is a judged event, or by serving as an audience to appreciate student work and give constructive feedback.

Civics at the LWVMA level:

The state League has adopted the Celebration of Student-led Civics Projects as a state initiative. In addition to our work here on the Cape, I have been leading a civic education collaboration network of Leagues across the state. I co-hosted a November 15 Zoom discussion with the Concord, Needham, and Worcester Leagues to share progress and answer questions for Leagues seeking to develop these school partnerships. We have created a Toolkit to support Leagues in developing a partnership with schools and that is posted on the LWVMA website at this link: [School Celebration Civics Toolkit](#).

LWVMA has also offered to help raise funds to support the State Level Civics Showcase that will be held in May/June 2023. **They are sponsoring an LWVMA Giving Tuesday (November 29) event targeted for that purpose.** It will be conducted by social media and we are asked to share their post in our own social media sites to spread the word. Since the state is prohibited from spending money on food, funds would go to feed students at the showcase event.

How You Can Help:

We have committee members to cover most of our districts, but we do not have any helpers for Sandwich or for the Nauset Regional School District. You don't have to be a committee member to help. If these schools choose to hold a civics showcase event at the end of the school year or if they would like help contacting community resources, it would be great to have helpers to cover those schools. Please let Karen Mazza know if you would like to help by contacting her at mazzak1623@gmail.com.

*Submitted by **Karen Mazza**,
Chair, Youth Service Committee*