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**LWVCCA CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE**

2022 was challenging: the mid-term elections, the January 6th Committee, Russian invasion of Ukraine, climate change, inflation, and more. 2023 will almost certainly bring more challenges, but one bright spot is that LWVCCA membership has grown through the year and we continue to welcome new members and plan new events.

Most recently we held our first in-person Holiday Brunch in 3 years hosting 40 people. In past years, we have often held it at the Riverway in Yarmouth. On December 3rd we held it at the same place, now The Family Table Collaborative. The FTC is a non-profit organization working to end the growing problem of food insecurity on Cape Cod. Founder and chef Jeni Wheeler and her volunteer staff served up an outstanding breakfast buffet. Cape Cod Times Executive Editor Anne Brennan was the keynote speaker, and we closed with a book swap. See Karen McPherson's report in this issue for more details about the event and the venue.

Several forums/events are in the works for spring. Eileen Elias and Carole Young-Kleinfeld of the Health Committee are organizing a forum around preventing youth suicide on the Cape. Karen Mazza and the Florence Seldin Committee are identifying the next speaker in the series. Your fearless co-presidents are working with Anne

Brennan and Kate McMahon of Cape Media to provide a "Civic Engagement for Adults" series focusing on how government works, especially at our local and state levels. We are also planning a presentation and roundtable discussion with the Women and Girls Fund of the Cape Cod Foundation, working to improve the status and opportunities for women and girls. An informal group is forming to plan a forum on affordable housing on Cape Cod. And, as always, the Voter Service Committee is very busy planning voting education and registration activities for upcoming local spring elections.

We are also about to begin the annual update of our program priorities (see pages 14-16 of your Members Handbook and Directory). All members will be invited to participate.

As mentioned above, we continue to welcome new members: 35 in 2022 so far. We welcome all and will feature each, incrementally, in the monthly Voter, publishing information about backgrounds and interests. A town liaison will contact new members directly. However, new members who would like to submit their own info can contact Suzanne Brock ([sailinsue22@gmail.com](mailto:sailinsue22@gmail.com)) for further information. We'll provide a template to guide you. Thank you all for joining LWVCCA! We look forward to all members sharing their knowledge and skills to engage in our work.

The committee reports in this issue provide more information about LWVCCA events and activities. If a committee or planned event piques your interest, just contact the committee chair (listed with each report) to get involved. We welcome your participation.

In the meantime, we wish you a happy and healthy 2023.

*Jeanne and Mary*

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

**CALENDAR**

**Board Meeting**

TUESDAY Jan 3 | 9:30 a.m.

Zoom conference by invitation

**Annual Martin Luther King Day 2023 Virtual Breakfast**

MONDAY Jan 16 | 8:30 a.m.

Zoom conference [AT THIS LINK](#)

**UPCOMING**

**African American History Month Begins**

WEDNESDAY Feb 1 |

**Board Meeting**

TUESDAY Feb 7 | 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.***

**IRA SELDIN**

APRIL 29, 1930 – DECEMBER 18, 2022



Many of you knew Florence Seldin, a longtime member of the LWVCCA, who passed away last year. We're sad to announce that her husband Ira Seldin, also a longtime member, and LWVCCA treasurer for many

years, passed away at home last weekend.

<https://capecodchronicle.com/en/5751/obituaries/9741/Ira-Seldin.htm>

*"Ira was a mensch, a lovely and kind human being. He was so helpful and supportive to me when he served as Treasurer when I was President of the LWVCCA. As a Board member he got to the point and encouraged all of us to do so with good humor and clear insight. He was a great host for dinner at the Seldin home and once made us latkes when we shared a dual Christmas Eve and Hanukkah dinner at our home. I liked Ira very much. He and Florence made quite a team. As she was a force of nature, Ira was laid back making his points quietly and quickly. He gave generously of his time to volunteer service at a variety of charitable and civic organizations. Our organization has been blessed to know the leadership, influence and kindness of both Ira and Florence and I am grateful for their mentorship, support and friendship".*

Karen Mazza

*"Ira was the Treasurer before me and he handed off beautiful books and lots of good info. It was very easy to slip into the job with his help. I did love those little cartoon doodles he drew of himself when he forwarded mail to me. He was a sweet, gracious man. I remember sending Florence home with some leftovers and getting a nice thank you from him. He also taught me about how to make latkes and I enjoyed the stories of the latkes in his life. He was wry and dry and generous and above all, kind. When I served on Harwich Housing Committee, there was a gal on the board who heard I was in the League and the first thing she asked was, "do you know Ira Seldin?" (not Florence). She knew him as I knew him - kind and gentle and a sly wit. He touched many."*

Amy Harris

And here's an amusing appreciation of Ira from the Cape Cod Chronicle, titled "The End of an Ira":

<https://capecodchronicle.com/en/5751/opinion/9728/Our-View-The-End-Of-An-Ira.htm>



**DID YOU KNOW—?**

Inside Climate News—an independent, nonpartisan, non-profit, Pulitzer Prize-winning online news publication—reports that many oil and gas utilities have sold assets such as wells and coal plants to private companies, supposedly in an effort to lower their greenhouse gas emissions and to invest in renewable energy sources. However, these sales could backfire against our environment.

The publication states, “Privately held companies are exempt from many of the financial reporting rules that publicly traded companies face, and they are more insulated from the social and environmental pressures that investors have placed on the fossil fuel sector in recent years.”

Environmentalists worry that that these transactions to private equity firms reduce transparency of the environmental impact of the operations and can obscure the actual ownership of each property site. They warn that, while both public and private firms do invest in renewable energy, those privately held companies could continue to operate fossil-fuel plants longer than the publicly traded companies would have. If the private firms fail or abandon those sites, they could leave the public with clean-up expenses.

Read more here:

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/24102022/fossil-fuels-private-equity/>

**WELCOME to NEW MEMBERS**

Introducing

**Polly Brazelton**

**Susan Littlefield**

**Sue Cameron**

Hi Leaguers. Meet one of our newer members, **Polly Brazelton** who joined us in July. And, yes, before you ask, her father was the famous T Berry Brazelton, “the baby doctor!” Polly spent some of her early years in Cambridge MA where she summered on the Cape in Barnstable with her family. Polly attended Shady Hill School and Milton Academy and finally headed to New York and Kirkland College for Women. Her education prepared her for a career in finance. That career

took Polly from J.P. Morgan in New York to Sun Valley, ID and finally back to Cambridge, MA. When it came time to retire, Polly decided on the Cape because the family home was here and she loved the area. Polly is divorced and has a son who is an engineer living with his family in Pittsburgh and a daughter who runs the Lilly Pulitzer store in Chatham.

Polly was attracted to the League originally while she was working in Cambridge by a publication she saw in Brookline. The Brookline League had put together a candidate’s information pamphlet for voters and Polly found it extremely helpful. On the Cape, because this year was such a tumultuous year politically and elections were very prominent, Polly was looking for a way to get involved. She had a strong interest in promoting student voting and feels that the League needs to continue to work hard to make voting more accessible and important to younger voters.

In terms of the League and issues, Polly has a strong interest in abortion and women’s rights. She feels that equal pay needs to be an ongoing focus as well as the income equality wealth gap problem. Her hope is that the tax structure is addressed at the national level in order to alleviate some of this discrepancy. In addition, Polly is concerned with international relations and protecting Democracy, especially given the divisiveness in America with all of the differing factions.

In her spare time, Polly loves to play tennis and she volunteers to raise money for the preservation of the Steeple Church in Barnstable. She is also on the Board of her father’s Foundation. Moving forward with the LWVCCA, Polly will get involved slowly with her primary focus right now on voting rights. I would like to join the rest of the League members here on the Cape in welcoming Polly and I hope to see her out and about in our community.

**Polly Brazelton**

617-285-6930

[pbraz235@gmail.com](mailto:pbraz235@gmail.com)

P.O. Box 474,

Barnstable 02630



*"How can I not support such an amazing organization as The League of Women Voters!"*  
Susan Littlefield

**Susan Littlefield** joined the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area while attending a League-sponsored event with friends who are members of the LWVCCA. Her LWVCCA friends had invited her to the event. After attending the event she started asking herself: "How can my personal concerns, interests and skills serve to support the powerful efforts of the League? Like other new members of the LWVCCA Susan Littlefield possesses the rich background of personal and professional experiences that can serve the on-going progress of the LWVCCA very well.

Susan grew up in Providence, Rhode Island and graduated from Harvard University where she met her husband John. They have been married 44 years. After graduating from Harvard University where she had majored in Art History (Fine Arts); Susan worked with and as gardening editor for *House and Garden* magazine. She authored books on gardening and later received a degree in Urban Landscaping from City College of New York. She loves to write. She has resided in New York City, Connecticut, California, Florida and Argentina. Susan speaks Spanish fluently. She and her husband have three adult children: A son who is an editor; a daughter who earned her M.B.A.; and a son who is earning his doctorate degree in Political Science. He will soon be traveling to Brazil to do research regarding his doctoral work.

Susan's community service efforts on the Cape have included involvement with the Unitarian Church in Barnstable where she is an active member. She is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Friends of Barnstable Harbor. Susan is a supporter of projects that provide services for abused women as she volunteers with the Safe Plan Program at Independence House.

The League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area is honored to welcome Susan Littlefield as she expresses her desire to learn more about The League. Susan definitively states: " I am anticipating that through my active membership in

the LWVCCA, I will better understand how I can contribute to efforts to repair our broken system of government."

**Susan Littlefield**

203-858-0186

[sshlittlefield@gmail.com](mailto:sshlittlefield@gmail.com)

P.O. Box 409, 11 Holly Lane,  
Cummaquid 02637



And welcome **Sue Cameron**

*Sue submitted the following as her introduction to LWVCCA*

I am new to Cape Cod, moving here in April of this year. I grew up in Sharon MA, returning to Massachusetts after 4 decades of living in Northern California. My 90-year-old mother lives in Mansfield and I have siblings nearby.

My career was in Silicon Valley, where I eventually found a niche providing accounting and finance services to small businesses.

While I was working, I had precious little time to devote to community volunteering. I did, however, become certified as a Court Appointed Special Advocate and advocated for two teen girls over a 5 year period. I retired in 2012 and moved to a rural county in Northern California where the cost of living was reasonable and pace of life A LOT slower.

After several months of recuperating from relentless deadlines, I started full throttle volunteering. I ran for and served on the Board of our HOA, serving as Treasurer for 2 years. I joined Soroptimists International, participating in various events to raise funds for women and girl's programs. I became involved with a small local group called Totes 4 Teens. Totes 4 Teens provides teens in foster care or living in compromised households, overnight suitcases filled with essential items; it culminates during the holiday season. It was an informal community-based group until 2015. That year, the Valley Fire, tore through our community. That was, as of 2015, the 2<sup>nd</sup> worst fire in California history. Totes 4 Teens had a storage unit with nearly a year's worth of inventory that went up in flames. Our



founder thought that was the end of Totes 4 Teens. Until a local resident offered a \$10,000 grant, IF the organization incorporated as a 501c(3). The founder got to work on that and the organization survived. But then needed an accountant with experience doing the government reporting required of non-profit organizations. I've been doing that ever since! Additionally, I buy the pajamas, coordinate the sewing of custom pillowcases, and for a few years, managed the fund-raising. A hugely rewarding activity!

I also initiated the founding of a chapter of Health Care for All California. Having been at the mercy of health insurance companies during my years of being self-employed, I was particularly enraged about our for-profit healthcare system and wanted to participate in trying to change that.

I first joined the League during this period of my life. I joined as simply a dues-paying member because the closest Chapter was a 1.5 hour drive from my home. So attending meetings was not feasible. I am thrilled to find a robust, active League on Cape Cod. I am looking forward to active involvement in an organization dedicated to voting, and to women voting.

**Susan Jean Cameron**  
 408-219-5434  
[susanjcameron@att.net](mailto:susanjcameron@att.net)  
 37 Williams Rd,  
 West Yarmouth 02673

**HOLIDAY BRUNCH**

With all the joy of the Holiday Season, LWVCCA members and guests returned to an indoor, sit-down brunch on Saturday, December 3, 2022. Thirty-nine members and guests enjoyed the absolutely wonderful meal at the [Family Table Collaborative](#) (located in the building formerly The Riverway Lobster House in South Yarmouth). The service, provided by FTC volunteers, was impeccable.

The Family Table Collaborative's 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. On Sunday, December 4, a very informative article about the

Family Table Collaborative was published in The Cape Cod Times. The Cape Cod Times article can be seen by going to

<https://www.capecodtimes.com/story/business/economy/2022/12/04/revenue-streams-sustain-nonprofit-family-table-collaborative-yarmouth-cape-cod/69600594007/>

(Editor's note: If you can't see the article, a PDF of the article is available at the link below.)

[https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/will\\_revenue\\_streams\\_sustain\\_nonprofit\\_family\\_table\\_collaborative.pdf](https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/will_revenue_streams_sustain_nonprofit_family_table_collaborative.pdf)



Jeanne Morrison welcomes Jeni Wheeler.

We are so thankful this year for Jeni Wheeler, Co-Founder and Director of Operations, who was so helpful as we organized this event.



Our speaker . Anne Brennan

Our speaker was Anne Brennan, Executive Editor of the Cape Cod Times. Her topic was "Cape Cod Times Role in the Community: Operating in the Current Media Landscape." Her speech was very well received by all in attendance. Anne started as a reporter for the Cape Cod Times and

over the years has held progressively more responsible positions at news organizations throughout New England prior to being named Executive Editor of the Cape Cod Times in 2020.

In addition, most in attendance participated in the traditional “book swap” (banned or not). We are thankful that several brought more than one book, so that all who wanted could take a wrapped book home.

It was interesting to see how many local residents were coming to the FTC to buy baked goods, which FTC sells on Saturday and Sunday mornings. I was hooked myself when I decided to buy 2 muffins as I was leaving after the brunch. They were large – and delicious! I shall return – and am confident that the LWVCCA will return for events in the future.

*Submitted by Karen McPherson  
Vice President, Program & Planning*



**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

The 193<sup>rd</sup> Massachusetts Legislative Session begins in January 2023 and extends through the end of 2024. The LWVCCA Legislative Committee— with **Suzanne Brock** as its new chair—will be watching for new bills, bills from the last session that may be re-introduced, and those that are priorities for the LWVMA Legislative Action Committee (LAC). The LAC will be chaired by **Jan Muroff** who has worked with local Leagues as LWVMA’s Immigration Specialist and its Gun Safety Specialist.

**Renate Sands** reports that the Common Start legislation will be re-introduced in the next session, along with several firearm safety bills, and Same Day/Election Day voter registration bills. Legislative Committee members **Rosemary Shields** and **Elaine Dickinson** will also continue to advocate for protecting Cape Cod Bay from radioactive wastewater discharge.

The Work and Family Mobility Act, passed by the legislature and upheld by the voters on the 2022 Ballot, allows immigrants—regardless of their status—to obtain drivers licenses. This new law

takes effect on July 1, 2023. Legislators who worked hard to pass the law are closely monitoring the language in the proposed regulations that the RMV will use to implement the law. Stay tuned for more on this as the session progresses.

Do you have a governmental issue of special interest? Early childhood education? Election administration? Immigration? Good government? Now is a great time to join the LWVCCA’s Legislative Committee, learn more about the legislative process, communicate with your lawmakers, and help the LWVCCA speak up on priority bills. Contact **Suzanne Brock** or **Carole Young-Kleinfeld** for more information about the committee.

*Submitted by Carole Young-Kleinfeld,  
Suzanne Brock  
Co-Chairs, Legislative Committee*

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION  
COMMITTEE**

The League of Women Voters – Massachusetts sponsors a quarterly Zoom Peer Discussion Group for members across the Commonwealth interested in diversity, equity, and inclusion issues. The most recent meeting was held Saturday, December 10, 2022. Marcia Fredlich and I attended representing our chapter’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

Last month I noted “Belonging” is being added to the conversation and, sometimes, to the title of diversity, equity and inclusion committees. This came up during the Discussion Group’s meeting. “Belonging” was described as an approach to making all feel part of the group; not just invited but incorporated.

Remember last month I asked, “How can we possibly keep up with the changing descriptions?” “Belonging” is out there as a change. I’m not big on making committee names long and cumbersome so I haven’t come to grips with how we on the Cape could or should include “belonging” into our committee title or activities.

Maybe “belonging” is not a change. My current thinking is “belonging” is the goal and is the aim of most, if not all, of our committees. It is why we encourage everyone to plan activities using the lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our committee will meet in January and put this on the agenda. We’re not looking to change the committee’s name. We’re looking to see how a “belonging” lens will help us. Let me know if you want to join the discussion at the meeting, even if you are not a committee member!

The Group also discussed how we can go beyond preaching to the choir as raised by our Marcia. Many of the suggestions focused on expanding the choir. Ideas were floated to recruit people by breaking down silos and seeking out people already concerned about these issues but not yet involved. As one participant noted, concrete ideas would be helpful. Sounds like another agenda item for January!

I’ll close with the perspective shared by one participant, who was a singer and member of a choir. She drew a parallel between the dynamic within a group of singers and the dynamic of our peer discussion group. We are a choir, too. We get together with people who are basically on the same page. We tune in to each other and coordinate with and support each other as we talk about things that are not so easy to discuss. It’s empowering as well as uplifting.

Happy to be a member of choir called the League of Women Voter of the Cape Cod Area.

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

**VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE**

*“if they don’t give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair.” Congressperson  
Shirley Chisholm*

*“Don’t leave your power on the table.”  
Jeanne Morrison*

THANK YOU to all our League members who helped Get Out The Vote, through the Voter Service Committee or on your own. Every vote matters, and whether you helped with an event, wrote

postcards, took a friend to the polls, worked at the polls, or called a friend to ask what their voting plan was, it made a difference!

Usually, mid-term elections don't attract as many voters as in Presidential election years but with ballot issues and competitive races for Sheriff and the District Attorney, Cape Cod voters turned out 5 to 10% more than they did in the 2018 mid-term elections.

<b>Cape Cod Midterm Election Results November 8, 2022</b>		
<b>Town</b>	<b>Number of Votes / Number of Reg. Voters</b>	<b>% Registered Voters</b>
Barnstable	21, 926 / 35,966	61%
Bourne	9078 / 15,931	57%
Brewster	5,961 / 8,633	69%
Chatham	4074 / 6232	65%
Dennis	8614 / 13,004	66%
Eastham	3386 / 4679	72%
Falmouth	17,545 / 27,212	63%
Harwich	7477 / 11,436	65%
Mashpee	8040 / 12,667	63%
Orleans	1987 / 2855	70%
Provincetown	2237 / 3390	66%
Sandwich	10,678 / 16,999	63%
Truro	1490 / 2145	70%
Wellfleet	2032 / 3106	65%
Yarmouth	12,014 / 21,677	55%

Also, if you want to compare Cape Cod's 2022 November election turnout with the rest of the state, you can do so by using this interactive map:

[https://storage.googleapis.com/q2w\\_maps\\_public/ma\\_turnout\\_2022/index.html#8/42.200/-71.612](https://storage.googleapis.com/q2w_maps_public/ma_turnout_2022/index.html#8/42.200/-71.612)

We want to thank members of the Voter Service Committee, in particular, Sue Cameron, Joan Craig, Mary O'Connor, Tova Soynt Carole Young-Kleinfeld, Lynne Pleffner and Mati Ligon, for gathering the data of our mid-term election.



**SO WHAT DOES ALL OF THIS MEAN?**

Our votes give us a place at the table, but now that the election is over, we can't leave our power on the table. Let's not abandon the issues to the whims of our Senators and Representatives or to the determination of the vested-interests lobbyists.

After the election is the time to develop our relationships with our legislators. Find their contact information here:

<https://my.lwv.org/massachusetts/cape-cod-area/government/directory-elected-officials>

Let's hold ourselves and our representatives accountable by strengthening our contact with them. This is January. The new year is the perfect time to get to know your legislators. Call their offices and congratulate them for winning their election, specifically, Senators Cyr and Moran and Representatives Peake, Diggs and Chris Flanagan, newest member of First Barnstable District. For those who faced no opposition, tell them you appreciate their dedication to public service, working for their constituents for another two years. Ask them what they see as the most important issues in the upcoming session. Take notes and keep a phone log. On your second call in a week or two, start talking to them about the things you hold dear (see the suggestions below). The third phone call might be how they see the budget process progressing – seems like nothing gets done during budget negotiations but you can still add a plug to your causes. Once you start calling and then call more often, it becomes easier. And remember to add the names of the staff you talk to. You're not always going to get to talk directly to your rep but their staff are excellent at relaying what constituents want.

Oh, yes, and if you prefer, there is always e-mail.

**UNSUNG ELECTION HEROES**

The LWVMA, was an early advocate for the Votes Act, which codified the aspects of voting that worked so well during the COVID lockdown. Its passage was a huge win for democracy, even as a segment of the discontented tried to declare the Votes Act unconstitutional. The Courts decided that the description of absentee ballots as written

in our MA Constitution did not prevent the legislative reforms embodied in the Votes Act. Early voting and mail-in voting is a boon for many Cape Codders - for example, those 2 options accounted for 42% of the votes cast in Sandwich in the November election.

The Votes Act, however, took its toll on the Town Clerks (TC) because the Act lacked any provision to fund or staff Town offices or to insure their technology was adequate for the new requirements. Postage alone broke many a TC budget and finding poll workers was a challenge in several towns. Add to that, there were last minute problems like a printing error in the Dennis Primary, and the vault malfunction in Barnstable - the stuff of TC nightmares.

Cape Codders are fortunate to have smart Town Clerks who are as dedicated to voter accessibility as we are, but they need the resources to do their jobs! What can we do? Besides showing them the appreciation and respect they deserve, next time we contact our State representatives and/or Secretary of State, ask them to pass a follow-up bill that requires the state and town governments to insure that Town Clerks receive the funding, staffing and technical resources required to effectively implement the VOTES Act.

**WHAT'S NEXT?**

2023 being relatively quiet on the election front affords time for each League member to GET MORE INVOLVED in League activities: attend a Board meeting via Zoom - it's a great way to find out what's going on in the League beyond what's in the Voter newsletter, speaking of which, READ the Voter completely - it has lots of good information! Finally, DELVE DEEPER into the issues that you're passionate about...the environment (e.g. holding Holtec's feet to the fire as they continue try to dump 1.1 million gallons of nuclear wastewater into Cape Cod Bay), banning assault rifles, assuring child care and early education for our kids, assisting schools with Civic Education...the list (unfortunately) is endless.

This month, the Voter Service team will take a close look at what went well and what didn't - for example, where were there gaps in voter



accessibility and turnout? We'll strategize how to address those needs for 2023 municipal elections...and beyond. The 2024 Presidential election is closer than we think. Please contact us with your ideas.

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

