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CALENDAR

FEBRUARY



Black History Month

February 1 – February 29

BOARD MEETING

TUESDAY February 6 | 9:30—11:30 a.m.

Zoom conference by invitation

SAVE THE DATE & TIME:

PROGRAM PLANNING

UPCOMING




Women's History Month

March 1 – March 31

Board Meeting

TUESDAY March 5 | 9:30—11:30 a.m.

Zoom conference by invitation

 **International Women's Day**

International Women's Day Breakfast 2024

FRIDAY March 8, 2024, 7:30 AM TO 9:30 AM

Details to Follow

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.

LWVCCA CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Greetings members.

During our first month of 2024 we've been gearing up for several things to come in February and March. First, all members are invited to our annual Program Planning meeting to identify program priorities for the next fiscal year (2024-2025). It will be held during the first part of the Board meeting, February 6 at 9:30 am. Committees have been meeting to review last year's priorities (priorities appear on pages 14-16 of the *Members Directory and Handbook*) and to identify proposed changes for this year. Members' input is important and welcome as these priorities will directly impact LWVCCA forums and programs for the coming year.

We will also review and vote on whether to support a Healthcare Concurrence Proposal ([LWV Vermont Update to LWVUS Position on Privatization](#)), and complete the 2024 - 2026 [LWVUS Program Planning Survey](#).

Additionally, the Nominating Committee is putting together the slate of officers and committee chairs for the membership's vote at the May Annual Meeting. LWVCCA, in partnership with other community organizations will host an

International Women's Day Breakfast on March 8, 7:40-9:30 am at the Hyannis Conference Center 35 Scudder Ave in Hyannis. Two panels will address *The Power of Women and Girls Creating Change*, celebrating women and girls who are leaders in their communities. At the January Board meeting the board agreed to join the Housing to Protect Cape Cod Coalition. We're looking for participation from former committee members to represent the LWVCCA and periodically report back. If interested contact Mary Utt or Jeanne Morrison. The Legislative Committee will host two spring events, the annual Legislative dialogue with Cape Cod legislators on March 22nd 10am-12pm at Cape Cod Community College and with the Health Committee, a forum on the end-of-life options bill. More details in the Legislative and Health Committee sections.

As all are aware, we've entered the 2024 Election year. A recent [New York Times article](#) predicts that *"the general election campaign is set to be one of the longest in modern history, pushing candidates into unfamiliar territory as they struggle to engage an electorate that seems numbed by the prospect of a 2020 rematch."* Further the article acknowledges, *"the 2024 presidential candidates face extraordinarily complicated challenges as they and their aides grapple with how to run a presidential campaign that will last almost nine months, significantly longer than most general election contests. So, between now and November presumptive nominees will test attacks on opponents, shore up their shortcomings and build the policy, political and financing foundation for the fall campaign."* [See the article at this link.](#)

In addition, we have elections for MA state Senators and Representatives coming up this fall. We'll see some changes in our Cape Cod legislative delegation as Senator Sue Moran and Representative Sarah Peake have announced their retirements. This should be an interesting election year and a very busy time for our Voter Services. They are a constant force in our communities providing voter registration and information. The LWV believes every voice matters. Voter Services has already begun to ramp

up their work to prepare voters and encourage voter engagement. You can read more about their activities and opportunities to get involved in the Voter Services section of this Newsletter.

Finally, as the country celebrates Black History Month, we all need to be reminded of the important legacy of women such as Ida B. Wells and Sojourner Truth which resonates today. [These Black Women Were Pioneers of the Right to Vote Campaign - NBC Boston](#). As black women fought fiercely for the vote, Ida B Wells joined the voting rights fight saying *"I do this for the future benefit of my whole race."* More than 100 years later some struggles for voting rights continue and many of us of all races are fighting restrictions that many charge are nothing but new ways to prevent people of color and other marginalized people from voting, among them requirements for voter IDs, the purging of voter rolls, redistricting to break up voting blocks, misused robo calls and the closing of polling places. Check out the LWVUS articles on black women who helped define the Voting Rights Movement and are fighting today to keep democracy alive.

[Black Women Who Define\(d\) The Voting Rights Movement - LWV](#)

Aside from a focus on increasing the black vote this year's black history month theme is "African Americans and the Arts", celebrating a dynamic culture that has spread worldwide in the arts, music, literature and film. It's a very rich history. Here is a link for more information.

https://www.chiff.com/home_life/holiday/black-history-month. Also join the community in celebrating local events to honor the triumphs and struggles of African Americans throughout U.S. history. Check our [LWVCCA Facebook page](#) for these events and updates and listings of all of our activities.

Jeanne and Mary

Jeanne Morrison
Mary Hunter Utt
Co-Presidents, LWVCCA

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Looking ahead to May 2024 the members of the nominating committee held their first meeting in January. Sue Cameron and Madeline Zevon from the Board were appointed at last year's Annual Meeting. Debra Dagwan and I were elected at that same meeting. We have started the process and will be contacting members over the next weeks.

Now is the time to try something new. You can join a committee you've been interested in or step up to chair a committee you've been involved with this year. Consider co-chairing with a current chair to ease your way in. The League needs leadership to continue our important work in this election year.

Kathy Borofsky, Chair
774-994-8602

In Memory of Paula Bacon

Submitted by Karen Mazza

Paula was among a generation of senior leaders of the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area who kept our eyes on critical issues and who became strong advocates for progress in these key areas. In particular, she wanted to see Barnstable County Government become a more effective governing body and advocated for consolidation of its governing boards from two to one, since the two bodies had historically argued with each other. She was an advocate for forward movement on wastewater treatment and the protection of the environment. Paula regularly attended the League's goal setting meetings to keep us moving in the right direction. She often wrote letters to the editor of the Cape Cod Times focusing on these issues. In one of her most recent articles she praised the work of our Youth Service Committee on civic education and the Massachusetts law that requires non-partisan civic action projects for students in Grade 8 and high school.

In addition to Paula's work in the League, she also attended classes at the Academy for Life Long Learning based at Cape Cod Community College. She recommended one of her instructors, a constitutional lawyer, to us as a speaker and she was one of the best speakers our organization has heard.

Paula was also a member of the American Association of University Women. Pat Ryle, a League and AAUW member, that organization remembers a delightful October luncheon that AAUW enjoyed with Paula in October. Carolyn Solomon, from that organization writes:

"Paula was a long time valued member of the Cape Cod Branch of the AAUW. I was a fairly new member but appreciated her knowledge of local and national issues. She could debate with the best of us. She will be missed greatly."

Both Suzanne Brock and I had the opportunity to visit with Paula shortly before she passed. Paula said she wanted to be remembered as someone who stirred things up. She did.

Paula's friends in the League remember her fondly and will miss her energetic entreaties for change. We extend our sympathy to her family. We will remember her spirit, and in that spirit, I will close by saying something she would want all of us to say – Onward!!

DID YOU KNOW—?

...that, in Massachusetts, a Black woman is almost twice as likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause as a White woman? According to The Massachusetts Department of Public Health's recently released [Data Brief report](#), Black and Hispanic birthing people are also more likely to have additional serious perinatal health problems—called serious maternal morbidity (SMM). SMM includes strokes, deadly heart attacks, kidney failure, blood clots, and sepsis.

The Department's data dovetails with the Massachusetts Special Commission on [Racial Inequities in Maternal Health Report](#) (May 2022) which explored the serious pregnancy and

childbirth outcomes for people of color. It proposed steps that would help to effect policy changes, such as maternal/infant mortality reviews, affordable birthing centers, diversity in healthcare providers, culturally sensitive community-based health workers, and reimbursement under MassHealth and other insurance providers for supportive pregnancy and postpartum services, such as those provided by doulas. Care provided by a doula—a trained, non-medical companion—has been correlated with lower rates of preterm births and unnecessary C-sections.

A recent article in the Cape Cod Times highlighted the lack of culturally competent doula services for women of color in Massachusetts, and especially on the Cape & Islands. Noting some positive news, the article quoted AG Andrea Campbell's announcement of a grant program for nonprofits that offer pregnancy and postpartum support. Additionally, in response to the 2022 *Racially Inequities* report, MassHealth just announced that doula services will be available to MA residents covered by Medicaid this spring.

The report concludes that racial equity efforts “may significantly improve overall maternal health outcomes for Massachusetts residents” but may require legislation to redesign health delivery systems, recognize implicit bias in healthcare, enact equity training for medical students, promote collaboration across health settings, support midwifery and community-based health workers, and offer mental health, housing, and social service assistance.

Submitted by Carole Young-Kleinfeld

FEBRUARY REPORT FOR THE SPEAKER SERIES COMMITTEE

The Speaker Series Committee has begun planning for a September Speaker Series Event that will be focused on democracy and motivating people to vote. As a non-partisan presentation, it will not discuss specific candidates, but will address the importance of protecting democracy. The committee is in the process of gathering input

from community groups to understand how the event can meet the needs of the community. The event is timed for September in recognition of the annual celebration of the US Constitution.

How You Can Help:

If you would like to give speaker suggestions to the committee for someone who could handle this topic, be non-partisan, and be a very engaging speaker, especially for young people please contact Karen Mazza, Chair, at mazzak1623@gmail.com.

VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE

January 8, Barnstable County Human Rights Advisory Commission Awards breakfast

LWVCCA's Voter Service had an information table at the January 8 Barnstable County Human Rights Advisory Commission (BCHRAC)'s International Human Rights Day Awards breakfast. BCHRAC is a longtime community partner with the League. The event drew over 200 people, including most of the Cape legislators. The LWVCCA's Co-President Jeanne Morrison, a past Director of the BCHRAC, acted as emcee of this event, which honors Cape Codders who have fostered and supported human rights. If you ever despair for the state of human rights, attending a meeting like this will leave you heartened by the progress being made and hopeful for the future!

DID YOU KNOW...the BCHRAC is an outgrowth of the United Nations Declaration of Human rights which was drafted by an international committee led by Eleanor Roosevelt and approved by the UN in 1948. The aspirational document details the universal and unalienable rights of all human beings, and its history and progress are worth checking out!

The BCHRAC's award recipients were individuals and groups including advocates who support marginalized communities who face discrimination in areas such as food insecurity, housing, health care, employment and education.

Some examples: a Provincetown advocate for children/public health/racial justice; a Marine Corp vet whose group cooks hundreds of meals each week for hungry and/or unhoused Cape Codders; a fellow who assists students applying for their GED; an advocate for the Cape's Transgender community; the Family Pantry of Cape Cod, that supplies groceries for the food insecure; and Nauset Interfaith's MLK Action Team that initiated listening sessions between communities of color and police chiefs to promote understanding and improve interactions.

[Barnstable County Human Rights Advisory Commission Announces Awardees for 2023 Annual Human Rights Awards Celebration - Barnstable County](#)



January 14 Martin Luther King commemoration

The NAACP invited us to set up Get Out the Vote (GOTV) table at the Sunday, January 14, Martin Luther King commemoration at the First Baptist Church of Hyannis. It was noted that in the 1980s only 15 people showed up for the service and on this day, the church was filled. The service included 7th Grade students updating the "I have a dream" speech. They described how they want to be the agents of change – to see racism eliminated and peace prevail in today's world. The keynote speech was by Cecilia Phelan-Stiles, director of DEI and Interpreter Services, Cape Cod Healthcare. Ceci, as she is known, talked about how patients without health insurance and patients who do not speak English are in mortal danger. It is distressing that so many people are left out of basic medical care. By having interpretation services available, not only in the hospital but for the Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), they are saving lives and serving the community at a very core level. Lynne

Rhodes, President of the NAACP, gave a moving tribute to the late John Reed -- teacher, mentor, activist. John Reed was the former president of the NAACP, the founder of both the Barnstable County Human Rights Advisory Commission and the Zion Union Heritage Museum, and he created the Human Rights Academy and the Imani Club for Cape students. These titles and roles only skim the surface of how John Reed supported, inspired and lifted individuals and the entire Cape Cod community.

Natasha Faith Walton gave a rousing rendition of the hymn, "His Eyes Are on the Sparrow." Dr. John Cox, President of Cape Cod Community College (CCCC), followed Ms. Walton and said, "Wow! How do I follow that?" But follow he did, and described the new program – MASS Reconnect. Any person 25 years or older will be given free tuition at CCCC as long as they take 2 classes per semester. MASS Reconnect is designed to bolster the role of CCCC as an economic driver on Cape Cod and help meet the needs of businesses to find qualified, well-trained workers. The goal is to break cycles of inter-generational poverty by helping residents complete their higher education credentials so they can attain good jobs and build a career path. Dr. Cox isn't stopping there – he's going to work to lower the age requirement in order to make this program more inclusive. Rabbi Harold Robinson, Rear Admiral USN Ret., gave the closing Congregational Prayer by quoting World War II chaplain, Rabbi Roland Gittelsohn. Rabbi Gittelsohn dedicated the nondenominational 5th Marine Division's cemetery on Iwo Jima:

"Here lie officers and the enlisted, blacks and whites, rich and poor...together. Here are Protestants, Catholics, and Jews...together. Here no man prefers another because of his faith or despises him because of his color. Here there are no quotas of how many from each group are admitted or allowed. Among these men there is no discrimination. No prejudice. No hatred. Theirs is the highest and purest democracy."

After singing "We Shall Overcome," hand in hand, we went to the fellowship hall where

around 100 people gathered for popcorn, goodies and conversation. Around 20 people came by our table to get a check-your-registration-status cards and the Voter Primary and Election Dates handout.



*MLK Commemoration Hyannis First Baptist
14 Jan 2024*

*Submitted by
Rosemary Shields,
Voter Service Co-Chair, and
Anita Rogers, Voter Service Chair Emerita*

Youth Service Committee

Last June, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) hosted its first state wide student civics project showcase event. For this spring, DESE will expand to include more students by hosting three regional student civics showcase events. The one for the Southeastern Massachusetts region will be held at Bridgewater State University on May 28. Additionally, school districts who use the Generation Citizen Civics Curriculum will be eligible to attend the civics showcase event hosted by GC on May 20 at the EMK Institute.

Our committee will encourage local school districts to apply to attend these events and also

to host their own local civics showcase at their school. Our committee offers to assist schools with these events. Additionally, this year we are in the process of producing a Cape Cod Area Student Advocacy Guide modeled after the ones done by Needham and Falmouth, to give schools. This Guide provides information about how to advocate at various levels of government and also gives information about town governments and county government. It will be useful for students to have as a reference when they select their issue because it will help them identify who they want to contact that can help address their issue, and strategies for advocacy.

How You Can Help:

At both the local school level and at the state civics showcase level, we will need as many League members as possible to serve as community advisors. In that role, you will listen to students make their presentation, ask them questions about their project and offer positive feedback, congratulations and helpful suggestions for continued advocacy on the project.

Please consider volunteering to be a community advisor and let Karen Mazza (mazzak1623@gmail.com) know of your interest.

HEALTH COMMITTEE

The LWVCCA Health and Legislative Committees, in partnership with the Compassion and Choices Organization April 11, 2024 7:00 PM Zoom-based forum: **Talking About Death Won't Kill You**. This forum supports the Massachusetts End-of-Life Options Act, and includes panelists representing faith-based and medical communities and individuals/families who have experienced the challenges of loved ones who have died from or are experiencing terminal diseases. The forum will provide information and address challenges faced by individuals and families. Promotion of the forum will begin in February, targeting the Cape's medical, older adult programs and staff, and the Cape community. The

program's participant evaluation is underdevelopment which will provide participant input on possible program continuation.

Contact Eileen Elias at eileen.elias@comcast.net if you would like to join the Health Committee. Our next planning meeting is scheduled for February 5.

Submitted by
Eileen Elias
Health Committee Chair

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

The Legislative Committee is in the throes of the second year of our two-year legislative cycle. Our delegation has returned to the House and Senate and are trying to sort through those bills that are most important to themselves and hopefully, important to their constituents. Under the Joint Rules, Committees are required to report most bills out of Committee by the third Wednesday of March in the second year of the session, and within thirty days on all matters referred to the Committee after the third Wednesday of February. So, we are furiously working to keep up with any changes to the bills that we have been following. Unfortunately, there has not been too much progress so far We will keep you posted.

The Legislative Committee met yesterday to continue planning the Legislative event for March 22nd. Members were assigned specific tasks going forward and we are working to refine questions that will be asked of individual legislators. The program will differ a bit from last year in that each legislator will be targeted with a specific question to address. Other legislators may or may not weigh in on that question. Hopefully, this will allow a more fluid exchange to take place. Questions will target the LWVCCA's list of followed bills. The main idea is to elicit legislators' positions on those bills that are important to League members. Please plan to join us on March 22nd from 10-12 at CCCC. Advocacy is

such an important part of what we do and it is always easier to advocate for a bill if you have some background about it.

Bills that we are following for which there has been little movement include, The Voting Rights Access Bill, protecting our water from PFAS contamination, Common Start, affordable housing issues, preventing gun violence, various health care bills, immigration laws, the new commuter rail extension and Holtec legislation. I believe that we all realize we are not the only constituents lobbying legislators, but numbers and voices matter. If there is something you are passionate about, let your senator and/or representative know.

A couple of weeks ago, Madeline Zevon testified virtually at the State Congressional hearing supporting the Medicare for All bill and today I was part of a panel with Nancy Brumback from the LWVMA virtually testifying against the bills calling for an Article 5 Constitutional Convention. We continue to submit testimony for many of our supported bills. It is now critical that we raise our voices loud and clear to move these bills forward. Attached to this article will be a link to the list of bills we are following. Please feel free to advocate for those most dear to your heart. It truly takes a village..... you are our village and your voices are crucial for change to happen. If you have any questions regarding legislation, please do not hesitate to contact me.

P.S. Please be on the lookout for an invitation to the March 22nd event.

Thank you and continue to be advocates for change.

Submitted by
Sue Brock
Legislative Chair

LWVCCA Board & Contact information

LWVCCA DIRECTORS 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	Open *
Florence Seldin Lecture Series	Karen Mazza *
Health	Eileen Elias *

* = Off-Board

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