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LWVCCA OPENING MESSAGE

President’s Message

Well, here we are. The beginning of another summer! This is also a beginning of a new year (fiscal-wise) for our League.

We ended/started off with an interesting Annual Meeting. First off, we had a lovely meal at the Bass River Golf Course on Highbank Road in South Yarmouth. This is a beautiful place. If you enjoy playing golf, I suggest that you check this course out at your earliest convenience.

The Annual Meeting approved the Program Goals for 2026-2027. These goals came about from a discussion that took place in February. Membership was invited to this meeting via email in January. Every member will receive this updated information in the new issue of the Members Directory and Handbook which will be available at the September Membership meeting. Venue to be decided. We have one Board Member who is stepping off and that is Karen Mazza. Karen has been involved with our League and the MA League for several years. Her interest in civic

education has enriched the lives of many students. Her most recent project is a Graduation Card that will be given to graduating Seniors of Barnstable High School and Dennis/Yarmouth High School. The card will give them the tools they need to vote for life. We also honored a long-time member – Renate Sands.

Our speaker was Michelle K. Tassinari, First Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth and Director and Legal Counsel of the Elections Division. Do you remember when Barnstable had their issue with the safe not opening on Election Day a few years ago? It turns out that this wasn’t a huge issue as the Commonwealth had run some tabletop scenarios to try and anticipate potential issues. This specific issue had just been discussed!



Michelle K. Tassinari, Speaker
May 2026 Annual Meeting

My report, the President's Report, was about our attempt at being more transparent and sending you timely information. I hope you haven't had your fill of emails! I also talked about upcoming events. We will be marching in the Barnstable Village 4th of July Parade. I know summer is filled with fun and family however it is also festival season on the Cape and we will be at many of them: Amity Day in Mashpee, Unity Day in Hyannis, Amplify POC Summer Festival at the Hyannis Green and more to come. This is a perfect opportunity for you to get to know more members and to see what we do. I encourage you to attend these festivals and if you have a spare hour or two volunteer with the Voter Service Committee and chat with your neighbors.



Annual Meeting May 2026
Bass River Bar & Grill

The National League has partnered with many national organizations. Here on the Cape that has translated into a partnership with our Libraries. The American Library Association (ALA)'s Office for Intellectual Freedom has recorded attempts to censor 4,235 unique titles, nearly 2,000 more titles than 2024 when the average was 273 for the years 2001-2020. In November of 2025, led by Senators Julian Cyr and Jacob Oliviera, the Massachusetts Senate passed **S.2726 "An Act regarding free expression"**, a bill that fortifies the freedom to read and the protection of librarians during book and materials challenges. It is now pending before the House Ways and Means committee. If this is passed by the House and signed by the Governor we will join Illinois, California, New Jersey,

Delaware, Rhode Island and Connecticut where Freedom to Read legislation has already passed.

The National League has also been very busy and these various partners will conduct "Unite & Rise – A Day of Action" on August 8th. This date is in honor of the Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Look for an email soon as we will be reaching out to you for support.

In closing I referred to a wonderful book "Fox Under The Moon" by Stacey McNeill. She posts often on Instagram and I have found her quotes to be quite nice. This is what I read: "I think I've lost all hope", said the fox. "There is always hope", replied the moon, "even if it's just the faintest glimmer, it's always there...like stars in the night sky." "I do like stars", replied the fox. "Sometimes it's hard to see a path through the trees," moon said, "So take the step in front of you and see what lies ahead...focus on the small things, take it day by day...you'll see in time – those steps add up, and you will find your way."

Best wishes for a happy and healthy summer!

Lynne Pleffner

DID YOU KNOW...?

...that voters in Massachusetts still face the possibility of 11 ballot questions in November? These additional questions would accompany the question already certified to appear on the ballot—to uphold/protect our model firearms legislation.

The MA Legislature chose not to act legislatively on any of the other 11 questions by the May 6 deadline. Assuming no constraints imposed by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court (SJC), supporters must collect an additional 12,000+ signatures by July for these questions to qualify for the November ballot.

A 12th question—reforming the stipend system used by the House and Senate leadership to provide extra pay for lawmakers who perform specific roles in the legislature—has been deemed unconstitutional by the SJC and, subsequently, by

the MA Attorney General. Therefore, that question will not appear on the ballot. *CommonWealth Beacon* reports that several other measures still face court review and decisions—reviving rent control, two tax-related proposals, recriminalizing marijuana, and the All-Party Primary question.

The LWVMA and the LWVCCA's Legislative Committee have supported the following ballot questions—Election Day Registration, improving access to public records, zoning of single family homes, and a VOTE YES for upholding our 2024 firearms law.

One question, proposing an All-Party Primary (top-two primary) system for Massachusetts has become controversial recently. Instead of offering separate party primaries with separate ballots for voters, all candidates for state and federal elections would appear on the same ballot in one September primary election. Candidates would appear with their party affiliation, as listed on their nomination papers. Although a political party would be allowed to endorse one candidate for a specific office, other candidates from the same party—not endorsed—could also appear on the primary ballot for that same office. The top two winning candidates from all of those listed on the ballot—regardless of party affiliation or endorsement—would advance to the November ballot. Candidates for Massachusetts' Governor and Lieutenant Governor would be listed as a team on the ballot. Voters would be allowed only one vote on the primary ballot—no ranked choice options. Washington (state) and California currently use a *top-two* primary system, also called a *nonpartisan*, or *jungle* primary.

Supporters of the all-party primary system believe that an all-party ballot gives more choice to voters and will increase turnout. A group called the [Coalition for a Healthy Democracy](#) is backing this petition. Neither the LWVMA nor Common Cause has participated in or endorsed this group.

Others have noted several concerns for voters facing an all-party primary— voter confusion, the effect on minor party candidates, the effect on Lieutenant Governor candidates, and the potential for “vote-splintering” when several candidates

from the same party appear on the ballot. Splintering the party primary vote could result in a political party having no candidate on the November ballot, because the “top two” candidates from the same party could easily claim a spot on the ballot by winning only a small percentage of the final vote.

There is currently a “Undo the Top Two” movement in California as party leaders realize that one party could be shut out of the November ballot. A NY Times columnist [states](#), “The risk of vote splitting is baked into a jungle primary.The system has failed Californians. Voters now face...the possibility of being governed by a leader whose politics clash with the bulk of the electorate's.”

The LWVMA has taken no position on the proposed *all-party primary* question or on any proposed legislation related to it. For a brief overview of the LWVMA's positions— Support/Oppose/No Position—on all of the ballot questions, go to <https://lwmva.org/lwmva-statement-on-2026-ballot-questions/>.

Carole Young-Kleinfeld



CALENDAR

JUNE

Board Meeting

TUESDAY JUNE 2 | 9:30—11:30 a.m.
Zoom conference by invitation

Speaker Series

June 11 | 7:00 p.m.
Cape Cod Community College
Details below at [this link](#)

UPCOMING:

Board Meeting

TUESDAY SEPT 3 | 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 "Schedule" to see a list of all events. Click on any calendar listing to see more detail.

"LOCAL MEETUPS" Has Launched!

On a sun-dappled Thursday morning in late May, thousands of Lady's Slippers -- wild orchids bursting with white and hot pink petals -- hosted some unexpected visitors along Provincetown's Old Colony Trail.



Lady's Slippers along the trail

Crunching along the gravel path were LWVCCA Town Liaisons Kalliope Chute, Elaine Dickinson, Carla Koehl, and Suzanne Brock. They gathered to launch **Local Meetups**, an initiative to create hyper-local, purpose-driven gatherings for the 141 members of the LWVCCA. "As Town Liaisons, we realized we really didn't know a lot of our own towns' members," said Carla, who recently joined Elizabeth Harder as Membership Co-Chair for the LWVCCA. "So we've made it our #1 goal to get to know our members this year through gatherings that are rooted in purpose and action."



Event organizer Kalliope Chute with Michael Chute, Suzanne Brock, and Dennis Minsky

"Purpose and action" will take a variety of forms as **Local Meetups** unfolds: post carding events, issue-themed coffees, beach walks, and more.

Outer Cape Town Liaison Kalliope Chute organized the P'town event, which kicked off with Legislative Committee Chair Suzanne Brock updating the group on pending legislation affecting the natural environment. Then well-known P'town naturalist and author, Dennis Minsky, led a walk along the trail, indicating notable foliage and answering questions. Also in

attendance were Kalliope's husband Michael Chute, and local friends Valerie Isaacs, Lisa Monday and Penelope Sutter.(Future members? Watch this space!)



Inaugural "Local Meetups"

Stay tuned for upcoming **Local Meetups** this fall -- to connect with fellow members *in your town* through purpose and action!

Carla Koehl, Membership Co-chair

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Members:

As our 2025-2026 year slows down, I wanted to touch base regarding the Legislation progress.

Unfortunately, I will not be able to give you a true final reporting until after July 31st, when the Legislative year ends. Right now, the majority of those on the Hill are involved in the budget process. The Governor has already produced her budget. If you would like to glance at some of the highlights you can do that here:

<https://www.mass.gov/news/governor-healey-files-fiscal-year-2027-budget-that-controls-spending-prioritizes-affordability-and-continues-transformative-investments-in-education-transportation>

The next step is for the House Ways & Means to work out their budget which they are doing <https://malegislature.gov/Budget/FY2026/HouseWaysMeansBudget>

The link will take you to the Budget progress page

and you can check out the progress of the House. As well as the other steps along the way. Unfortunately, a number of our bills are hung up in either the House or Senate Ways & Means Committee, so until their budgets are finalized the fate of those bills will hang in limbo. The House W&M's budget is not yet finalized. There are still amendments being haggled over. Once the House and the Senate produce their bills they then have to be reconciled with the Governor's. The whole process is lengthy and messy. Often in the process bills trying to move through the legislative process are combined and some are dropped.

I am doing my best to keep abreast of the progress of the budgets but the final reporting of the bills that we have been following will be done when the 2025-2026 legislative session ends and the dust settles. In the meantime, I am trying to remain sane and optimistic regarding the continual dismantling of our democracy and all of our voting rights. It seems like the powers that be in Washington have decided to completely ignore the Constitution and the Supreme Court has turned a blind eye, if not added to the chaos within Congress and the states around the country. While it seems that the problems here in MA and on Cape Cod are manageable, we are part of a larger structure that I feel is in need of serious critical care. Here's hoping the patient, as we knew it, can be saved.

I continue to pray for peace and unity,
Sue Brock – Legislative Chair.

YOUTH SERVICE COMMITTEE

June is a very busy month for the Youth Service Committee. We are still seeking additional League members to attend two local school civics showcase events.

- Barnstable High School Friday, June 12 from 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM.
- Monomoy Regional High School (Chatham & Harwich), June 17 from 12:05 PM to 1:05 PM

The civics showcases are run similarly to science fairs. Student projects will be on display and student teams that worked together will present their projects to you for about 5 minutes, explaining why the issue was important to them, what they learned about the root causes of the problem, strategies they recommend to address the problem, and an action plan they propose. Rotate to other teams, listening and responding to as many projects as you can fit in within the time available.

Our job as League members is to listen to the student presentation, ask clarifying questions, offer positive feedback about their work and if you have any, provide helpful suggestions. The purpose of these projects is to teach students the process of change. Ask them what they learned about making change happen. Perfection with these projects is not the point. Learning about change and wanting to make a difference are the points. This is the heart of what civic engagement is all about.

If you have not already told Karen Mazza that you will attend either or both of these events, please email her at <mailto:mazzak1623@gmail.com>

If you would like to consider joining the Youth Service Committee, please reach out to the new Co-Chairs of the Youth Service Committee, Pat Anderson and Carol Woodbury to learn more about what the committee does. In addition to the civics projects, we are very involved in voter registration and education at schools and have a newly designed toolkit for that purpose.

Pat Anderson: <mailto:andersonpla@snet.net>
 Carol Woodbury: <mailto:dysupt@yahoo.com>

Submitted by Karen Mazza

SELDIN SPEAKER SERIES

With the Cape Cod Speaker Series

Our partnered event with the Cape Cod Speaker Series is June 11 at 7 PM at the Tilden Arts Center at Cape Cod Community College.

The League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area is a Partner with the Cape Cod Speaker Series for this June 11 event featuring Harvard Professor Danielle Allen. Drawing from her acclaimed new book, *Radical Duke*, Dr. Allen will explore how the American Revolution reshaped Britain -- and continues to influence political life today. She will connect history to the urgent questions facing modern democracy right now. The program is June 11 at 7 PM in the Tilden Arts Center at Cape Cod Community College. Tickets are available at <https://www.capecodspeakers.org>.

Share this communication with your friends.

CAPE COD SPEAKER SERIES
 Tickets at [capecodspeakers.org](https://www.capecodspeakers.org)

Don't miss
Radical Duke
 Dr. Allen explores how the American Revolution reshaped Britain -- and continues to influence political life today. Drawing from her acclaimed new book, Allen connects history to the urgent questions facing modern democracy right now.

Democracy. Power. Revolution.
 Who gets a voice -- and who doesn't?

Dr. Danielle Allen
 Harvard professor, democracy advocate and author

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE CAPE COD AREA
 program partner

JUNE 11 • 7 PM
 Tilden Arts Center
 CAPE COD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Professor Danielle Allen
 June 11 program at CCCC

Karen Mazza

Outgoing Chair of the Florence Seldin,
 "Democracy Is Not a Spectator Sport" Speaker Series.

T-SHIRTS!

Members,

Hot off the press! LWVCCA T-shirts you can wear when you participate in a League-sponsored, or League-approved, event. Let everyone know that the LWVCCA is there!

The shirts are \$15 each, and are available in S, M or L.

To order: Email Suzanne Brock at sailinsue22@gmail.com

- Tell her how many you want
- Select a size – or sizes
- Write a check to LWVCCA for \$15 per shirt

Send checks to

LWVCCA
c/o Sue Cameron
20 Fessenden St
South Yarmouth, MA
02664

Is your League membership up to date?
If it's time to renew, scan or click below



Front of shirt



Back of shirt with LWVCapeCod logo

LWVCCA Board & Contact information

LWVCCA DIRECTORS 2025-2026	
Officers for 2025-2026	
President	Lynne Pleffner
Vice Presidents	
Programs	Patricia Burke
Operations	Carol Woodbury
Treasurer	Sue Cameron
Secretary	Debbie Winnick
Committee Chairs:	
Legislation	Suzanne Brock *
Membership	Jeanne Morrison Elizabeth Harder *
Voter Service	Judith Kelleher-Andersson
Youth Service	Karen Mazza
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Jeanne Morrison
Health	Eileen Elias *
Communications	Richard Utt
Newsletter	Richard Utt
Florence Seldin Speaker Series	Karen Mazza *
Member At Large:	
Gail Spink	
* = Off-Board	

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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Jeanne Morrison
Health	Eileen Elias *
Communications	Richard Utt
Newsletter & Website	Mary O'Connor
Florence Seldin Speaker Series	Open *
Member At Large:	
Lynn Carlson Amy Harris Nancy Skinner	
* = Off-Board	

Contact LWVCCA:	
LWVCCA P. O. Box 2347 Orleans, MA 02653	
Email: lwvcca@gmail.com	
Website: http://lwvcapecod.org/	
Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/LWVCCA/	

Contact Information for Your Legislators**Governor Maura Healey**

(617) 725-4005

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/email-the-governors-office>

Senator Julian Cyr

(617) 722-1570

julian.cyr@masenate.gov

Senator Dylan Fernandes

(617) 722-1330

dylan.fernandes@masenate.gov

Representative Christopher Flanagan

(617) 2080 Ext. 7300

christopher.flanagan@mahouse.gov

Representative Kip Diggs

(617) 722-2080

kip.diggs@mahouse.gov

Representative David Vieira

(617) 722-2230 and press 5

David.Vieira@mahouse.gov

Representative Hadley Luddy

617-722-2800 Ext, 7313

Hadley.Luddy@mahouse.gov

Representative Steven Xiarhos

(617) 722-2488

steven.xiarhos@mahouse.gov

Representative Thomas Moakley

(617) 722-2800 x7302

Thomas.Moakley@mahouse.gov

Senator Elizabeth Warren

(202) 224-4543

<https://www.warren.senate.gov/contact/shareyouropinion>

Senator Edward Markey

(202) 224-2742

<https://www.markey.senate.gov/contact/share-your-opinion>

Congressman Bill Keating

(508) 771-6868

Info.keating@mail.house.gov

For more contact information, go to our

Directory of Elected Officials page at

<http://lwvcapecod.org/government/directory-elected-officials>

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www.ScargoCafe.com

David@ScargoCafe.com



W- 508-385-8200
C- 508-274-8901

PO Box 1025
Dennis MA, 02638



ROYAL II
Restaurant and Grille

715 Main Street
Route 6A
508-362-2288 Yarmouthport, MA 02675