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LWVCCA OPENING MESSAGE

President's Message

I hope to see all of you or as many as possible at our December Meeting on the 4th. Carol Woodbury and Pat Burke have worked hard to bring you an entertaining program and I must say a very friendly price for our dinner menu. Well done ladies!

The Voter Service Committee held a special forum at Cape Media in Dennis. We have so many residents that are unaware of our form of County Governance. In addition, this is the year that the County Charter Review Process begins. It takes place every year that ends in a 0 and a 5. The Barnstable County Commissioners have requested from the State Legislators to create an Independent Charter Review Committee. This will probably be approved and appear on the November 2026 ballot where you can add your support or disapproval.

December brings a change of pace with the holidays and the bustle of holiday shopping. During all this please provide yourself with a few moments of peace; perhaps a nice cup of tea?

Please also take time to be thankful for the past year's achievements as we plan for the year ahead which is already looking to be a busy one!

I appreciate each one of you and wish you a very healthy and happy holiday season!

Lynne

CALENDAR

DECEMBER

Board Meeting

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

LWVCCA Members

2025 Holiday Gathering

THURSDAY DEC 4 | 5:30—7:30 p.m.
Emerald Resort, Hyannis, MA
Register here before Nov 30!

JANUARY

Board Meeting

TUESDAY JAN 6 | 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.

DID YOU KNOW...?

...that, according to a [recent article](#) in the NY Times, Anchorage will be using a vote-by-phone program for its 2026 local city assembly election? Although the Times calls the plan "experimental," Anchorage officials clarified that the city actually

launched a pilot program earlier this year, using a secure online voting portal — accessible on any internet-connected device, including smartphones— as an alternative to email and fax.

Voters may choose to apply to use the system and have their registration verified. Next, they will receive a unique link to an online voting portal where they can submit their ballot via their smartphones and cast their vote, allowing officials to generate a paper ballot that's tabulated with other election ballots. The technology, an open-source program, is called the Mobile Voting Project.

Although the city will still allow in-person and mail-in voting, city elections officials assert that the online voting portal increases voter turnout and makes voting more accessible to voters living in remote Alaska locations with limited postal service, frequently hazardous driving conditions, and unpredictable weather.

Like the rest of the states, Alaska has, for many years, allowed military and overseas citizens to receive—and return—absentee ballots electronically or by mail in federal elections, following the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) and applicable state laws. Since 2018, the Municipality of Anchorage has done the same for its local elections. Anchorage's election officials explain that the expansion to voting by smartphones just represents “an evolution” of Alaska's long-standing policy that encourages overseas voters to participate in elections. However, the vote-by-phone program will not be available for any upcoming elections for state and federal offices.

The downside? Security concerns, the stoking of conspiracy theories, and voter distrust. David Becker, the executive director of the Center for Election Innovation and Research (ERIC), a nonpartisan group that advises election officials, observes that the timing for launching an online mobile voting option is unfortunate, given current political divisiveness, the frequency of online hacking, and the growing demand for only paper ballots in elections.

[The Tech Buzz](#)—an online newsletter about technology news and its future—quotes election security experts like Ron Rivest (MIT) and David Jefferson (Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory) who express serious concerns whether “any mobile system can truly protect against malware, man-in-the-middle attacks, and sophisticated state-sponsored interference...”

Anchorage's municipal election takes place in April. Stay tuned...

--Carole Young-Kleinfeld

VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE

Voter Service and Youth Services Committees continue to combine forces to volunteer at a number of Cape Cod high schools this year for the first-time Cape Cod 5, Credit for Life (CFL) “Prepare to Vote” program. The November 7th event was at the Monomoy RHS. Rosemary Shields was there representing the Voter Services Committee. There will be another 1-2 events in December at regional high schools.

The Candidate Forums for Town of Barnstable Precinct 12 and the School Board were held the evening of Wednesday, October 22nd, 2025 the Barnstable Town Hall – James H. Crocker Jr. Hearing Rm. at 367 Main St., Hyannis MA. 02601. The audience provided numerous comprehensive questions which the three town council candidates (no incumbent) each answered in turn. The School Board Forum, was attended by an incumbent Andre King and newcomer Katia DaCunha.

The Forums were recorded through the Barnstable Government Access Station and shown on Xfinity channels 8, 1070, and 1072 and the recording was available on their YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/@BarnstableGovernmentAccess>) beginning October 23rd until the town election on November 4th.



Town of Barnstable School Board Forum.
Andre King (Left) and Katya DeCunha (Right)



Town of Barnstable Town Council Candidates
for Precinct 12. from left to right, are Nelson
Andrews, Jr., Barry Sheingold (won the
precinct) and Meaghan Mort.

We wish to thank Sarah Beal-Fletcher, Barnstable Government Access Station Manager, who ensured the Forum and recording went smoothly. A number of volunteers from the Voter Services Committee turned out to help with the forum, including Rosemary Shields (Moderator), Carol Young-Kleinfeld, Bonnie Lilienfeld, Debbie Winnick Lynne Pleffner (President of the League) and Karen McPherson, and Judy Kelleher (Chair). We are of the belief that these forums and the recordings do help voters better understand who they are voting for in their important local elections.

Judy Kelleher, Chair

HEALTH COMMITTEE

Save the Date! LWVCCA's Health Committee is pleased to update you with new information on its

virtual forum on the impact of domestic abuse—scheduled for Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 7:00 PM. This event will raise awareness of domestic violence across the state and the Cape and Islands, will share resources for service providers, and will summarize pending legislation related to supporting violence survivors and violence prevention. Co-sponsors of this event include the Cape's WECAN organization, the Mass Family Advocacy Coalition (MFAC), and the LWVMA.

This panel-based forum will consist of domestic violence experts—a clinical services provider, a community advocate, and a police department's victim services advocate—and a Q/A segment. Our audience will include League members from both the LWVCCA and off-Cape Leagues, along with service providers, law enforcement and legal personnel, and the general public.

We hope to promote understanding the challenges of domestic abuse, available sources of help and support, and the importance of a coordinated service approach for the Cape and Islands community.

If League members are interested in joining the Health Committee, contact Eileen Elias, Committee Chair a eileen.elias@comcast.net.

Eileen Elias

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Happy Holidays, members. Most of us have made it through Thanksgiving and are now moving towards Hanukkah or Christmas or both. Without a doubt everyone has been busy.... And that includes the Legislative committee. While it may seem as though not much has happened, the legislature has been pretty busy moving bills through hearings. That does not necessarily mean that bills have passed, but some are getting closer. Many still need a lot more prodding from us, the constituents, in order for the ball to move more quickly.

Our League is now following 42 bills. Of those 42, 32 have had hearings and we have presented

testimony for all 32. However, of those 32 bills that we have presented testimony for, only 10 have had any action taken. Those ten are:

- S.136 – Emergency Family Housing – to Senate Ways & Means
- S.118 – Lift Our Kids Out of Poverty – To Senate Ways & Means
- H.820 – Accessibility for Disabled Voters – new draft H.4760 – to House Ways & Means
- H.876 – Post Election Audits – To House Ways & Means
- S.607 – Threat of Invasive Species – to Senate Ways & Means
- H.1946/S.1053 – Facial Recognition Privacy – New draft H.4640 and S.1053 to Senate Ways & Means
- H.3594/S.2328 – Recognition of Free Expression – H.3594 to House Ways & Means. New draft for Senate 2328 – S.2726 – Passed Senate, to be engrossed (signed by the Governor)
- H.86/S.197 – Location Shield to Prevent Sale of Location Data – S.197 to Senate Ways & Means, H.86 included in S.2619 Data Privacy
- H.656/S.340 – S.340 Age-Appropriate Accurate Sex Ed. – includes S.336 an Act Re: LGBTQ and Inclusive Curriculum – to Senate Ways & Means H.656 to House Ways & Means
- H.2488 - Monitoring of Dry Casts – new draft H.4728 to House Ways & Means

Bills are usually moved to either the House or Senate Ways & Means committee because there is some sort of financing required or interaction with the MA General Laws that needs ironing out. If bills have been assigned a new number, usually amendments have taken place and additional discussion or debate needs to take place. Should action be needed from you all for a particular bill, I will put out an alert through Richard.

With the new rules that were adopted in the Joint Committees at the beginning of this new session, there has been a better flow of bills being assigned to hearings and increased debate on many of them. An article in the Commonwealth

Beacon recently indicated that legislators were more willing to discuss and move bills that dealt with smaller issues rather than very intricate bills. So, bills that target specific issues apparently have a better chance of passing.

There have been ongoing opportunities to engage with some of our topics for those who have the time and interest. Every Wednesday, from 1-2pm the LWVMA leads a stand out for Immigrants in front of the Plymouth Correctional facility. I did have a chance to go up to Boston about 3 weeks ago to attend a Rally for Immigrant Rights on the steps of the statehouse. We did follow up with visits to our legislators to push the Safe Communities bill that has been floating out there for a number of years. And I know that Lynne has been trying to encourage members here to follow County Government hearings. All politics begins at the local level. For years, the LWVCCA had a County Government Committee. This would be a good renewal project for those interested.

The other area that would be great to initiate would be members following local government in terms of sitting in on Select Board meetings and reporting back to the various town League members. Often, change occurs under cover of night or in the corner of a local restaurant (like in Dennis). It seems that this has become “business as usual” at all levels of government these days. The more eyes watching and includes those willing to speak up, the better our democratic governments have of remaining resilient. If you are not already, think about getting involved somewhere and make a difference. “Democracy is not a Spectator Sport.”

In Solidarity,
Sue Brock – Legislative Chair

Legislative Committee Members:
Carole Young-Kleinfeld, Lisa Nagel, Mary Utt,
Nancy Skinner, Jeanne Morrison, Susan Guill,
Rosemary Shields, Eileen Elias, Penny Holeman,
Renate Sands, Diane Turco and Elaine Dickinson

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Gail Spink

* = Off-Board

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For more contact information, go to our

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