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LWVCCA OPENING MESSAGE

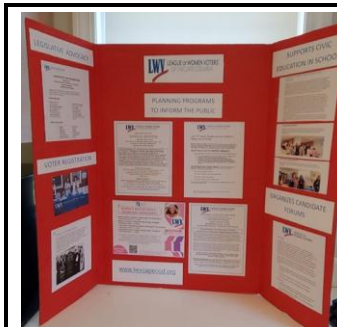
President's Message

Welcome to the month of love! Love yourself, love others! Remember love wins over hate.

There is a lot going on!

First, I have to share with you the wonderful time we had at The Nye Family Museum in Sandwich. Thank you very much to Judy Kelleher for creating and setting up the wonderful exhibition on the League.

I had the opportunity to introduce Steve Adams. Steve had a wonderful program entitled "A Fine Agitation". It was a Women's Suffrage musical history performance at the Sandwich Public Library. Steve drove from Central Massachusetts to present this program!



Display Board at Nye Family Museum for *Voices to Votes*, Dec 2025 to Feb 1 2026



Steve Adams and Nye Family Museum Director Amy Johnson, at Sandwich Library - Nye Family Museum Jan 2026

The Cape Cod Commission has approved the Cape Cod Regional Planning Guide on December 29th. Did you know that 40% of the Cape is protected from development? That was the driving force to create a planning guide. I encourage you to visit the Cape Cod Commission to learn more and how it might impact your town – www.capecodcommission.org.

This year we celebrate the 250th Anniversary of US! We are still youngsters, but we are certainly mighty! Some interesting fun facts about Massachusetts: the first public school opened here, the first American newspaper was published here, and the first public park welcomed visitors. That is just a few of the amazing facts about this Commonwealth. Sign up for the newsletter at Massachusetts250.org.

This is the month that we start hearing rumbles about open seats and who might be running for what. Please keep your ears open and let Judy Kelleher know what is going on. We have held

Candidate Forums for many years, and this is a great way to engage the public and educate them on the issues.

I participated in a panel discussion on “Civic Engagement” sponsored by Leadership Cape Cod. My fellow panelists were Mark Forest, Chair of the County Commissioners and Amanda Bebrin, Brewster Select Board. The 2026-2027 Class was very interested and engaged. A perfect audience!

A few of us went to see *SUFFS* at the Providence Theatre and when it was over the conversation made the ride home go fast!

Thursday, the 12th is our Program Planning for 2026-2027. ALL members are invited to attend and share their views. There will be an email blast with more information.

I also want you to be aware of the 3rd Annual Cape Cod International Women’s Day Breakfast. Please save the date – Tuesday, April 7th for this community engagement event. This is an opportunity for women of all ages and background to get together and realize that we share so many commonalities.

I must be honest. I am writing this in January, and I have no idea what the days ahead will bring before you read this *VOTER*. I am greatly troubled by the events in Minneapolis, the grab of Greenland and the dismissal of our European allies. Per Celia Canavan, Executive Director of LWVMA: The current agreement within the League is that being nonpartisan does not mean being nonpolitical, and local Leagues may use our positions to stand up against the current federal administration. This includes producing educational events, meeting with your Congressperson to voice concerns, and rallying for democracy. Some local Leagues have taken to the streets in weekly standouts for democracy, others are hosting Know Your Rights training. Please be aware that I may be asking you for help in reaching out to potential partners in the weeks ahead.

Thank you for all that you do. I greatly appreciate each and every one of you,
Lynne

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

Board Meeting

TUESDAY FEB 3 | 9:30—11:30 a.m.
Zoom conference by invitation

Program Planning Meeting

THURSDAY FEB 12 | 10 a.m.—2 p.m.
Details to Follow

March

Board Meeting

TUESDAY MAR 3 | 9:30—11:30 a.m.
Zoom conference by invitation

UPCOMING

Board Meeting

MONDAY APRIL 6 | 9:30—11:30 a.m.
Zoom conference by invitation

International Women’s Day Breakfast

TUESDAY APRIL 7 | Save the Date
Details to Follow

Health Committee Virtual Forum:

“We Can Help - Domestic Abuse Resources and Legislation”
WEDNESDAY APRIL 8 | 7:00 p.m.
Zoom Link & Details to Follow

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.

The League in a Time of Constitutional Crisis:

Elevating Our Voices and Our Actions

Submitted by Karen Mazza

The League's stated mission is to empower voters and defend democracy. In ordinary times, we all understand how the League fulfills that mission. But these are not ordinary times. The second-term administration of President Donald Trump has provoked a constitutional crisis. In response, Leagues at the national, state, and local levels are renewing and strengthening our defense of democracy in more visible and demonstrable ways.

While the League does not support or oppose candidates, we do take strong positions on public policy issues. The purpose of this article is to make the League's democracy efforts more visible to our members. In these difficult times, part of the value of League membership is drawing hope, strength, and energy from our collective action.

NATIONAL LEVEL -(LWVUS)

League of Women Voters of the United States

<https://www.lwv.org/>

Unite and Rise 8.5 Campaign

On April 17, 2025, LWV CEO Celina Stewart and President Dianna Wynn released the following statement:

"From the flagrant disregard for congressional authority and governmental checks and balances to defying Supreme Court orders... one thing is abundantly clear: our country is in a constitutional crisis. We the people must fight back. That is why the League of Women Voters is launching a powerful new initiative, Unite and Rise 8.5."

Unite and Rise 8.5 is the League's national campaign to activate 8.5 million voters to protest governmental actions that threaten democracy. The number is based on research indicating that when 3.5% of the population engages in sustained, nonviolent protest, meaningful change becomes possible.

LWVUS invites members and supporters to commit to the Unite and Rise 8.5 campaign. More information is available through the League's website at: [Unite and Rise](#).

Protest Rallies, Lawsuits, Advocacy, and Coalition Building

LWVUS has joined other civic action organizations to support and participate in protest rallies, including the Hands Off Rally and the No Kings rallies. In partnership with state Leagues and allied organizations, LWVUS has also joined legal actions to protect voting rights and challenge partisan gerrymandering. A list of these actions is available in the Legal Center section of the website.

The League continues to issue public statements on critical legislative issues and advocates directly with Congress through letters, and in-person lobbying. Members receive alerts encouraging advocacy action, and these communications are also available through the League's Newsroom and Legal Center.

STATE LEVEL - (LWVMA)

League of Women Voters of Massachusetts

<https://lwvma.org/>

Legislative Advocacy

LWVMA maintains a strong Legislative Action Committee at both the state and local levels. The League supports several bills designed to protect immigrant rights, promote safe communities, and shield Massachusetts residents from federal threats.

Members regularly receive action alerts encouraging them to contact legislators at critical points in the legislative process. Our collective

influence depends on members responding to these calls to action. Recent alerts can be found on the LWVMA website under [Action Alerts](#).

Witness Wednesdays

LWVMA organizes peaceful protests every Wednesday outside the Plymouth Correctional Facility to oppose due process violations and show support for ICE detainees. Members are also encouraged to bear witness outside the ICE Operations Office in Burlington.

What Democracy Means in Everyday Life Series

The LWVMA Voter Engagement Committee has produced four recorded educational programs addressing current democracy-related challenges. These programs are available on the League's YouTube channel and include:

- [Voter Engagement](#)
- [Intersectionality of Democracy and Immigration](#)
- [Civic Engagement and Technology](#)
- [Indirect Taxation Without Representation: A Conversation About Tariffs](#)

Understanding the Tools of Advocacy

LWVMA recently offered a program titled *Advocacy 101 for Local Leagues*, featuring Khadija Ali Amgaiab, Legislative and Policy Coordinator for LWVUS. The program focuses on how local Leagues can effectively advocate at the national, state, and local levels. A recording will be available.

LOCAL LEVEL – (LWVCCA)

League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area

<http://lwvcapecod.org/>

Legislative Advocacy

LWVCCA has an active Legislative Committee chaired by Suzanne Brock. The committee identifies priority bills supported by LWVMA and focuses on issues of particular importance to Cape

Cod. The League's current legislative priorities for 2025–2026 are available on the website: [Legislative Priorities 2025-2026](#).

Local and state advocacy efforts are especially critical to ensuring good governance and strong protections in Massachusetts, even when national governance falls short of expectations.

Protest Rallies and Citizen Lobbying

Both state and local Leagues inform members of opportunities to participate in rallies and demonstrations in support of democracy. Members also respond to action alerts by contacting their state and federal representatives.

Voter Registration and Candidate Forums

While voter registration efforts remain strictly nonpartisan, increasing voter participation strengthens democracy. LWVCCA conducts voter registration drives and sponsors local candidate forums to inform the electorate and increase participation in local elections.

Conclusion

Membership in the League of Women Voters connects us to a powerful organization committed to defending democracy and empowering collective action. By understanding the tools of advocacy and joining together to use them, we amplify our impact.

Every action alert we answer, every voter we register, every forum we organize, every legislator we contact, and every peaceful protest we attend strengthens our shared voice. In standing together, we sustain hope and affirm our belief that justice will prevail.

Karen Mazza is a long time LWVCCA Board member and Chair of the Youth Service Committee and the Florence Seldin "Democracy is Not a Spectator Sport Speaker Series."

DID YOU KNOW...?

...that state legislatures around the country are considering proposals that would affect election laws and practices in their states?

For example, [Verified Voting](#), a nonpartisan organization of election technology experts and a source of national voting/election news, reports that the New Hampshire House has passed a bill removing student IDs as acceptable forms of identification for voting, instead requiring high school and college students to present a government-issued ID or passport before voting. The NH Senate has not passed this bill. On the other hand, another bill would finally allow NH voters—joining most other states—to register to vote when renewing or applying for drivers' licenses at DMV offices.

In North Carolina, students have protested the closing of campus early voting sites at Elon College and Western Carolina State College. Five NC counties have also eliminated Sunday voting for early voting and primary elections. Supporters of Sunday voting say that "Souls to the Polls" has boosted turnout in NC and has been popular with independent voters and those of both major parties.

Fourteen states, including Massachusetts, allow mailed-in ballots to be counted after Election Day only if they are postmarked by Election Day. However, the US Postal Service recently announced that it might not add a postmark on the same day that mail is received at a Post Office. Voters might have their ballots rejected as too late unless they get their ballots to their PO before Election Day. According to a [report](#) from the National Conference of State Legislatures, state policies on requiring ballots to be received by Election Day are "in flux". In 2025, four states—Kansas, North Dakota, Ohio and Utah—required that, to be counted, ballots must be received by Election Day. Massachusetts provides for various [return options for ballots](#). For state elections (every two years), mailed-in ballots can be counted if received within 3 days after the

election, but only if they're postmarked by Election Day.

--Carole Young-Kleinfeld

HELP WANTED

Would you like to get a little more involved with the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area? Yes? Members are always welcome to attend our monthly Board Meetings, join our committees, or help with our programs.

Our Nominating Committee is currently seeking a Website Administrator to manage and maintain our website. We'd love to speak with you now about the details and scope of this job if you're interested, or if you know someone who might be. Questions? Contact any of us. We're in your 2025-2026 Members Directory and Handbook or by email below.

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Judy Kelleher-Andersson
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Debra Dagwan
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Eileen Elias
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HEALTH COMMITTEE

Much appreciation to the members of the Health Committee. Each helped shape the Committee's planning over the year, especially in identifying the importance of understanding the impact of domestic abuse on the Cape community and across the State.

The Health Committee partnership-based virtual forum titled: "***We Can Help - Domestic Abuse Resources and Legislation***" is scheduled for Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 7:00 PM. Its Zoom access will be provided prior to April 8. The Forum's co-sponsors 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 the general public, League members from the LWVCCA and off-Cape chapters, service providers, law enforcement and legal personnel.

The forum will provide information on the challenges of domestic abuse, sources of help and support, and the importance of a coordinated service approach for the Cape and Islands community. The Health Committee with its partners will continue working together after the Forum to plan the Cape community coordinated approach.

If interested in joining the Health Committee, contact Eileen Elias, Committee Chair at eileen.elias@comcast.net.

Wishing all a Peaceful and Special Holiday Season and New Year!!

Eileen Elias Chair eileen.elias@comcast.net.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Members,

From a Legislative perspective, not much is happening.... While the legislature is back in session, there does not seem to be a whole lot of action. Of the 42 bills that we are following, at this point, 17 are either in the House or Senate Ways & Means Committee. This is usually a good sign, since bills that make it that far have some merit. However, Ways and Means target funding issues or conflicts with MA General Laws, both of which can interfere with passage. Three of our bills are definitely dead, 4 have extended dates which indicates that they still might see the light of day, but probably not. And for 16 of the bills, hearings have been held but no further action has been taken on them so I am not holding out much hope.

However, two of the bills have passed.... One, S.2726 deals with protecting books and librarians from arbitrary decisions and possible exclusion from library shelves or prosecution for book selections.

The other bill that has been passed already is H.86 which deals with protecting us from the sale of phone tracking programs. This bill was actually wrapped into Senate bill S.2619. But, do not lose hope that none of these other bills will make it through. This is the time to increase pressure on our legislators to focus on issues of importance to their constituents, US!

For those of you that were not able to get to the Nye Museum for the Voice and Votes traveling Smithsonian exhibit, you missed an excellent look back on the history of voting rights. A couple of photos included give you a snippet of the information shared. This history is important and needs to be remembered. Make sure you fight like hell to prevent the erasing of history. Our kids and grandchildren and great grandchildren need to be able to see, read and remember the truth of history; not pieces selectively chosen by those that are ashamed of the truth or who don't want to believe that it actually occurred.

Sometimes, because we live in a blue state, things seem better.... The country not so bleak. Now is not the time to become complacent. 2026 can be a pivotal year in terms of helping to change the direction of the country. If you want to effect change, we need to focus where there is a possibility for change to take place. Find a way, as an individual, to impact decisions that may be taking place in other states. If you have friends or relatives, engage in dialogue about things that are important to you. Take part in postcard writing for states where voting rights are being challenged. When an Action Focus appears in your inbox from the local, state or national League, make sure you respond. The louder our voice the better the chance for change. Do not concede defeat before it even happens. Remember, Silence implies Consent. Do not remain silent when an injustice is taking place. Without resistance, Massachusetts could also become a target of this administration. It is important to remain peaceful but vigilant.

Thanks for your support,

Sue Brock – Legislative Chair

Voices and Votes exhibit at Sandwich's Nye Museum

Members of the LWVCCA Legislative Committee and Board welcomed visitors to Smithsonian's Voices and Votes exhibit at Sandwich's Nye Museum. We thank all our members who represented the LWVCCA throughout the run of this spectacular exhibit.



LWVCCA members working hard at the Nye Museum!



At the bottom of this display, there was a test! We passed!

found 14 students who did not have licenses and 10 of those students chose to obtain registration cards from us.



Pat Anderson and Deb Walker review registration materials before students arrive.

The first component of our grant is to ask schools to identify a school club or organization where at least a few students would be willing to serve as voter outreach coordinators to the junior and senior classes. Students need to hear from other students about the importance of voting. Our role would be to support those clubs in their outreach efforts with a resource kit that will assist them with outreach. We would also like to supply them with graduation bags for the seniors containing information they need to cast their first vote as 18 year old young adults.

The second component of our grant activities is to develop a recorded lesson for seniors that will prepare them to vote in the November 2026 elections and we will ask schools to approve the lesson for showing in every senior class. We discovered in a report from the Center for Information and Research about Civic Learning and Engagement, (CIRCLE) that in the 2024 Presidential election, Massachusetts had the lowest voting participation rate for 18 and 19 year old young adults of all 40 states for which CIRCLE

YOUTH SERVICE COMMITTEE

YOUTH SERVICE COMMITTEE RECEIVES GRANT

The Youth Service Committee has been awarded a grant for \$500 from LWVUS to support high school voter registration. The grant is to be used before the end of June. Our plan is to use it to support expanded registration and voter education efforts with our local high schools.

Presently, we offer high school voter registration during the Credit for Life Fairs conducted by Cape Cod 5 for seniors at the high schools. On that occasion we can help them verify whether or not they are registered, and help them register if they are not. Since most students have licenses, they are automatically registered. But at our recent visit to Barnstable High School, we

had data. At 21 %, this statistic was shocking. (See the CIRCLE website data for the Youth Vote in 2024, Youth Vote in 2024. Look at the map and toggle the statistics shown to reveal the vote for 18 to 19 year old people.)

One thing we know from research about voting, is that lack of knowledge about procedures, timelines, locations and candidates are a barrier to voting. In our lesson, we intend to make that information clear and we especially want them to understand the timelines and procedures for voting by mail as many students will be away at college or in the military.

We will receive orientation about the resources and requirements from LWVUS for this grant in a virtual orientation meeting later in January.

Thank you.

I would like to thank Rosemary Shields of the Voter Service Committee for partnering with the Youth Service Committee on the Credit for Life Fairs. Rosemary is the League's liaison with the Cape Cod 5 Bank on the Credit for Life Fairs and she always arrives early at these events to display the League materials and swag. She keeps us well informed about dates and details for these events. Thank you also to Pat Anderson, Deb Walker, Carol Woodbury, Heather Kissel Walsh, and Karen Boujoukos of the Youth Service Committee who have taken turns attending these Credit for Life Fairs at the five high schools we have visited so far this year.

In addition to implementing the grant activities, we will once again support schools in the spring local Student-led civic showcase events and attend as community advisors for the state regionals showcase events in May and June.

Our committee is always welcome to receive new members. It is really fun to talk with students!

Submitted by Karen Mazza, YS Committee Chair

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

(617) 725-4005

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Senator Dylan Fernandes

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Representative Thomas Moakley

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Senator Elizabeth Warren

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<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>

BUSINESS SUPPORTERS of LWVCCA

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