



League of Women Voters[®] of Falmouth Bulletin

February 2025

Steering Committee Report

As we move forward following the 2024-2025 election cycle, it's important to find common ground. There are more things that unite us than divide us. All of us want clean air and water, good affordable health care and housing. We want to build a community that welcomes different perspectives and gives us a sense of belonging. We want to protect our voting rights and have a say in our democracy.

In Lincoln's Lyceum address January 27, 1838, he called for Americans to exercise "general intelligence, sound morality, and in particular a reverence for the constitution and law." This talk was titled "The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions," and was delivered to the Young Men's Lyceum of Springfield, Illinois.

We are fortunate to have state legislators on both sides of the aisle who share a common interest of putting the voters first.

Last month we completed a reparations study to be submitted to the state league convention (more information on the reparations study is in this bulletin's DEIB report). Thanks to all who participated; we had a lively discussion.

This year's Falmouth town-wide read is *Solito*, by Javier Zamora. There are many

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interesting programs planned around the book in which League members might be interested. There will be a screening of a documentary dealing with migration issues, Saturday, March 8, with a discussion, chaired by Eileen Mattingly, following the film. For more information on the town-wide read and to register for events, please go to the Falmouth Reads Together site on the Falmouth Library's website (<https://www.falmouthpubliclibrary.org/reading/falmouth-reads-together-2025/>).

I look forward to seeing you at future events.

— **Janet Lauer**

First Vice President

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Don Gibbons and the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee (DEIB) convened a meeting of the LWVF membership on January 23, 2025, to discuss the possibility of the LWVMA taking a position on reparations for Black Americans. LWVMA Reparations Committee, which included LWVF Meghan Hanawalt, had studied the issue in depth and prepared a report on the reasons reparations are being considered. These include the effects of enforced slavery from the colonial era through the Civil War, the Jim Crow era, the impacts of segregation laws and bias towards whites in the Homestead Act, GI Bill, federal housing policies, and others into the 1960s. The harm these policies engendered has had a major impact on the ability of Black Americans to succeed economically.



Misty Niemeyer ably chaired the discussion to evaluate the level of consensus.

Fifteen LWVF members met to discuss the issues and to answer a series of questions prepared by the LWVMA Reparations Committee. The discussion was open to all points of view and the meeting sought to reach consensus rather than an up or down vote. The group agreed that the League should support educational campaigns to increase awareness of the impacts of systemic racism. A broad

range of possible reparations, including culture and symbols, housing equity, transportation, educational equity, removal of bias in the criminal legal system, healthcare equity, and income and wealth parity were mentioned as possibilities.



Don Gibbons, Chair of the DEIB committee, shared informational slides with the program participants.

A consensus was reached that all African/Americans should be eligible for reparations, with priority given to descendants of enslaved Africans. There was no consensus reached on whether those reparations should be cash, but there was consensus that the federal government should provide the bulk of the reparations, and that state and local governments as well as businesses and other organizations should participate in reparations. It was agreed that the federal government should be the guiding authority here to ensure uniform fairness across the country. There were many questions about the implementation of reparations, but these are to be discussed in the future. The group agreed that LWVMA should take a position in support of reparations for Black Americans.

—Don Gibbons
Chair, DEIB Committee

International Women's Day Breakfast

Uniting Women, Empowering Equity:

Building a Just Future Together

Please Join Us

March 11, 2025

7:30-10:30 a.m.

Emerald Resort Cape Cod

Cape Cod Irish Village

35 Scudder Avenue, Hyannis

To register: <https://my.lwv.org/massachusetts/cape-cod-area/2025-iwdb-registration-page>

Would you like to help sponsor this International Women's Day Event? See this letter from Penelope Duby:

We are asking you to join our list of sponsors for our International Women's Day Breakfast (IWDB) 2025. International Women's Day is an event celebrated around the world. The focus is on Accelerating Action, which emphasizes the urgency of taking faster and more effective steps toward gender equality.

Based on the positive feedback we received after the 2024 Breakfast, we are planning a program with multiple speakers and opportunities for attendee interaction. The event will highlight both ongoing existing work that promotes equity and justice on Cape Cod, as well as focusing on action steps participants can take.

On the next page is a list of the Sponsor Levels for the event and information on where to send your donation. We appreciate your considering to serve as a Sponsor for the 2025 Breakfast. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to discuss this event further.

Thank you,

Penelope Duby,

on behalf of the [IWDB Planning Committee](#)



International Women's Day

International Women's Day Breakfast 2025

Uniting Women, Empowering Equity: Building a Just Future Together

March 11, 2025 7:30 AM TO 10:30 AM

Sponsorship Opportunities:

☐ Platinum Presenting Sponsors \$1000

- Logo included as "Presented By" on event invitation (time permitting)
- Podium recognition at event and on program - including Sponsor Thank You Board
- Opportunity to place branded items on tables for attendees
- Six Tickets to Event

☐ Gold Sponsors \$750

- Recognition on program at event - including Sponsor Thank You Board
- Three Tickets to Event

☐ Silver Sponsors \$500

- Recognition on program at event
- Two Tickets to Event

☐ Bronze Sponsors \$250

- Name included on program at event
- One ticket to event

Community Donors:

- We welcome donations of any amount to support the Breakfast from community members and business supporters. All names will be listed in the event program

Select your preferred sponsor level above and please provide:

Name as you would like it to appear on program:

Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

Make checks payable to League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area,

**Print this form and send it with your check to: LWV Cape Cod Area, P. O. Box 2347
Orleans, MA 02653**

Legislative Committee Report

The Legislative Committee's public meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 10, 7:00 p.m. in the Hermann Room of the Falmouth Public Library. State Senator Dylan Fernandes, State Representative David Vieira, and State Representative Thomas Moakley have accepted our invitation to participate. The program will be broadcast live by FCTV.

Four members of the Committee met on Monday, January 27, to begin planning for the upcoming meeting and legislative term. I attended along with long-time members Margaret Cooper and Kerry Walton. We were happy to welcome new member Deanna Jaroche.

We tentatively agreed to continue to support a Death with Dignity bill if it is introduced in the 2025-26 session of the Legislature and also to support a bill limiting use of Facial Recognition Technology. In view of national developments, we would also support attempts to insulate our law enforcement authorities from being required to enforce federal ICE provisions. Other areas of special interest include legislation regarding Elections and Voting, Good Governance, and Women's Issues. Once the LWVMA has issued its list of bills that are supported or opposed, our Committee will select the specific bills upon which it intends to focus.

— ***Judy Ziss***
Chair, Legislative Committee

Save the Date

***Legislative Committee
 Public Meeting with Legislators***
Thursday, March 10, 7 p.m.
Hermann Room
Falmouth Main Public Library

International Women's Day Breakfast
Friday, March 11, 7:30-10:30 a.m.
Emerald Resort Cape Cod, Hyannis

Candidates Night
Wednesday, April 30, 7 p.m.
Hermann Room
Falmouth Main Public Library

LWVF Annual Meeting
Saturday, May 17, 9:30 a.m.
Swope Café
Woods Hole, MA

NEEDED: New Videographers

The League of Women Voters Falmouth is a member of Falmouth Community Television (FCTV), and we are looking for interested League members to learn to film, edit, and produce programs to benefit ourselves and our community. As a Community Partner, we are able to use the facilities and expertise of FCTV to share who we are and what we do.

Learning to use a portable video camera seems daunting, but (trust us!) it's relatively easy and quite empowering. We can broaden our reach and increase the community's knowledge base by filming and broadcasting programs and interviews of interest to our membership and to our town. If we have piqued your interest, please contact Lynne Rozsa at lynrozsa@gmail.com.

Pauli Murray: Activist for Women's Rights and Civil Rights

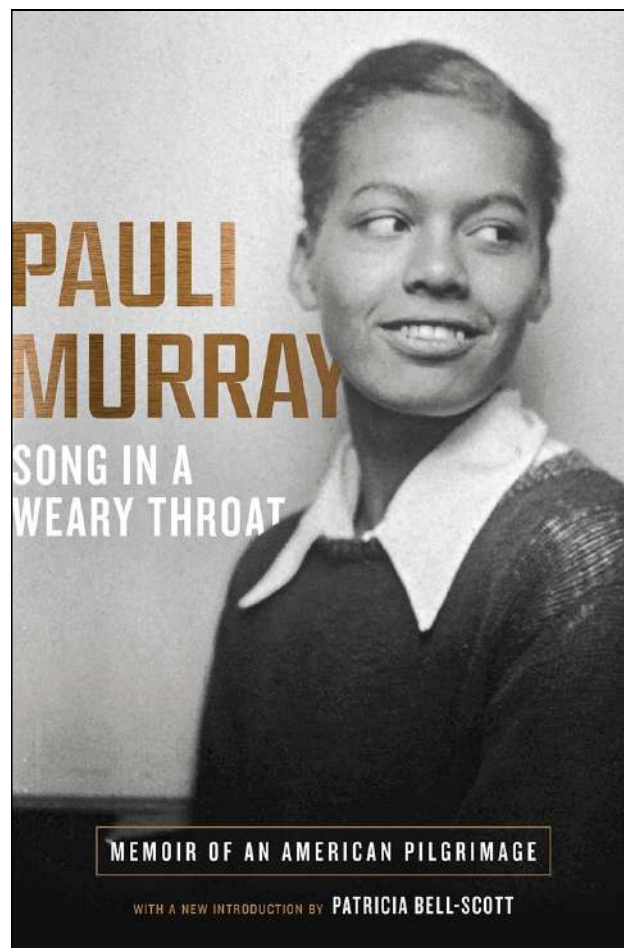
Anna Pauline Murray was born in Baltimore, Maryland, November 20, 1910. When she was 3 years old, her mother died and her father experienced emotional problems. Pauli was sent to Durham, North Carolina, and was raised by two aunts and her maternal grandparents. Her background was multi-racial; her parents identified as Black, even though their parents had Irish and white blood.

At age 16, she moved from Durham to New York City, where she lived with relatives who were passing for white. She finished her high school years in New York City and enrolled in Hunter College, graduating in 1933 with a degree in English. Murray had hoped to enroll in Columbia University, but did not apply because Columbia did not admit women.

In 1938, she applied to a PhD. program in sociology at the University of North Carolina. She was rejected because of her race. Then her application to Harvard Law School was rejected because she was a woman. Patricia Bell-Scott notes in her introduction to Murray's memoir that Murray's personal motto was "Don't get mad, get smart." She was accepted to Howard University's School of Law in 1941, where she was the only female in her class. She was looked down upon by her fellow classmates; she termed the sexism in the school "Jane Crow." In 1944 she graduated first in her class. Because she was a woman, she was barred from a graduate fellowship at Harvard (traditionally an honor granted to Howard's top graduate). Murray began post-graduate work at Berkeley.

Pauli Murray was an early activist for Black causes, and fought for women's rights as well. While in law school, she became a member of

the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). While a member of CORE, she published an essay, "Negro Youth's Dilemma," challenging segregation in the United States military. Her graduate thesis at Berkeley was "The Right to Equal Opportunity in Employment."



In 1940, while traveling by bus to Durham with her roommate, the women were relegated to broken seats at the back of the bus. In defiance of the segregation laws, they moved to the white section of the bus and refused to return to the back. Both were arrested and sent to jail. This was 15 years before Rosa Parks refused to yield her seat to a white passenger.

Murray's activism continued throughout her career. She was at the forefront of the civil

Continued on next page

Pauli Murray, cont.

rights movement and fought against racism and sexism. Her articles and books became the foundation for some of the laws against segregation. Her book *States' Laws on Race and Color* became the foundation for the NAACP's arguments in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Her legal documents were also far reaching. The "Proposal to Re-examine the Applicability of the Fourteenth Amendment to State Laws and Practices which Discriminate on the Basis of Sex Per Se" posits that the Fourteenth Amendment bars discrimination on the basis of both race and sex. In 1966, she co-founded the National Organization for Women and also co-wrote an ACLU brief for *White v. Crook*, a case that the ACLU won and paved the way for women to be able to serve on juries.

From 1967 until 1973 she taught law at Brandeis University, where she began courses on African-American Studies and women's studies. In her 60s, she retired from Brandeis and enrolled in the General Theological Seminary in New York, receiving a Master of Divinity in 1976. Her master's thesis was "Black Theology and Feminist Theology: A Comparative Review." In 1977, she joined the first generation of Episcopal women priests, the first African-American woman among them. The last chapter in her memoir is "Full Circle," in which she describes her struggle with her "call" to the ministry: "Once I admitted the call of total commitment to service in the church, it seemed that I had been pointed in this direction all my life and that my experiences were merely preparation for this calling."

Pauli Murray died of pancreatic cancer on July 1, 1985; she was 74 years old. Throughout her life she struggled with financial uncertainty, illness, chronic fatigue, and sexual identity, yet

continued to fight for the rights of marginalized people. Encouraged by her great niece, Pauli Murray managed to complete her memoir before her death. It was published posthumously in 1987. Patricia Bell-Scott notes in the introduction that Murray was very particular about the titles of her books. After much deliberation, she chose the title of the memoir from a line of her poem "Dark Testament": "Hope is a song in a weary throat."

Although she has received much recognition and many honors, Pauli Murray's work on behalf of women's rights and civil rights has almost been lost. In 2021, a biographical documentary, "My Name is Pauli Murray," premiered at the Sundance Film Festival, and she was an honoree on an American Women quarter in 2024. As noted on the front flap of her memoir: "At last, with the republication of this beautifully crafted memoir, *Song in a Weary Throat* takes its rightful place among the great civil rights autobiographies of the twentieth century."

—Mary Fran Buckley
Communications

Editor's Note: Here are some additional resources if you would like to learn more about Pauli Murray:

The Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray Quarter: A Celebration of Life and Legacy at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GK79OwINMk>

The home page of the Pauli Murray Center at <https://www.paulimurraycenter.com/>

A book for children: ***Pauli Murray: Shouting for the Rights of All People*** by Deborah Nelson Linck

Membership Portal Launched

The League of Women Voters switched to a new member portal for all Leagues across the country. The system launched February 3, 2025. There is no action that members need to take right now, but we want to provide an overview of what these changes mean for you.

Members will receive an email to log in to the portal, but will not be asked to renew membership again until a year after your most recent renewal. You will be given the option to sign up to auto-renew annually, and your membership will last a year after your last renewal. When you have access to the portal, you can update your own information, including contact information.

When it comes time to renew, you will receive an email reminder. Dues will no longer be a fixed rate but will be pay-what-you-can. The recommended dues amount for all members across the country will be \$75, but members can pay any amount (min. \$20), including the current dues rate of \$65.

Under the current system, LWV Falmouth pays a fixed rate per member to LWV Massachusetts and to LWVUS. Under the new system, a percentage of dues will go to the state and national Leagues. This means that when you renew and would like to make an additional contribution directly to LWV Falmouth, as some members choose to do when they renew, this donation must be separate from choosing a higher dues amount. A higher dues amount benefits the League as a whole and allows us to offer the option of lower dues to increase our member base but does not exclusively support the local League. To donate directly to our League, please go to the LWVF website and click on "Donate."

There will still be the option to renew by check for members who are not able to use the online system, but members who are able to access the

portal and renew online are encouraged to do so, as it will ensure accuracy of information and ease the burden on the League membership team. For our members, we hope these changes will make managing your membership easier. This is expected to increase membership around the country and improve our ability to empower voters and defend democracy. We will keep you informed of any new and relevant information.

If you have any questions about the new system, please reach out to Membership Chair Misty Niemeyer at 912-996-3985 or at mistyniemeyer13@gmail.com.

—Misty Niemeyer

Chair, Membership Committee

Falmouth Road Race

The Falmouth League has been awarded five bibs (racing spots) for the 2025 Falmouth Road Race Charity teams. This year's race will be Sunday, August 17. We are excited to host a team for the second year.

In 2025, the Falmouth team is solely hosting, which means we are looking for five runners for the team to raise money for our League. This is an opportunity to help our League raise several thousand dollars and is one of our most significant fundraising efforts.

If you, a friend, or family member are interested in running and supporting the LWV, please reach out to Misty Niemeyer at mistyniemeyer13@gmail.com, and we will get you registered and started!

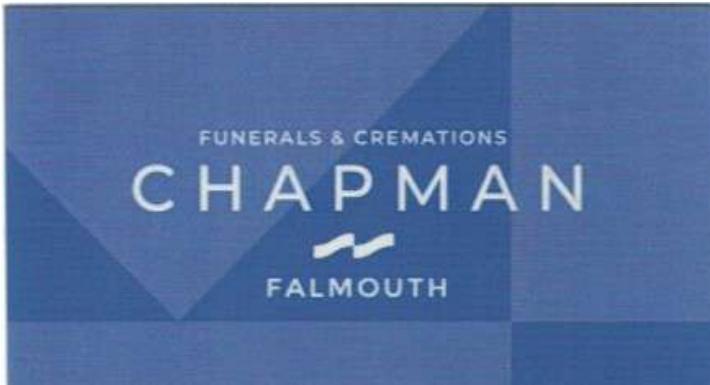
—Misty Niemeyer

Chair, Membership Committee

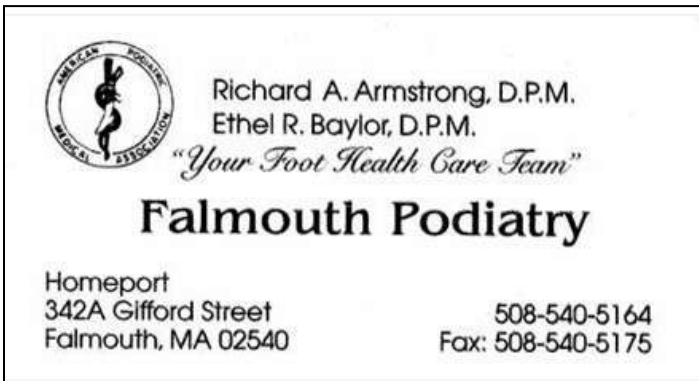


Stephanie Miele
Certified Piano Technician

Tuning
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H: 508-548-1759
steplen@comcast.net



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Fax: 508-540-5175

2024 Friends of the LWVF

Maria Moniz
Robert and Barbara Schneider

New URL for Our LWVF Website

Our new website address for the League of Women Voters of Falmouth is now:

<https://my.lwv.org/massachusetts/falmouth>

Please change your bookmarks.

Make your voice heard today!

Contact Information

for Your Legislators

(Be sure to include your name, address, and phone number when writing.)

Senator Dylan Fernandes

617-722-1330

dylan.fernandes@masenate.gov

Representative David Vieira

617-722-2230 and press 5

David.Vieira@mahouse.gov

Representative Thomas Moakley

(617) 722-2800 x7302

Thomas.Moakley@mahouse.gov

Congressman Bill Keating

508-771-6868

Info.keating@mail.house.gov

Letters to the Editor

The Falmouth Enterprise

Letters can be mailed to 50 Depot Avenue, Falmouth, MA 02540 or e-mailed directly to the editor at paradise@capenews.net.

General contact email:

newsroom@capenews.net.

The Cape Cod Times

Email to letters@capecodonline.com or mail to Letters, Cape Cod Times, 319 Main St., Hyannis, MA 02601.

The Boston Globe

Send an e-mail to letter@globe.com or mail

LWVF Board of Directors 2024-25

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Second Vice-President	Sheila Scott-Gordon*
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At-Large	Karen Epstein
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Facebook	Penny Duby
Email Communication	Kathy Mortenson
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FCTV	Lynne Rozsa

Nominating Committee

Chair	Stephanie Miele
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*Member of Steering Committee

**Shared Chairmanship by Richard Johnson*, Kathy Mortenson, Denise Morreale, John Carroll, Sally Palmer. Richard Johnson is Board Representative.

Meeting and Event Calendar

February 20, 7 p.m.,	State and local planning meeting (Zoom)
February 25, 7 p.m. ,	Board meeting (Zoom)
March 10, 7 p.m., Hermann Room, Falmouth Library	Legislative Committee public meeting with Legislators
March 11, 7:30-10:30 a.m., Emerald Resort, 35 Scudder Avenue, Hyannis	International Women's Day Breakfast
March 25, 7 p.m.	Board meeting (Zoom)

Contact us:

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P.O. Box 450
Falmouth, MA 02541

Email: FalmouthLWV@gmail.com

Website: <https://my.lwv.org/massachusetts/falmouth>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LWVofFalmouthMA/>

Submissions for the March issue of the LWVF Bulletin are due by March 5, 2025. Please send copy, photos, and other material to both of these addresses:

maryfran55@earthlink.net
eileenmattingly@yahoo.com



League of Women Voters

P.O. Box 450

Falmouth, MA 02541

February 2025

JOIN

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Democracy in Action



Image by Kit Irwin