



League of Women Voters[®] of Falmouth Bulletin

June 2023

Steering Committee Report



This month's Steering Committee Report focuses on membership. It is that time again! Only a THIRD of our members have renewed

so far, which means we still have a ways to go before our renewals are complete for the year. If you have already renewed for the 2023-2024 year, you joined as a new member this year in 2023, or you are a life-time member, congrats! You are all set and you can disregard this notice and we thank you!

Our membership is key to our League, and it allows us to provide timely programs and services to the Falmouth community and to continue to grow and thrive as a league.

Go to our website at www.lwvf.org and click on the JOIN or RENEW button. Instructions on how to register online and either pay online or mail in a check are included. Checks can be mailed to the address below; however, a registration/renewal form must be submitted online.

LWVF
PO BOX 450
Falmouth, MA 02541

If you are unable to submit via computer, call or email Misty Niemeyer for a paper version of the form to include. Please consider registering/renewing online as it eases the burden of the Membership Committee and ensures your information is correct for the Membership Directory. Membership dues must be paid by June 20, 2023 for inclusion in the directory.

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Individual memberships have increased this year, as voted on by the Board and membership at the Annual Meeting on May 20, 2023. See dues rates below.

Current Membership Dues (as of May 20, 2023):

- Individual Membership = \$55 **increased*
- Individual Membership via Paypal = \$58
- Additional Household Member = \$25 (same rate), Household Membership = \$80
- Household Membership via Paypal = \$83
- Affordable Membership option = \$25
- Student Membership = waived for Full/Part-time students - please renew each year

We want to ensure that the League is accessible to

Continued on next page

Steering Committee Report, cont.

all. Money is allocated annually for dues scholarships, and the membership fee should not prevent anyone from joining or renewing. Please reach out to Misty Niemeyer.

Membership Fees Paid to National & State League

- LWVUS – Individual = \$32
- LWVMA – Individual = \$23
- LWVUS & LWVMA – Additional household member = \$25
- LWVUS & LWVMA – Student = Waived

Please note that the current membership dues cover the dues paid to the LWVMA & LWVUS; they do not cover League operating or program expenses. Funding to cover operating costs, programs, and scholarship memberships must be raised through donations, bulletin advertisements, and charging for events.

Getting your membership dues paid on time helps to minimize the workload on our committee, allowing committee members to focus on recruitment and membership engagement. So please get your renewals in ASAP. If you know of potential new members, please encourage them to join, or contact me and I will reach out to them.

Thank you all. We cannot do this amazing work without all of you. We are grateful to have you as a part of the League and we look forward to what this next 2023-2024 year brings!

Please reach out with any questions!

—Misty Niemeyer

Membership Chair

mistyniemeyer13@gmail.com

Cell: 912-996-3985

Welcome to Our New Members

We are excited to announce and welcome 11 new members who have joined the league since April; however, most have joined recently in May—NINE new members in one month, which may be a recent record for our local league! This is all due to our amazing programs, our recent annual meeting, and specific efforts of our members to recruit members and host specific recruiting events. THANK YOU all; it has been incredible and greatly appreciated. The future of our League is in our membership and here it is. Please join me in welcoming our new members to our league!

Bill Brown

Nicole Cain

Zaria Cain-Williams

Krista Hennessy

Ann Holden

Robert Mascali

Moria Powers

Ann Shea

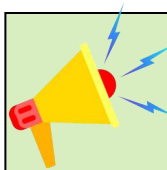
Bruce Woodin

Jane Woodin

Margot Woodruff

—Misty Niemeyer

Membership Chair



Shout Out

Thank you to Michele and Larry Moore for hosting a small membership recruitment and LWVF fundraising event in their home in May, with Constitutional scholar Jane Scarborough as featured speaker. Michele and Larry's successful event generated over \$1,000 in donations and 6 new members! We are very grateful for their efforts and their support of the League.

— LWVF Board

Annual Meeting

Kim Fish (left) and Victoria Bowen (right) were key-note speakers at the Annual Meeting, which focused on the need for attainable housing in Falmouth.



After months of planning, the LWVF held its Annual Meeting on May 20, 2023, at the Coonamessett Inn. After enjoying a robust breakfast buffet, nearly 45 members, including several new and prospective ones, had an opportunity to learn more about Falmouth's housing challenges. Kim Fish, Housing Coordinator for the Town of Falmouth, alongside Victoria Bowen, a manager at Cape Cod Healthcare, shared their perspectives on how insufficient inventory of attainable housing in Falmouth is negatively impacting our community.

That said, a key question followed from Olivia White, "When will something be done?" Select Board Member Doug Brown (at left) shared some

very encouraging news about anticipated multi-use developments in Town.

Additional questions from attendees highlighted examples of how and where residents can help, and the presentation concluded with an invitation to join the Falmouth Housing Huddle on June 7 from 8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., at

the Main Library in Falmouth., where the discussion of the housing crisis will continue.

Other highlights of our Annual Meeting included a well-deserved recognition for Denise Morreale (right), in appreciation for the 10 years she's devoted as Chair of Observer Corps, as well as an impressive 30 years of work for the LWVF overall. Our 1st Vice President/Steering Committee Chair, Janet Lauer (below left), presented a new slate of Board officers and Steering Committee for the next two and one-year terms respectively. *[Editor's Note: The new list of Board members for the 2023-24 year is on page 11.]*



Misty Niemeyer (above right) presented a case for a modest dues increase to \$55/year, which was accepted. Following direction to the Board for the coming year, regarding future events and a potential new local study, we engaged in a fun raffle, and four lucky attendees left with new books and gift cards.

Extra copies of the Annual Report are available by emailing marotitus@msn.com. The booklets will also be used as an introduction to the League of Women Voters of Falmouth for new members. My thanks again to everyone who provided help, guidance, encouragement and enthusiasm for this year's meeting. Our membership makes things fun!

—Maro Titus

Annual Meeting Chair

Annual Meeting, cont.



Annual Meeting Chair Maro Titus arranged the venue, recruited speakers, provided us with an excellent buffet breakfast, and chaired the smoothly run Annual Meeting. She has even reserved the Coonamessett Inn for next year and prepared instructions for the incoming Annual Meeting Chair.



Denise Morreale is all smiles as she models her new t-shirt, a gift from the League, after the annual meeting. The shirt was given to her with a gift card to the Eight Cousins bookstore in appreciation for all her work for the League, most recently as Chair of the Observer Corps. The shirt reads, "Voting Like a Girl Since 1920."

Many League members came to the meeting with the desire to learn more about the housing crisis from local experts, in hopes of ameliorating it.



League of Women Voters — Firearms Safety Positions

The League of Women Voters is careful to maintain a non-partisan posture with respect to individual political figures. However, after detailed study of and debate about a key topic in our political life, the League will often take a firm stand in favor of a policy that members feel will promote social and economic justice. Health care, the environment, immigration, and the right to fair elections have all been the subjects of policy stands by the League. In this spirit, the League has also addressed the issue of violence, particularly violence related to gun possession and gun safety. On this page, read about the policy statements taken by the national League of Women Voters and the League in Massachusetts. On the following page, read about the position of the LWVF.

National Organization Position

The League of Women Voters Position Statement on Gun Policy, as adopted by 1990 Convention and amended by the 1994 and 1998 Conventions, is as follows:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the proliferation of semi-automatic/automatic weapons in the United States is a major health and safety threat to its citizens. The League supports strong federal measures to limit the accessibility and regulate the ownership of these weapons by private citizens. The League supports regulating firearms for consumer safety. The League supports licensing procedures for gun ownership by private citizens to include a waiting period for background checks, personal identity verification, gun safety education, and annual license renewal. The license fee should be adequate to bear the cost of education and verification. The League supports strong limitations on access to semi-automatic/automatic weapons, enforcement of strict penalties for the improper possession of and crimes committed with handguns and assault weapons, and allocation of resources to better regulate and monitor gun dealers.

—*Impact on Issues 2022–2024*, pp. 153-55, at https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2023-02/LWV_ImpactOnIssues2022-2024.pdf.

Massachusetts LWV Position

The League Of Women Voters of Massachusetts has taken the following stand in the *Where We Stand* Program book, updated in 2020:

Handgun control Goal: Elimination of the private possession of handguns (1974) and assault weapons (1989)

The League supports:

- limitation of the sale and possession of handguns and assault weapons to law enforcement and military personnel
- a possible exception for sportsmen if the guns are used and stored away from the home under controlled conditions

Until such a time as a ban on the private possession of handguns and assault weapons becomes law the League supports:

- improved and standardized licensing procedures
- training in the use of handguns and assault weapons and the responsibilities of ownership
- education of the public to the dangers of the handgun in the home
- strict enforcement of the present laws concerning handgun ownership
- measures to encourage the removal of all handguns and assault weapons from the home and street

—*Where We Stand Program Book*, p. 48 at <https://lwvma.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Where-We-Stand..pdf>.

Continued on next page

League of Women Voters — Firearms Safety Positions, cont.

Janet Lauer and Judith Ziss spelled out the position of the League of Women Voters of Falmouth in the following letter, with copies sent to Sen. Susan Moran, and Representatives David Vieira and Dylan Fernandes.



To: Representative Michael S. Day, Chair, Joint Committee on the Judiciary

Re: Gun Violence Prevention

We in the League of Women Voters of Falmouth very much appreciate the Listening Tour which you have undertaken. A member of our League was pleased to be able to attend your session in Brockton. As you recognize, we are in the midst of a national epidemic of gun violence that cannot be ignored. Although Massachusetts long ago enacted strong gun laws, it is always possible to do better. Sadly, according to a recent news report, our low per capita level of gun fatalities masks “one of the largest disparities in deaths between white and Black” citizens due to gun violence.

In the 1990s, the League of Women Voters of the United States adopted the position that the proliferation of semi-automatic and automatic weapons in our country is a major health and safety threat. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Massachusetts League supported barring the sale of assault weapons to members of the general public. As the years have gone by, though, and as technology has made weapons more and more lethal, our laws have not always kept up with the latest deadly trends.

To keep up with the times, Representative David Linsky has introduced H. 2361, which would substitute the phrase “any rifle or shotgun containing a semiautomatic mechanism” for the term “assault weapon.” As we understand it, the new term would reduce any possible ambiguity, especially with respect to weapons designed to evade statutory prohibitions, and it might well reach weapons beyond those commonly known as “assault weapons.” We believe Representative Linsky’s bill falls well within the spirit of the pronouncements of both the national League and the Massachusetts League. Although H. 2361 is not before your Committee, we hope that you will encourage favorable treatment as it wends its way through the legislative process so that that eventually it can be included in an omnibus bill passed by both Houses.

While we are emphasizing this definitional issue, we do not want to ignore the need for renewed, strong enforcement of our current red flag law and for quick passage of H.2360/S.1509 which would prohibit 3D printed weapons and ghost guns. Safe gun storage and suicide prevention measures also are important means of reducing death and injuries from firearms.

We wish you and your team well as you continue your Listening Tour, which clearly is an invaluable effort to consider all the ways that gun violence can be reduced. This comes with our heartfelt thanks for your work and for that of your colleagues.

Respectfully submitted

Janet Lauer, First Vice President
Judith Ziss, Chair, Legislative Committee
League of Women Voters of Falmouth

Member News

In Memoriam **Alice L. Carey**

1934-2023

Alice Carey will be missed by many members of the League of Women Voters. Alice served on numerous committees, attended League conventions, and served as a volunteer at the polls on election days. She was a member of the steering committee from 2014 to 2020.

Civics Committee

Civics Project Trust Fund Budget Line Item

This spring, I received an SOS from the Massachusetts League and, as Chair of our Legislative Committee, emailed the following message to State Senator Susan Moran:

“As you know, our Falmouth League has been strongly supportive of civics education and you have been supportive as well. I am writing now to ask you to co-sponsor and vote for **Amendment 651** regarding the Civics Project Trust Fund line item. This Amendment would increase line item 1595-0115 to \$2.5 million, which would support professional development and civics education, especially in underserved areas. We can't forget that the young people who receive high quality civics education today will be our voters of tomorrow.”

We were delighted to receive an emailed response from Senator Moran, thanking us for our advocacy and letting us know “that amendment #651 was adopted in the FY24 budget” by the Massachusetts Senate.

—Judy Ziss

For the Civics Committee



OBSERVER CORPS PRESENTATIONS

JUNE 15, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

**Town Hall Civil Defense Room, Lower Level,
59 Town Hall Square**

All Observer reports will be presented on that evening. Some members will have submitted a report to be read in their absence. Those in attendance will be offered a chance to participate in a Q&A limited to the remaining time.

Thank you to all my wonderful Observers, past and present, for their enthusiasm and dedication to their jobs. The past ten years have been so successful for our Observer Corps because of you. Looking forward to joining the ranks under our new chair Meghan Palanza.

—Denise Morreale

Housing update

In a statement about the importance of attainable housing in our community, the Town of Falmouth has created a website dedicated to housing information, which may be found here:

<https://www.falmouthma.gov/1412/Housing>

Emerging from History's Footnotes: Emily Roebling and the Brooklyn Bridge

The iconic Brooklyn Bridge has spanned the East River, connecting Manhattan and Brooklyn, since its completion in 1883. It is a monument to the design and ingenuity of German immigrant and bridge-builder John A. Roebling; most of its construction and completion were overseen by his son, Colonel Washington Roebling. However, a third Roebling deserves much credit and recognition: Washington Roebling's wife, Emily.

John Roebling's dream of a massive structure linking Brooklyn with Manhattan seemed to be dashed when he died of injuries suffered from a tragic accident at the site he had planned for the bridge. Washington Roebling was determined to carry out his father's dream, and decided to dedicate his life to building the bridge. Washington was an engineer trained at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; he and his father had worked closely on other engineering projects, and Washington therefore understood the plans and architectural drawings his father had left in his son's care. As construction began and huge caissons to support the structure were lowered under the East River, Washington inspected the interior of the caisson on the Brooklyn side and upon emerging suffered from the "bends," or as it was known, caisson sickness. Unable to travel to the construction site, he sent his wife, Emily, to communicate with the engineers and workers.

At first, Emily was a messenger traveling between their Brooklyn home and the construction site. When Washington's condition worsened and it became apparent he would not return to the site, he taught Emily the engineering principles underlying the construction. Her role became more important; she took on the site manager role that her husband could not carry out. She buried herself in his textbooks and taught herself physics, mathematics and engineering, under her husband's guidance.

Emily's main interest as a young woman was women's suffrage. She wanted to push forward with the suffragists, but was cautioned by her husband not to participate and thus possibly be arrested. The bridge

was a flashpoint for many critics, and Washington feared that her arrest would contribute to the critical news about the building of the bridge. The couple worked out an agreement, and Emily put all of her energies into the construction.



*Portrait of Emily Warren Roebling by
Charles-Émile-Auguste Carolus-Duran*

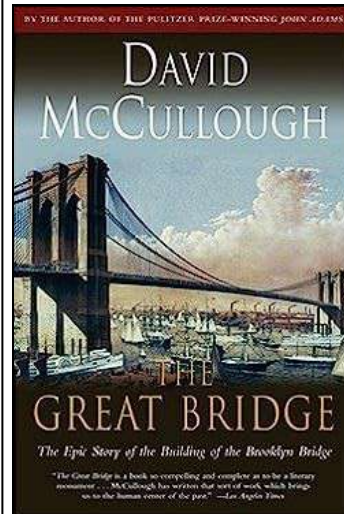
For this, she was the victim of malicious gossip. She was criticized for working among men, unaccompanied by her husband. Emily forged on, determined to complete the building of a bridge that was so important to her husband and to the memory of her father-in-law. It took a number of years for her to be completely accepted by the site engineers and working men. In 1931 her important role was acknowledged and a plaque was placed on the bridge by the Brooklyn Engineers Club. It reads: The builders of the bridge, dedicated to the memory of Emily Warren Roebling, 1843-1903, whose faith and courage helped her stricken husband, Col. Washington A. Roebling, C.E., 1837-1926, complete the construction of this bridge from the plans of his father, John

A. Roebling, C.E., 1805-1869, who gave his life to the bridge. Back of every great work we can find "The self-sacrificing devotion of a woman." Acknowledgment, yes, but a rather back-handed compliment!

Emily's role is the subject of a novel, *The Engineer's Wife* by Tracey Enerson Wood, whose tag line on the cover reads: "Based on the true story of the woman who built the Brooklyn Bridge."

The history of the Brooklyn Bridge is the subject of David McCullough's *The Great Bridge*. McCullough notes that

"So daring a concept as spanning the East River... required vision and dedication of the kind that went into building Europe's great cathedrals. During fourteen years of construction, the odds against success seemed overwhelming. Thousands of people were put to work. Bodies were crushed and broken, lives lost... and surges of public doubt constantly threatened the project..."



His book: ... "is also the story of a remarkable family, the Roeblings, who conceived and executed the audacious engineering plan at great personal cost. Without John Roebling's vision, his son's skill and courage, and Washington's wife Emily's dedication, the bridge we know and cherish would never have been built."

The bridge has indeed stood the test of time for well over one hundred years. Emily Warren Roebling is among the vanguard of pioneering women we remember, who have paved the way for generations of women!

—Mary Fran Buckley





Stephanie Miele
Certified Piano Technician

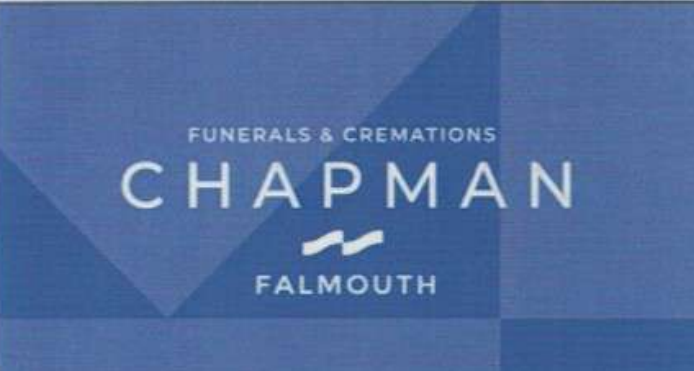
Tuning
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H: 508-548-1759
steplen@comcast.net




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Contact Information for Your Legislators

Senator Susan Moran
617-722-1330
Susan.Moran@masenate.gov

Representative David Vieira
617-722-2230 and press 5
David.Vieira@mahouse.gov

Representative Dylan Fernandes
617-722-2013 and press 3
Dylan.Fernandes@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 saito@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
to Letters to the Editor, The Boston Globe,
PO Box 55819, Boston, MA 02205.

LWVF Board of Directors 2023-2024

Board Members

First Vice-President	Janet Lauer*
Second Vice-President	Meghan Hanawalt*
Secretary	Richard Johnson*
Treasurer	Joan Boyer
Legislative	Judith Ziss
Natural Resources	Richard Johnson, Kathy Mortenson, Denise Morreale, John Carroll, Sally Palmer
Voter Service	Felicia Bordick and Chinna Mapp*
Spokesperson	Sylvia Szulkin*
Publicity/Bulletin Co-Editors	Mary Fran Buckley, Eileen Mattingly
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging	Chinna Mapp
Membership	Misty Niemeyer
Observer Corps	Meghan Palanza
At-Large	Lynne Rozsa
At-Large	Karen Epstein
Annual Meeting	Position Open

Off-Board Specialists

Historian	Kathy Mortenson
Social Media	Penny Duby
Email Communication	Kathy Mortenson
Webmaster	Joan Boyer

Nominating Committee

Chair:	Stephanie Miele
Off Board:	Kathy Mortenson, Olivia White
Board members:	Karen Epstein, Misty Niemeyer

*Member of Steering Committee

Meeting and Event Calendar

June 15, 7 p.m.	Observer Corps Reports in Town Hall Civil Defense Room, 59 Town Hall Square (downstairs)
June 27, 7 p.m.	Board meeting at Gus Canty Center
	NO MEETINGS IN JULY
August 17	Member meeting
August 22, 7 p.m.	Board meeting

Contact us:

League of Women Voters of Falmouth
P.O. Box 450
Falmouth, MA 02541

Email: FalmouthLWV@gmail.com

Website: www.lwvf.org

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

Join the League of Women Voters: Democracy in Action!

You do not have to be a resident of Falmouth to join. Membership dues are \$55 for an individual membership and \$25 for an additional household member. A discounted rate is available for students. If you wish to join the League, send your check made out to the address below. Include your name, mailing address, and phone number.

If you prefer, go to our website at www.lwvf.org. Click on "Join" to join or renew and pay online.



Submissions for the July/August issue of the LWVF Bulletin are due on July 1, 2023. Please send copy, photos, and other material to both of these addresses:

maryfran55@earthlink.net
eileenmattingly@yahoo.com