



League of Women Voters[®] of Falmouth Bulletin

April 2024

Candidates Night Is Coming

The League of Women Voters of Falmouth has a standing tradition of providing Falmouth residents with an opportunity to hear from candidates running for local offices. The LWVF invites candidates running for competitive races to come to Candidates Night and address the public on why they are qualified for the position they seek and how they plan to fulfill their responsibilities. In addition, uncontested candidates are invited to be introduced to the audience.

The residents of Falmouth are invited to Candidates Night hosted by the LWVF in partnership with Falmouth Public Television (FCTV), on Wednesday evening, April 24, at 7 p.m. in the Hermann room of the Falmouth Public Library. Mindy Todd will serve as the moderator. Candidates Night will also be televised on FCTV Public Channel 6, fctv.org, as well as FCTV's Roku and Apple TV channels.

Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. to allow visitors time to pick up and review materials at the reception table, including voting information, a brochure about the LWVF, and a flyer announcing a special event to celebrate our United States Constitution at the Arts Alive event in Falmouth in June. There will be forms for audience members who wish to ask the candidates a question. These questions will be addressed if time permits.

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Save the Dates:

April 24

Candidates Night

***7:00 p.m., Wednesday, April 24
at the Falmouth Public Library
Sponsored by the Voter
Service Committee***

May 18

Annual Meeting

***9:30 a.m., Saturday, May 18
Coonamessett Inn***

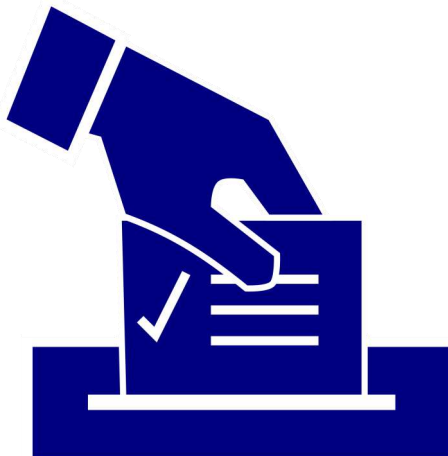
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Candidates Night, cont.

There is a common quote, “All politics is local,” and the interpretations of the quote can be very diverse depending on one’s point of view. However, there is agreement that being an informed voter, starting at the local level in community elections, has an impact on the quality of life in the neighborhoods of the community. Voting is a right and also a responsibility, especially if voters want input into who will represent them and who will participate in making critical decisions related to their children’s opportunity for a valued education, the affordability and availability of housing, the vigilance of the quality of drinking water, and the maintenance of the community’s treasured natural resources.

Thankfully, there are those residents who run for public office and are willing to do their due diligence in serving the needs of their community. The League encourages Falmouth residents to attend Candidates Night to hear what candidates have to say and then exercise their civic responsibility to get out and vote in local elections on May 21.

—***Felicia Bordick***
Voter Service Chair



Arts Alive



Celebrate the Constitution

Our Committee is busy working on the *We the People* event, a celebration of the United States Constitution, scheduled for the Arts Alive weekend in June on the Library green.

We expect to have photographs of original artwork created by Falmouth High School art students. The artwork will depict voting rights as expressed in our Constitution. The photographs will be on display at the LWVF booth and will be housed inside the Falmouth Public Library for two weeks following this special event. This is a work in progress with much more information to come.

—***Felicia Bordick***
Voter Service Chair



Legislative Committee Report: Meet Your State Legislators

A well-attended Legislative Committee annual public program took place at 7:00 p.m. on March 21, 2024, in the Hermann Room of the Falmouth Public Library. Called “Meet Your State Legislators,” it was intended to feature our three legislators, Senator Susan Moran, Representative David Vieira, and Representative Dylan Fernandes. Unfortunately, Senator Moran was unable to attend since the Senate was in session that evening. While we certainly missed her, we were able to present an informal program where we were not constantly watching the clock to be sure we fit everything in. We had five issues on our agenda, both Representatives spoke briefly on issues of their choosing, and the program closed with a lively Q and A.

First, we focused on affordable housing and a bill (H. 2747/S. 1771) that would adopt a local option real estate transfer fee. The fee would be based on a percentage of the sales price in excess of a certain sum. The parameters would be largely subject to local control but within limitations set by the statute. Representative Fernandes strongly supported the bill, which closely tracks legislation he has introduced. A parallel provision is in *The Homes Act* introduced by Governor Healey. Representative Fernandes traces the Governor’s support of that provision to a visit she made to the Vineyard.

Representative Vieira explained that he had a different take on home rule. He prefers having individual towns pass their own provisions, with the expectation that the Legislature would approve these home rule options. He believes such a system would give the towns more flexibility. Currently, towns pass these bills but the Massachusetts legislature essentially ignores them.

We then moved on to gun control. Although Massachusetts has strong laws already, ghost guns have become an issue and, as with all legislation, there are loose ends that should be tied up. Based on the discussion, it appeared that both of our legislators were largely in agreement on substance but differed as to procedure. Representative

Vieira was very critical of the unusual procedure where regular public hearings and committee work were absent. He believes that, as a result, legislators will only have the chance for an up or down vote without any opportunity to offer amendments. Representative Fernandes supports the current bill, which he described as a modest attempt to address the gun problem. He also noted that the highest number of gun deaths in Massachusetts are the result of suicide.

Our third subject was facial recognition technology (H. 4359/S. 927). The current bills are modest in scope, limiting the use of such technology by po-



Representatives David Vieira and Dylan Fernandes presented their views on major topics of upcoming legislation. Unfortunately, Senator Susan Moran was unable to attend due to the fact that the Senate was still in session that evening.

Continued on next page

Legislative Report: Meet Your State Legislators, cont.

lice and the RMV and requiring information to be provided by certain other entities. Representative Fernandes strongly supported the bill while emphasizing that it does not go far enough. He pointed out that there are cameras everywhere and that they threaten our privacy. He would like to see the same fiduciary responsibilities imposed on the people who control your face as are currently imposed on the people who control your money. Representative Vieira believes facial recognition technology can be useful if it is properly controlled but, when used, it is crucial that the usage takes dignity into account. He recalled that at some point in the past governmental entities were resorting to Facebook to obtain surveillance evidence necessary for law enforcement.

Our fourth bill was an Act Relative to End of Life Options (H. 2246/S. 1331). Here the contrast between the views of our two legislators was stark. Representative Vieira was strongly against the bill, stating that, at best, medical representatives can only make an educated guess regarding when a person will die. Representative Fernandes referenced the ordeal of a specific family, stating that, when a person is in excruciating pain, that person should be able to choose to die peacefully and with dignity in Massachusetts.



Dr. Roger Kligler, long an advocate for medical aid in dying, spoke about the reasons for his support for the Act Relative to End of Life Options.

We then moved to our final bill (H. 3502/S.2319), a Resolution that would convene a Constitutional Convention with the aim of overturning the *Citizens United* case. Representative Vieira is a co-sponsor. While understanding that some, like the League of Women Voters, fear the possibility of a runaway convention, he stressed that the public could be confident that the delegates, selected by state legislatures, would be laser focused on the issue at hand. He also stressed that, under the current system, people are reluctant to run for public office due to money in politics.

Representative Fernandes strongly agreed that money in politics is eroding our democracy and said we have to get rid of *Citizens United*. He also supported a bill permitting a candidate to claim childcare expenses as campaign expenses, a bill that our League also supports. And he noted that, even on the local level, large corporations are spending large sums on local issues such as zoning rules they oppose.

Turning from our five topics, each of our Representatives spoke briefly on issues of concern to them. Representative Vieira is trying to rejuvenate a program with the Sheriff's office to engage young people in civics, and he asked that we become involved. He also mentioned students who supported legislation to protect eagles. Representative Fernandes noted his pleasure in speaking to this group, mentioning that his becoming a legislator is an American dream story. Representative Vieira told the audience he felt the same way.

We then moved to questions from the audience. When asked about public violence, both legislators voiced deep concern, Representative Vieira calling it a current cold civil war. He said we have to focus on issues and set the right example for our children. Representative Fernandes described how his own office was impacted, with credible death threats from out-of-state led to heightened security.

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Meet Your Legislators, cont.

A question regarding student conduct prompted both legislators to state that they told the School Committee that teachers currently have the right to remove students from the classroom if there is a clear and present danger. More money may go into early education through passage of the current version of the Common Start bill. As an audience member noted, while costing money, these programs should save money in the long run.

Regarding jobs, Representative Fernandes noted federal problems with work visas as well as lack of housing. Representative Vieira noted that it takes too long to get federal paperwork and suggested that Massachusetts issue its own ID cards.

Moving to the environment, Representative Fernandes emphasized bills concerning plastics and bottles, grid infrastructure, and the importance of solar situated overhead in places like car parks. Representative Vieira said his pet peeve was seeing lawn watering systems operating while the rain poured down, saying we need to preserve water resources and control runoff.

As our program drew to a close at 8:45, we gave our thanks to all the participants as well as to FCTV.

***— Judith Ziss
Chair, Legislative Committee***



(Lots of) Help Wanted

Looking for New Videographers

Is it time for a new hobby? Can you see yourself behind a (portable) video camera?

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 expand awareness of 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.

Runner Needed!



Time to stretch your legs for a good cause! Represent the LWVF in the Falmouth Road Race on August 18.

Contact Misty Niemeyer at mistyniemeyer13@gmail.com or (912) 996-3985.

International Women’s Day Breakfast

On Friday, March 8, ten members of the LWVF attended the Cape Cod 2024 International Women’s Day Breakfast in Hyannis. The Falmouth League was a proud co-sponsor of the event. Kudos to Meghan Hanawalt and Denise Morreale, who collaborated with the League of Women Voters of Cape Cod to plan the event. It was attended by a sold-out crowd that included a diverse audience of accomplished young and seasoned women and supporting men.

The program was emceed by Jeanne Morrison, co-president of the LWVCC. The invocation was given by a dynamic young woman, Bobbi Rose Brown, a high school junior, activist, and author of the book *E is for Equity: An Alphabetically Arranged Toolkit for Changemakers*. Her speech was so inspiring that she received a standing ovation.

There were two panel discussions. The first, celebrating women political leaders who are making a difference, was moderated by Mindy Todd of WCAI 90.1. The second, cele-

brating women and girls who are making a difference in their communities at the local level, was moderated by Erica Tso Haidas, founder of Belonging Books. [Editor’s Note: See the website for Belonging Books at <https://www.belongingbookscapecod.com/our-story>.]

Co-president Mary Utt’s closing remarks summed up the breakfast event; the word “Wow!” was all she needed! The program ended with an inspirational poem, “Spoken Word,” written and read by Tamora Israel; the poem also brought people to their feet for a standing ovation!

How do you describe all these women—strong, confident, intelligent, resilient.... Did I leave anything out? Inspiring! What a success! Mark your calendar for next year as they plan to continue this event.

—**Janet Lauer**
First Vice-President



Membership

Please join me in welcoming our newest members, Debra Kattler and Thomas Zine. Our incredible membership is now 154 members, making us one of the largest Massachusetts leagues!

Read the interview questions and answers below to learn a bit more about one of our newest members, **Thomas Zine**:

What inspired you to join the LWVF?

Tom: I wanted to increase my understanding of public policies at the local level.

What is your favorite place in Falmouth, or your favorite thing about Falmouth?

Tom: I like all eight villages in Falmouth because they are unique. I do enjoy a daily walk or drive to Falmouth Village on Main Street.

What topics/issues are you most passionate/interested in?

Tom: I'm passionate about preserving the small town feel and charm of Falmouth.

What career field do/did you work in or what community interests do you have?

Tom: I'm interested in our town's recreation programs.

What recent books, music, movies, and or podcasts have inspired you?

Tom: DIY books, most music genres, and the Marvel movie series.

Where are you from? What path did you take to get to where you are now? Or are you local to the area?

Tom: Yes, I've lived in this area for more than 40 years.



New member Thomas Zine

What do you do that makes you happy? Drives you? Inspires you? Calms you?

Tom: Quality time at family get togethers, playing pickleball, the shops on Main Street like Ghelfi's Chocolates, and Disney.

What is your favorite ice cream flavor? Or alternative to ice cream?

Tom: Butter Pecan.

Who inspires you? Why?

Tom: My parents inspire me—my dad's strong work ethic, and my mom's kindness she shows to others.

Anything else about yourself you want to share?

Tom: I am passionate for rescue animals!

Treasurer's Report: Proposed Budget

PROPOSED 2024 BUDGET LWVF

INCOME

Ads	\$	200
Contributions - Friends	\$	1,000
Contributions - Members	\$	500
Dues	\$	7,335
Development / Fund Raisers	\$	2,000

INCOME TOTAL **\$ 11,035**

EXPENSES

Action/Program	\$	50	legislative posters
Administration	\$	350	
Web Site Fee	\$	400	
Annual Meeting & Report	\$	500	
Bank & Paypal Fees	\$	250	
Postage	\$	200	
Printing	\$	170	trifold
Convention - National			
Convention -State	\$	450	
Membership & Directory	\$	400	Directory printing
Participation & Gifts	\$	175	FCTV, LWVMA contribution
Per Member Pay Mass. (PMP)	\$	3,006	
Per Member Pay US (PMP)	\$	4,350	
Voter Service	\$	850	
Intl Women's Breakfast	\$	250	
EXPENSE TOTAL	\$	11,401	
GRAND TOTAL	\$	(366)	

3/21/24 checking acct	\$	8,633
LWV Educ Fund	\$	577
PMP Owed	\$	(1,696)

Budget Committee: Denise Morreale,
Kathie Mount, Karen Epstein. Joan Boyer,
Chair

Join the Observer Corps!

The work of the Observer Corps members is vitally important to the health and wellbeing of our town. But the League is sorely in need of volunteers to serve as observers for the following town organizations:

- School Committee
- Solid Waste Advisory
- Water Quality Management
- Falmouth Housing Trust
- Affirmative Action
- Beach Committee
- Coastal Advisory
- Historical Commission

If you have expertise or interest in serving as an observer in one or more of these areas, please contact the chair of the Observer Corps, Meghan Palanza, at mmpalanza@gmail.com for more information.

Voting Information

The Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth has numerous links to give you all the information you need about voting at <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/divisions/elections/elections-and-voting.htm>. Here is a selection of links that may be of use to you or to someone you know:

How to Vote

[Find Upcoming Elections](#)

[How to Vote in a Primary](#)

[Vote as an Inactive Voter](#)

[Voter Identification Requirements](#)

[Find Accessibility Options for Voters with Disabilities](#)

[Contact Your Local Election Office](#)

Vote Before Election Day

[Vote by Mail](#)

[Vote Early](#)

[Vote Absentee](#)

[Find a Ballot Drop Box](#)

[Track Your Mail-in Ballot](#)

Vote On Election Day

[Find Your Polling Place](#)

[View a Sample Presidential Primary Ballot](#)

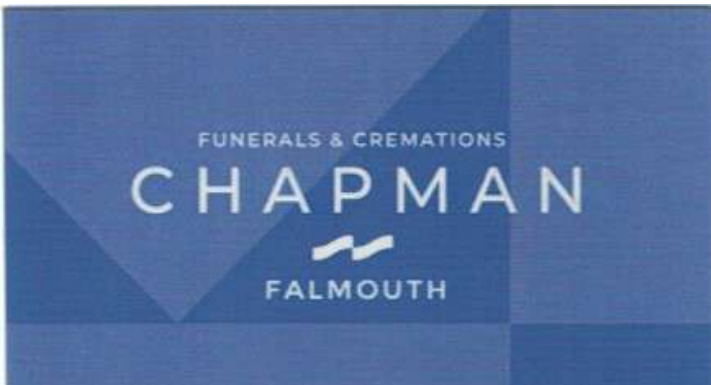
[Find Polling Hours](#)

[Provisional Ballots](#)

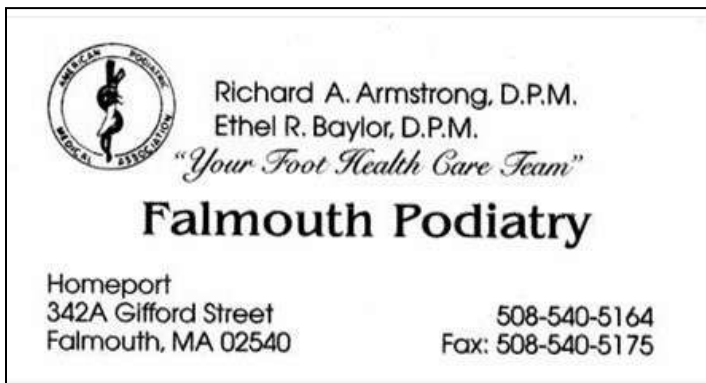



Stephanie Miele
 Certified Piano Technician

Tuning
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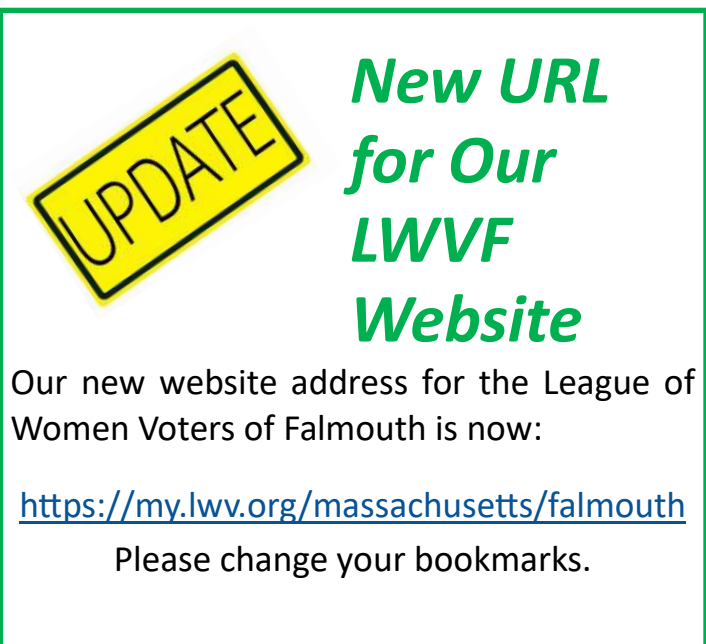
FUNERALS & CREMATIONS
CHAPMAN
 FALMOUTH




 Richard A. Armstrong, D.P.M.
 Ethel R. Baylor, D.P.M.
"Your Foot Health Care Team"
Falmouth Podiatry

Homeport
 342A Gifford Street
 Falmouth, MA 02540

508-540-5164
 Fax: 508-540-5175



 **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 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 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 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	Gayle Simundza

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

April 23, 7 p.m.	Board meeting (Zoom)
April 24, 7 p.m.	Candidates Night, Hermann Room, Falmouth Library (Voter Service)
May 18, 9:30-11:30	Annual Meeting, Coonamessett Inn

Contact us:

Falmouth, MA 02541

Email: FalmouthLWV@gmail.com

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

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 in the "Contact us" box above. Include your name, mailing address, and phone number. You may also join online through our website at <https://my.lwv.org/>



Submissions for the May issue of the LWVF Bulletin are due on May 4, 2024. Please send copy, photos, and other material to both of these addresses:

maryfran55@earthlink.net
eileenmattingly@yahoo.com