



League of Women Voters[®] of Falmouth Bulletin

December 2023–January 2024

Steering Committee Report

Reflecting on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) in Education

Welcome to the December *Bulletin*!

As we close out the year, we pause for a moment of reflection. Last month, the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEI/DEIB) Committee sponsored a community viewing of the film *Just Mercy*, followed by a discussion led by moderator Eileen Mattingly. Eileen facilitated great conversation and allowed all attendees to have their voices heard.

Just Mercy, based on the book of the same name, is a powerful film that tells the story of lawyer Bryan Stevenson and his work to fight for justice, through his Equal Justice Initiative, for people who have been wrongfully convicted or sentenced to death. Community members enjoyed fresh popcorn, engaged in meaningful conversation about social justice, and shared their own perspectives and individual storytelling that seemed to be transformative for everyone involved. This film and discussion allowed community members who read the book and those seeing the film a second time to experience something completely different that has the potential to lead to tangible change.

Table of Contents

Steering Committee Report	1
Civics Presentation	2
Membership	3
Transportation	4
Voter Service	5
Natural Resources	6
In Memoriam: Olivann Hobbie	8
Legislative and Press Directory	9
Board of Directors	9
Meeting and Event Calendar	9

So, one way to think about DEIB is that it is a movement aimed at creating a more equitable world by addressing power imbalances, systemic biases, and other forms of discrimination that exist in our communities. The educator in me views this movement as a powerful tool for teaching and learning. In education, this means working toward creating an environment where all students feel valued and supported, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that might make them a target of discrimination. When community is at the center of our work, we can be more empathetic and better able to advocate for others who are facing discrimination.

Continued on page 7

Civics Committee Report: Falmouth League Civics Presentation

We hope that, after you read this article, you will want to attend a classroom civics presentation next spring at Falmouth High School. We were one of six local Leagues invited to participate in the November LWVM Zoom program on the topic, “How Can Local Leagues Support Schools in Implementing the Student-Led Civic Project Requirement.” We were represented by LWVF First Vice President and Civics Committee Member Janet Lauer and Civics Committee Chair Judy Ziss.

Janet Lauer:

At Falmouth High School, the Social Studies department chose to do civics projects as in-class presentations. Students individually or in groups decide on a topic to research and present in a PowerPoint presentation. Letting one or two students explore and do presentations on a variety of topics in each class was a significant improvement over the 2022 format of each class focusing on just one.

League liaisons are invited to observe these presentations. Mike Feeney, chair of the Social Studies department, sends a schedule out a few weeks ahead so we can sign up for class time slots.

Presentations addressed a variety of community issues, including greater access to renewable energy, the need for affordable housing, and quality of the town’s drinking water. School-specific presentations included increasing nutrition in school lunches, mental health concerns, and - interestingly - vaping in bathrooms.

Student presenters explain their project, challenges in obtaining information pertaining to their topics, and, encouragingly, how they would have explored their issues more thoroughly if they had additional time.

Attending these presentations also allowed us to ask students questions and for them to ask us about the League. I reinforced the importance of becoming familiar with local issues and voting in town elections, which have a big impact on their day-to-day life.

Judy Ziss:

Janet has focused on the student presentations and on the subject matter of their projects. I'm going to step back and mention five ways in which we are trying to support the civics projects at Falmouth High School.

First: We have slightly revised the wonderful Needham Student Advocacy Guide to fit Falmouth and Barnstable County, and have made it available to the school.

Second: Two of us meet with Social Studies Chair Mike Feeney 4-5 times a year. We already knew him from a previous League Local Study project. He is welcoming and easy to work with. Mike has set up the projects to coincide with our spring Town Meeting. Some students adopt town meeting issues as their projects.

Third: We try to facilitate community contact for the students who need to reach out to community members for information and advocacy. Initially, emails were sent to community members by teachers on behalf of students and we were not involved. This system can be unwieldy and sometimes breaks down. We have many League members with information or experience that could be useful, and so we could assist

Continued on Page 7

Membership Committee Report

Exciting new updates from the Membership Committee!

Please join us in welcoming new members who joined in October: Janice Rook, Don Gibbons, and Walter Howard. In November we welcomed Roger Kliger, student member Tyler Farr, and Michelle Matteo, who recently moved to Falmouth and is a past president and member of the Bedford LWV. Welcome to all, we are excited to have you join our Falmouth league.

Thank you to all who renewed their memberships. We have completed our annual membership drive and stand at 150 members to date, including three lifetime members, 19 new members in 2023 (including three student members), and 128 renewed members—an increase from last year!

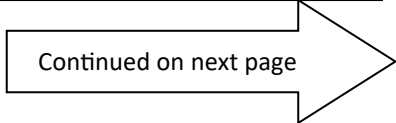
Our Membership Committee and Board will be updating contacts and the Membership Directory. We hope to send out an electronic version of the contacts and complete a printed version to distribute in early 2024; keep an eye out for updates.

Exciting news: in collaboration with the state LWV League, we submitted an application for five Falmouth Road Race bibs for the famous August Race. Participating in the race will be an excellent opportunity for our league, along with the state league, to raise awareness about the work we do, recruit members, and raise funds for programs, especially for this upcoming election year. We will find out this month if our application is accepted.

From the National League: Upcoming changes to Membership

I participated in a webinar hosted by the National League for the Massachusetts League. A few LWVF Board members joined me to learn about future changes to membership dues, membership renewal, and the joining process. The National League has been working on a major project to change the membership system, which will incorporate all of the local leagues, decrease the administrative burden on local league volunteers, and give members greater range of options in dues costs. The hope is that these changes will increase membership and diversity in the form of “pay what you can” options, and increase the percentage of annual dues that goes to the local leagues to boost local programming and local work.

Membership dues will be web-based and go directly into the database, saving our members data entry time; however, you will still be able to pay by check and there will be alternative options to renew, if needed. There will be features such as auto-renew, if you choose (YAY!), and auto entry in the database. These features will save a significant amount of time, allowing our committee to focus on other efforts, such as membership retention and recruitment. In addition, there will be other features and support available, including a new website option, if we choose, and an eblast tool available to our local league. The National League will be finalizing these tools and sharing more information over the next six months. Their plan is to start rolling out training in the fall of 2024 and get local leagues set up next fall for the official launch in January/February of 2025.

Continued on next page 

Membership Report, cont.

Therefore, there is a year to learn more about this new process.

One important thing to note is that the set individual membership rate, which is determined by the National League, will increase to \$75, and the household membership to \$112.50. This won't take effect until after January/February 2025, so if you are a current member, you do not need to renew until June 2025 at this rate. In addition, there will be a "pay what you CAN" rate, so you can pay less — you choose, ONLINE, what rate you want to pay, as low as \$20. Our local league would get 20% of this total amount. Free student memberships will no longer be available with this new option; however, the National League is working on an option for members to pay less than \$20, or an option to join at no cost. On the other hand, the \$20 cost (minus the 20%) will need to be absorbed by the local league to pay dues to the state and national league. This has been done in the past, and is something we can consider, especially for students. We do not want anything to hinder any person from joining our league.

I believe these are all positive changes. The National League representatives satisfactorily answered our many questions and we are working to ensure a smooth transition. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me (mistyniemeyer13@gmail.com). More information to come in the next 6-9 months. These are very exciting changes to move the League into the future.

— ***Misty Niemeyer***
Chair, Membership Committee

Transportation Report

The Transportation Core Group will be meeting mid-December to discuss the next steps we want to take to keep Upper Cape transportation in the forefront of residents' minds. Affordable Housing and Water Quality are high priority areas of concern for our community; transportation issues need to be addressed in conjunction with those priorities. At this time, we welcome some of the newer members of our League to consider joining us in our Transportation Study group. The areas of focus will be statewide, county wide, environmental, Falmouth-specific, and, most importantly, concentrated on improving quality of life in our community for all who live and work here.

The next bulletin will have more specific information. Meanwhile, if joining this study group interests you, please reach out to us. Write to me at denisemorreale@aol.com. Joining a study group or committee is a wonderful way to learn the workings of the League of Women Voters.

— ***Denise Morreale***
Transportation Study Group

Help Wanted

Moderator for for the National Program Planning in preparation for the LWVUS convention 2024. Program can meet in late January or February in person or on Zoom. Please contact Janet Lauer (janet@lauer-family.org)

Voter Service Committee Report

The Voter Service Committee hosted a special meeting November 14th with League member Larry Moore sharing his knowledge and expertise on the voting machine industry. His talk included assessment of the current concerns for questioning the outcome of elections and the impact this has on our democracy. He advised the importance of keeping an open mind for potential innovations in how we vote, and offered that when it comes to educating the public on the right to vote, messaging matters.

The attendees were surprised to learn about the logic and accuracy-testing performed on voting machines four days before voting begins. The testing of voting machines is open to the public, however, it seems few

people are aware of this opportunity to observe a test of their local voting machines. Motivated by the presentation to do our own research, a few members of our committee searched resources about the veracity of voting machines and whether the efforts of certain groups like Common Cause and Smart Elections, which questioned a certain voting machine (ExpressVoteXL), had the adverse effect of conveying the message that we cannot trust the voting process.

The Voter Service Committee will continue the dialogue in the new year as we prepare positive messaging for getting out the vote in the 2024 presidential election.

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



League member Larry Moore shared his expertise on the accuracy of voting machines as we prepare for the 2024 election.

Natural Resources Committee Report

The committee has been quiet since our October presentation, “Adding Tools to the Wastewater Treatment Toolbox,” held at the Falmouth Public Library. Unfortunately, this presentation will not be uploaded for streaming. We followed the November Town Meeting and were pleased that the sewer design article as well as the Urine Diversion Pilot Project were approved.

The Urine Diversion Working Group subset reported to the Committee on progress compiling recommendations. They were clear that the goal of the project is to provide data such that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will approve urine diversion as an authorized Innovative/Alternative (I/A) technology along with septic tank or leach field I/A systems. DEP has set certain conditions: three years of data from 50 households minimum using a limited range of technologies. The State Plumbing Board will also need to allow the use of certain technologies.

So far the DEP suggests a sample of 75 households committed to 4 years of data collection (some will drop out or sell the house), and ask that all toilets in the house be converted to urine diversion (UD) toilets. There would be an initial site visit by an expert to inspect the existing plumbing and recommend a new fixture/collection system. The septic tank would be sampled and pumped out at the onset to establish a baseline as plumbing is modified, then sampled periodically during the test period to measure nitrogen (N), phosphorous (P) and other chemicals (water use records would likely also be monitored). Urine collected would

be held on site in a 50-gallon tank for periodic collection by the Massachusetts Alternative Septic System Test Center (MASSTC), which would measure and test it before it is pasteurized and used in their research, sold, or sent to a sewage treatment site. A forgivable loan of up to \$10K is suggested per household selected to participate in the study, to pay for plumbing conversion, pumping, and testing. Participants from adjacent towns may be involved but the forgivable loan is only for Falmouth homes. There will be a further meeting/discussion on December 6th.

There was much feeling from the public that composting or incinerating toilets and cubies be considered as appropriate technologies, or that only the most used toilet in a multi-toilet house be converted, but DEP is not in favor of these: they want one technology and no opportunity for error so the data is tight. Again, the goal of the program is to get UD toilets approved as an I/A technology so that they may be considered as alternatives to more costly septic tank and leach field I/A options.

Earle Barnhart of the Green Center reported on a two-month voluntary study just completed with 42 households using cubies and collecting an average of 31 gallons of urine per house over 2 months. MASSTC collected and is analyzing the urine and will release a final report soon, but a great deal of N and P was kept out of the wastewater stream. The volunteers self-reported when they were away from home to estimate the percentage of urine not captured. Earle urged that the

Continued on Page 7

Steering Committee Report, cont.

On December 4th, we lost a dynamic master teacher, a friend, a DEIB Champion, and a beloved League member, Mrs. Olivann Hobbie. Olivann was DEIB personified. As one of the first Falmouth Academy teachers, she used her career as an educator to work toward providing opportunities for students of all backgrounds to learn about different cultures, histories, and experiences. Truly she helped to break down stereotypes and promote understanding and appreciation of diversity, a reflection of her wide-ranging and interesting background. She was willing to share and listen to others. She was an avid supporter of the League and League programming. Olivann will be sorely missed.

— ***Chinna Mapp***
Chair, DEIB

Natural Resources, cont.

requirement to convert all toilets be dropped, as the extra expense to convert a guest bathroom which is only used a few times a month or year will limit participants. The committee countered with the example that 30% of 2693 households in the Great Pond watershed have only one bathroom and that it should be possible to select enough participants from 1-2 bathroom households.

Discussion continues on December 6; the full committee will decide on recommendations to the Select Board later in the month or in January. The Select Board will make the final decision on the terms of the program.

— ***Richard Johnson***

Civics Committee Report, cont.

where it is needed. Developing a good system for us to get involved at an appropriate time is still a work in progress.

Fourth: we also want to let the community know about the student projects so community members will be willing to help if asked. We consider ourselves lucky to have a local weekly paper; we wrote an article for the paper last year and will again this year. We also may try an email outreach campaign to public and appointed officials and chairs of volunteer groups.

Fifth: as Janet has explained, we try to attend the student in-class presentations in groups of 1 or 2. That is icing on the cake for us and we understand the students appreciate it.

Our hope is that all students will become voters — active and informed voters. Our democracy depends on that.

Editor's note about CORI: One or two League members can attend each presentation, and this coming year we hope all presentations will be covered. To do so requires a CORI form to be filled out by the League member. To attend a classroom presentation, you should fill out and submit the required form before you attend, or simply stop by the VIPS office (just inside the front entrance of Falmouth High School, across from the main office) to get the form and fill it out on the day you attend. The form can be found online at

https://www.falmouthvips.org/uploads/2/5/2/9/25295603/cori_form_2017.pdf

In Memoriam:
Olivann Rumph Hobbie

The Falmouth LWV lost a beloved and energetic member with the passing of Olivann Hobbie on December 4. Olivann left an incredible imprint on the town of Falmouth; however, an examination of her life reveals that her years in Falmouth were but the tip of the iceberg. Her life was one of adventure, travel, and continuous learning.

Born in Utah in 1935, Olivann attended high school in Long Beach, California. She was the first in her family to go to college, first to Mills College in Oakland, California, for two years, then to UC Berkeley. It was at Berkeley that she met her husband, John, in the music practice rooms. They married in 1959.

From 1960 until 1961, John and Olivann lived in Lake Peters, Alaska, a remote site that is now in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. John studied year-round biological activity in the lake for his PhD. According to Olivann’s obituary on the Chapman Funeral Home website, Lake Peters had “temperatures as low as 72 degrees below zero” and the couple experienced “episodes with grizzly bears, caribou, and frozen furnace pipes.”

From Alaska, John and Olivann moved to Bloomington, Indiana; John completed his doctoral degree and Olivann began a master’s degree in English, which she completed while they were in Indiana. Their next move was to Upsala, Sweden, for John’s post-doctoral appointment. Olivann became fluent in Swedish and developed a love for the Scandinavian countries. They lived in Upsala for 2 1/2 years.



Their next home was Raleigh, North Carolina. Olivann taught at St. Mary’s Junior College. North Carolina was followed by a sabbatical for John in Norway. In 1976, George Woodwell asked John to join the Ecosystems Center at the Marine Biological Laboratory. The couple moved to Woods Hole, and in 1977, Olivann became one of the founding teachers of Falmouth Academy.

Olivann had been described as the heart and soul of Falmouth Academy, where she was, early on, an administrator and then a teacher until her retirement in 2014. Her obituary speaks to the difference she made in the lives of her students; one wrote, “You amaze me. Your life seems so full, overflowing almost, with stories and trips, friends and family. You make me hope to live a life as fulfilling as yours seems to be. Your poetry and humor bring your love and understanding of life in full view.”

Accolades didn’t end with her teaching position. Olivann was an active member of the Falmouth community. She was an accomplished pianist and loved music. In Falmouth she led the Falmouth Music Association, founded Soundfest with the Colorado String Quartet, supported the Simon Sinfonietta, edited the Woods Hole Historical Association magazine *Sprintsail*, in addition to her work with the Falmouth League of Women Voters.

Donations in her honor may be made to Falmouth Academy’s “Olivann Hobbie Fund for Financial Aid.” A memorial service will be held at Falmouth Academy in the spring of 2024.



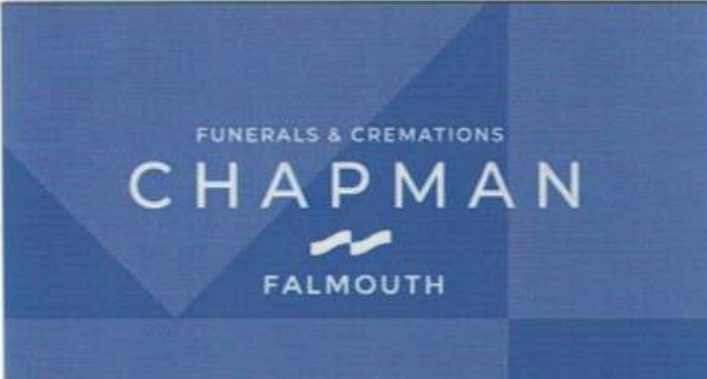
Stephanie Miele
 Certified Piano Technician

Tuning
 C: 508-685-9866
 H: 508-548-1759
 steplen@comcast.net




Get my Goats
 Natural Brush Clearing and Poison Ivy Control

Meghan Hanawalt, Goatherd info@getmygoatscapecod.com
 774-521-8745 www.GetMyGoatsCapeCod.com



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

Make your voice heard today!

Contact Information
for Your Legislators

(Be sure to include your name 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

No meetings in December

January, date TBD	National Program Planning
January 23, 7 p.m.	Board meeting on Zoom
February, date TBD	Local Program Planning
February 27, 7 p.m.	Board meeting on Zoom

Wishing you a safe and happy holiday season and a full and successful 2024!

Contact us:

League of Women Voters of Falmouth
P.O. Box 450
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/massachusetts/falmouth>. Just click on "Join" and pay online.



There will be no new issue of the Bulletin in January. Submissions for the February issue of the LWVF Bulletin are due on February 1, 2024. Please send copy, photos, and other material to both of these addresses:

maryfran55@earthlink.net
eileenmattingly@yahoo.com