



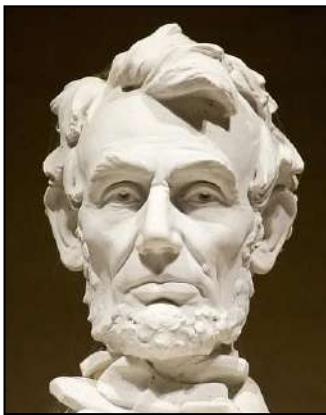
League of Women Voters[®] of Falmouth Bulletin

February 2024

Steering Committee Report

Happy 2024! We are entering a big election year — for local, state, and national government. Many challenges face us: we are up against misinformation, disinformation, and distrust in the voting system.

As we celebrate President's Day this month, it's important to contemplate Lincoln's legacy as it was understood at the conclusion of the



Civil War and as it now influences the American political scene. Lincoln's "new birth of freedom" led to the passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the Constitution. These amendments were passed following the conclusion of the Civil War, and

abolished slavery, punished insurrection or rebellion against the Constitution of the United States, and protected the right to vote for American men, regardless of race or color. These amendments uphold and defend popular sovereignty, federalism, the separation of powers, individual rights, and the rule of law. Unfortunately, the 15th amendment was not enforced until the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Lincoln once said "You cannot escape the re-

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sponsibilities of tomorrow by evading it today." Today, democracy is being tested in a sharply fragmented political landscape. We currently grapple with climate change, reproductive rights, immigration, transportation, and housing. How we solve these issues depends on our participation at the ballot box.

This year our Constitution celebrates 237 years. We the People of Falmouth plan to commemorate the signing of the Constitution, as a community. Stand by for more information in the coming months. As we strive to form a more perfect union, we look forward to your participation in the process.

— *Janet Lauer*
First Vice President

Legislative Committee Report

The newly enlarged Legislative Committee met on January 8. Five members were present; a smaller group met toward the end of 2023. We now have some subcommittees, with one or two members who expressed interest in specific bills and who promised to work with me to promote them. We also began discussion for the March 21 public meeting that will feature our three legislators.

Subsequent to the January 8 meeting, we worked on two new issues with tight deadlines. The LWVMA strongly opposes the proposal to convene a Constitutional Convention to amend the U.S. Constitution. The stated reason is that this convention would reverse Citizens United; the LWVMA fears that there would be no way to control such a convention once it was convened. After consultation within the LWVF, Janet Lauer and I signed a letter on behalf of the LWVF opposing the bill.

Then we were notified that the Massachusetts Legislature was holding a hearing on bills related to affordable housing. The Legislative Committee had already expressed our support for a bill that would allow communities to finance affordable housing via a tax on the portion of home sales prices exceeding a fixed dollar amount. We also learned that the hearing was addressing two other bills. One would limit the use of records of eviction proceedings. Currently, when an eviction notice is filed, it remains in the record regardless of whether the tenant did anything wrong or, indeed, whether an eviction took place. The other bill would provide qualified tenants and certain landlords with full legal representation in eviction proceedings. We have advised our three legislators that we support all three of these bills.

— *Judith Ziss*

Chair, Legislative Committee

In Memoriam

Constance Anita Martyna

May 16, 1934 – January 22, 2024

Save the Dates:

February 28

Observer Corps Reports

***6:30 p.m., Wednesday, February 28
at the Civil Defense Room, Town Hall***

March 21

A Discussion With Our Legislators

***7:00 p.m., Thursday, March 21
at the Falmouth Public Library***

***Sponsored by the LWVF
Legislative Committee.***

Meet New Member:

Kathy Fox Alfano

Meet Kathy by reading her answers to Misty Niemeyer's interview questions:

I'm a super voter. I don't think I've missed an election. Judy Ziss encouraged me to join the LWV.



I'm inspired by working on Cape Cod's environment, which is very vulnerable to climate change. We must work on climate resiliency

now. As such, I am Chair of the Bourne Wastewater Advisory Committee.

As a realtor for 20+ years, I am well aware of the housing challenges, especially on the Cape. I am on Bourne's Housing Trust, and I am enthusiastic about the potential housing going forward at the Joint Base but we must be so careful about how and where we add housing.

I am a strong supporter of women's rights from healthcare to opening all opportunities for our young women and girls.

I am a Bourne Library Trustee, and a Trustee of the Bourne Historical Society.

I host Bourne TV's "Upper Cape Spotlight," and interview everyone from government leaders to heads of non-profits. I enjoy educating people about the good things that are all around us. I should interview Judy and whoever would like to talk about the LWV!

I'm a Chocoholic and an Olympicaholic! I love living on the Cape and want to keep it as special as it is. But sitting back and hoping is no longer enough!

Falmouth Road Race



Great news! Our application for Falmouth Road Race 2024 bibs has been accepted! With the LWVMA, we will be fielding

a team of five runners to raise money for both Leagues; funds raised will be split evenly. This is a fantastic opportunity to raise awareness about our League and to generate new members for both Leagues at one of our most beloved local events.

We are looking for runners! We would like to have two runners represent the Falmouth League as part of the five-member team. If you or a friend or family member would like to represent the LWVF and the LWVMA, fund-raise, and run the the road race this year, please let me know ASAP, as we would like to register runners and start fundraising efforts.

If running is not your thing, you can still help. As soon as we get the fundraising efforts off the ground, we will be sharing fundraising Facebook and website pages to support our LWV runners. Runners will be asked to raise \$1,000 each; our League and the state League will support the runners in raising the funds. These funds will benefit our upcoming programs during an important election year.

Is anyone willing to host an out-of-town League runner at your home?

And, of course, we need people to cheer for our runners during the road race on Sunday, August 18. If you or someone you know is interested, please reach out to mistyniemeyer13@gmail.com. I am happy to answer any questions you may have about participating.

— **Misty Niemeyer**
Chair, Membership Committee

Civics Committee

As you may know, all Falmouth High School sophomores must complete a non-partisan Civics Project during their school year. These Civics Projects are required under a state law, An Act to Promote and Enhance Civic Engagement, passed in 2018. These projects are very important and our Falmouth High School students may need your help.

Under the law, the students, acting individually or in small groups, think of a problem that interests them — something they would like to see changed. They do research and then advocate for a desired outcome. In carrying out the project, it is hoped that, among other things, the students learn to analyze a complex issue, consider different points of view, and make arguments to support their positions while engaging in civil discourse, sometimes with those who may disagree. Here in Falmouth, the Civics Projects are intentionally scheduled to coincide with Spring Town Meeting because some students may see a Town Meeting issue that interests them. Unless a project is school-related, students will need to communicate with individuals in the community, either to research or to advocate. That is where the LWVF comes in.

Because of school rules, the students are not permitted to send emails or other communications directly to community members. Rather, the students tell their teachers what they need and the teachers initiate the communication via email. Sometimes messages run into problems. That's where we may come in!

If communications problems arise, we, in the League of Women Voters of Falmouth, have volunteered to try to solve them. If you learn that a student has been trying unsuccessfully

to communicate with you about a Civics Project, please contact me. When the Civics Projects are in progress, we stay in touch with the Social Studies teachers and Department Chair and may be able to help. Please use my email at judith_ziss@comcast.net.

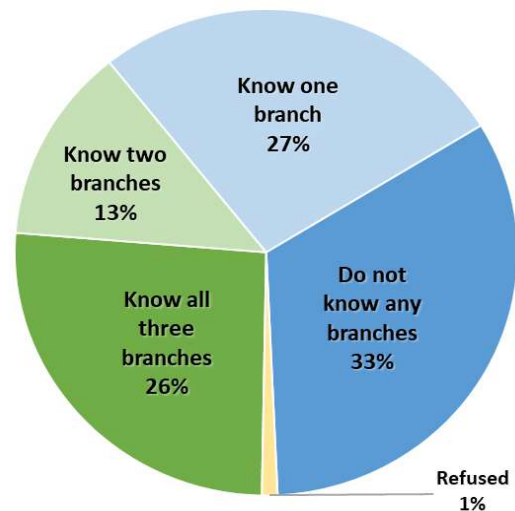
Mike Feeny, Social Studies Department Chair, would appreciate having a list of LWVF members who are also Town Meeting Members. Please identify yourselves to me so that I can pass your names to Mike. This would assist with the student civics projects if a student or group of students select Town Meeting issues as their projects.

Let's work together to help our students become good citizens and, we hope, active voters. Thank you.

—*Judith Ziss*
Chair, Civics Committee

Why Do We Need Civics Education?

% of people who can name the three branches of government



Source: Annenberg Constitution Day Civics Survey, August 9-13, 2017.
Annenberg Public Policy Center

International Women's Day Breakfast



International Women's Day

2024 International Women's Day Breakfast

You're invited!

The Power of Women and Girls Creating Change

March 8, 2024, 7:30 AM TO 9:30 AM

**Hyannis Resort and Conference Center,
34 Scudder Ave, Hyannis**

Two panel discussions:

1. Celebrating Women Elected Leaders Making a Difference

Mindy Todd, host of The Point, WCAI, will moderate and panelists include: Donna Buckley, Barnstable County Sheriff; Melissa Ferretti, Bourne Select Board member and Chair of the Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe, and Onjalé Scott Price, Falmouth Select Board Member.

2. Celebrating Young Women and Girls Making a Difference at the Local Level

Erica Tso Haidas, of Belonging Books, will moderate and panelists include: Allanah Boddah, Karibbean Lounge owner; Henna Monty, entrepreneur; Natalia Frois, business owner and translator/interpreter; and Destinee Powell, 4Cs student and activist member of the YMCA Achievers Program.

Plus: Resource tables for information and services

Please reserve by February 23:

\$15 per person with your credit card or with PayPal:

<http://tinyurl.com/IWD-Breakfast-2024>

**Host organizations: League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area,
League of Women Voters of Falmouth, Amplify POC, The Women and Girls Fund of
The Cape Cod Foundation, The Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe,
Cape Cod Cape Verdean Museum and Cultural Center**



LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE CAPE COD AREA



LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF FALMOUTH



Transportation Report

Within Massachusetts, there is a seemingly infinite list of never-ending priorities around transportation and infrastructure. The Cape Region is no exception. In an effort to update the LWVF Transportation positions from 1996, our Local Study Program on Transportation was presented in 2022. The resulting video is on our website.

The core group of the committee has reconvened with one primary focus: the Bourne Bridge. We believe that issues around the bridge are crucial for these reasons:

The Cape Cod Area, SouthCoast, and Plymouth Leagues are not likely to see equal levels of interest in this bridge.

This topic will be of interest to several within the LWVF, which includes residents of the communities who travel the bridge and whose businesses, education, and quality of living will be affected directly on a daily basis.

We can cover the necessary committee meetings, press activity, legislative actions, and ongoing timetable more concisely.

There is a natural synergy, within Falmouth, in focus updates. We can establish meaningful linkages with the Cape Cod Commission on this effort as well.

We are asking you, the members of LWVF, to consider joining this Local Study Reboot on Transportation. The coverage of funding, timeline, progress, and community impact needs to be distributed in a way that will reach the communities that are most affected: Falmouth, Bourne, and the Upper Cape.

The core group will be meeting soon. If this issue is of interest to you, and is one you would

Voter Service Report



The Voter Service Committee was awarded a Scharfman Grant to help with the cost of a public event to celebrate the Constitution of the United States. The event is planned for the weekend of Arts Alive in Falmouth, June 14, 15, and 16. There will be a public reading of the Preamble as well as other parts of the Constitution related to voting.

The event will include an opportunity to register to vote, to get current voting information using a QR code, and to test your knowledge of the Constitution with a quiz using questions from the test administered to those applying for American citizenship.

In addition, we will distribute free copies of the Constitution as well as postcards to mail to family and friends reminding them to vote in the 2024 presidential election.

In other news, the committee has scheduled Candidates Night for Wednesday, April 24, at 7 p.m. in the Hermann Room of the main branch of the Falmouth Public Library. Please email questions you would like to ask candidates to wegotv.ma@gmail.com.

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

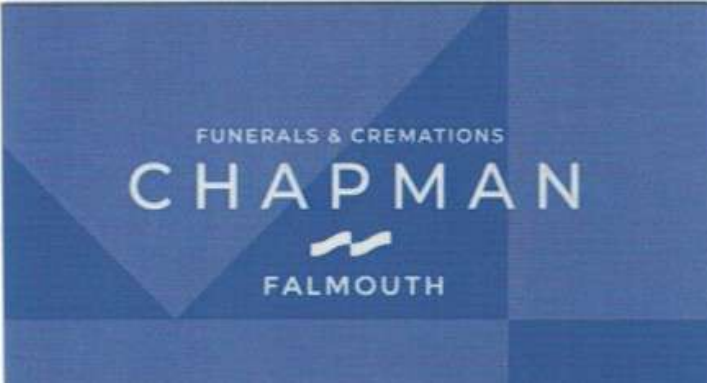
like to consider, please contact me at denisemorreale@aol.com.

—***Denise Morreale***
Transportation Committee Chair

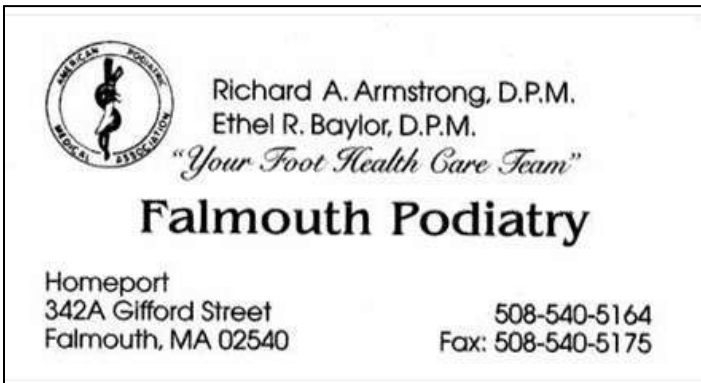



Stephanie Miele
 Certified Piano Technician

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



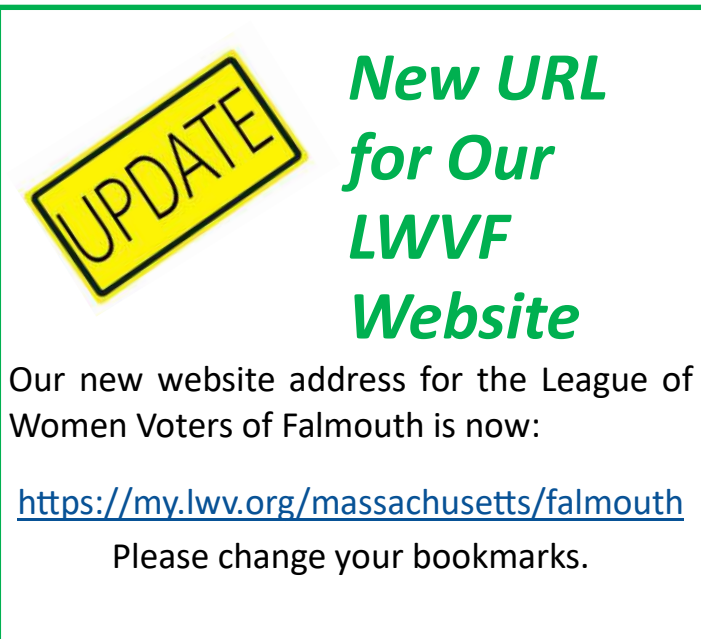
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CHAPMAN
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 Richard A. Armstrong, D.P.M.
 Ethel R. Baylor, D.P.M.
"Your Foot Health Care Team"
Falmouth Podiatry

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

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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

Submissions for the March issue of the LWVF Bulletin are due on March 1, 2024. Please send copy, photos, and other material to both of these addresses:

maryfran55@earthlink.net
eileenmattingly@yahoo.com

Meeting and Event Calendar

February, date TBD	Local Program Planning
February 27, 7 p.m.	Board meeting (Zoom)
February 28, 6:30 p.m.	Observer Corps Report, Civil Defense Rm., Town Hall
March 8, 7:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	International Women’s Day Breakfast
March 21, 7 p.m.	Legislative committee - Discussion with Legislators, Falmouth Public Library
March 26, 7 p.m.	Board meeting (Zoom)

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/>

