



League of Women Voters[®] of Falmouth Bulletin

November 2025

Steering Committee Report

The success of the League of Women Voters depends upon its committee volunteers. Our League has seven committees: Voter Service, Legislative (and Civics), Observer Corps, DEIB, Communications, Membership, and Natural Resources. There are opportunities in each committee for new volunteers to become involved, but we particularly need help on Natural Resources at this time.

The Natural Resources Committee monitors local developments related to the environment, climate change, sustainability, and pollution. The committee's primary task is to arrange a public program once a year on this topic, which usually involves inviting a local authority or activist to speak. Examples of past programs include food waste composting, zoning changes for solar power arrays, coastal resilience, and changes in septic system technology to address groundwater pollution. Topics are often very relevant to Town Meeting Warrant articles where education of the voting public is important. If you are interested in joining this committee, please contact Richard Johnson at rtj04@verizon.net.

The Membership Committee is also seeking new members to remind us to renew our commitment and to become involved in local programs. LWVUS has taken over the burden

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of bookkeeping, but there are other needs that still must be met. Observer Corps is always seeking new volunteers to monitor public, town, and county committees. The Voter Service and DEIB Committees are two of the most active groups in LWVF but will always welcome new members. The Civics subcommittee is seeking LWVF members who are also Town Meeting members to become involved with the High School Civics program. There are ample opportunities for you to volunteer in efforts that match your interests and available time. Please let us know if you would like to become more involved.

— **Richard Johnson**
Steering Committee member

DEI Hopes Everyone Has a Seat at the Table

Diversity is not about race; it's about marginalized people who currently don't have a seat at the table. But that seat requires being able to use it and be heard, according to Dr. Seyana Mawusi, who gave an hour-long talk for the LWVF on October 23 at the library. She said people are constantly looking for a way to belong.

In talking about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Dr. Mawusi said that "equality does not get to equity." Giving a five-year-old child and a teenager a one-foot box to stand on to look



over a fence to a baseball field doesn't work. Different people need different things to create equity in a situation. Creating this type of equity can be a bridge between diversity and full inclusion.

Dr. Mawusi discussed and passed out some worksheets to help us look at barriers to that type of inclusion and definitions of those barriers. She talked about bias, stereotype, microaggression, and weaponization (see box at right). The worksheets helped us determine the effect that things we say or do can have on people around us. Saying things like "older adults aren't tech savvy," is often not true. It struck this author, who after "retiring" paid many bills by helping bio-tech companies develop the latest social media accounts.

Our speaker spent the last part of her talk

describing the current impact of weaponization of DEI. How many people use DEI as a political tool to silence others and to exclude people from the table? They are labeling equity efforts as "reverse discrimination"; this is a way to roll these efforts back.

In explaining the origin of some terms, Dr. Mawusi described the first use of the term "woke," which I think has been misused by folks on both sides of the issue. It was first used by the singer Lead Belly in 1938 in the song "Scottsboro Boy" as a warning to black Americans to be vigilant against racial injustice. In an interview he said, "Stay woke, keep their eyes open."

—Don Gibbons

DEIB Committee Chair

Definitions of Barriers

Bias: Attitudes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.

Stereotype: A generalized belief or assumption about a group of people—often oversimplified and inaccurate.

Microaggression: A subtle, often unintentional comment or behavior that conveys bias or disrespect toward a marginalized group.

Weaponization: Using DEI language, policies, or principles to purposely distort or undermine their original intent—such as for political gain, to silence others, or to exclude instead of include.

What Is LUCE?

Have you seen the signs around town about the LUCE Hotline? What is LUCE and how do you use the hotline?



Leading immigrant justice and worker-centered organizations across Massachusetts coalesced in March 2025 to respond to the Trump Administration's attack on immigrant communities. Dubbed the LUCE Immigrant Justice Network of Massachusetts, this new network of grassroots and immigrant-led organizations is committed to building people's power across Massachusetts. Grounded in the principles of justice and equity, LUCE has a deep commitment to keeping all of our communities safe through grassroots organizing, information sharing, and mutual aid.

LUCE is an amalgamation of a number of different words for **light** in various Indo-European languages. LUCE founders chose this term because it captures the ultimate goal of the network: “**illuminating**” ICE’s actions so they cannot operate in the dark and bringing **light** to our community and the Commonwealth: **L**iberation, **U**nion, **C**ommunity, and **E**speranza/Esperança/Espoir/Espwa (Hope).

A signature accomplishment of the LUCE Network is the ICE Watch Hotline. Trained operators answer the calls (phone or text) from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. every day. They can accommodate several languages including English, Portuguese, Spanish, French, and Mandarin. Callers are not asked to identify themselves, only to describe what they are seeing in as much detail as possible.

The operator then dispatches a team of trained verifiers to the location who attempt to verify whether ICE is in the area. The aim is to dispel rumors to reduce fear in the immigrant community. If ICE is or was present, verifiers seek to gather information about what the agents are/were doing and document it. Documentation can help people win their freedom.

There is a rapid response team of verifiers on the Upper Cape. They have responded to several alerts since May through ICE’s first and second surges of operations in Massachusetts. The *Boston Globe* reported that ICE detained more than 1,400 Massachusetts immigrants in the month of September; some of those detained were residents of Falmouth and other Upper Cape towns.

At least 11 people from the Upper Cape had interactions with ICE in September. Some were sent to prisons across the country (Upstate NY, Texas, Louisiana), others terrorized into leaving the country. The LUCE hotline received calls from distraught family and friends reporting that someone had been taken. They had no idea why their loved ones were targeted and were looking for in-

LUCE, cont.

formation about what to do. LUCE referred them to the local group to get them on the path to obtain legal and other support.

Please help spread the word and join the fight for immigrant justice. “The LUCE Immigrant Justice Hotline is more than just a phone number, it’s a lifeline for people who often have nowhere else to turn,” said one LUCE Volunteer who requested to remain anonymous. “Whether people are facing a sudden ICE raid, need urgent legal advice, or just want to understand their rights, this hotline offers support, dignity, and hope in real time. It’s about community protecting community.”

Have you put the number in your phone yet? Take a moment to do that now! This QR code will put the number and website directly into your phone contacts. Please share the number widely.



Interested in learning more about joining the Rapid Response team or scheduling a community ICE watch training? Reach us at: LUCEUpperCape@proton.me

Learn more about other efforts to support the immigrant community by subscribing to the Falmouth Immigrant Rights Coalition email list. Falmouthimmigrants@gmail.com

—**Debra Kattler**
Falmouth Immigrants
Rights Coalition

Legislative Committee

Civics: I had a cordial and productive meeting with Mike Feeney, Social Studies Department Head, on Friday, October 3. He is having preliminary discussions with his leadership and hopes to suggest an activity at the schools that would involve League members.

Legislative: We have reserved the Hermann room at the Falmouth Public Library for our annual public meeting. It is scheduled for Monday, March 16, 2026, to accommodate the schedule of our three legislators, Senator Dylan Fernandes, Representative David Vieira, and Representative Thomas Moakley. They have been invited to participate and expect to attend. Now that the preliminary work for the public meeting is done, we will turn to legislation currently before the Massachusetts House and/or Senate. One bill of particular interest is an Act Regarding Free Expression, which pertains to access to materials in public and school libraries (H. 3594/S.2328). I believe our three legislators support this bill.

— **Judith Ziss**
Chair, Legislative Committee

Help with Hunger

The Falmouth Service Center Food Pantry is experiencing an unprecedented need right now. You can help with a financial donation or a gift of non-perishable foods. You can even drop your food donations at the Falmouth Police Station 24/7. See <https://www.falmouthservicecenter.org/food-pantry-at-fsc> or the FSC Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=falmouth%20servicecenter>

Massachusetts League Leader Luncheon

Janet Lauer and Sheila Scott Gordon attended the League Leader Luncheon hosted by the League of Women Voters of MA on October 25th in Harvard, Massachusetts. Falmouth League member Meghan Hanawalt was there as a representative of the state League to welcome attendees.

During the meeting, Chapter Spot—the new LWV Stripe membership platform—reported that 3,000 members have successfully transitioned to the new system. Massachusetts currently has 45 local leagues serving 156 municipalities, and LWVMA has hosted 53 events and 19 grant-funded programs so far this year.

The main focus of the luncheon was membership growth and retention. The new platform confirms memberships for new joiners, however, it's up to the local leagues to reach out and personally welcome them. Meeting with new members to provide an overview of the LWV and introduce them to local committees helps foster engagement and connection. Building that sense of belonging and community is essential to advancing our mission of voter empowerment and protecting democracy.



Sheila Scott-Gordon, Janet Lauer, and Meghan Hanawalt represented the League of Women Voters of Falmouth at the League Leader Luncheon. They had an opportunity to meet with Celia Canavan, the Executive Director of the Massachusetts League (second from right).

— Janet Lauer
First Vice President

SAVE THE DATE

Learn More about Immigration Issues with Upcoming Events

The Nonviolence in Action film series concludes for the season with a full-length screening of *Cesar Chavez*, the story of the activist who championed farm workers. Screening will be at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 12, in the Hermann Room of the Falmouth Main Library and will be followed by a discussion.

The film will provide some context for Antonio Massa Viana's talk "RESTORING THE PROMISE: A Discussion about Immigration, Democracy, and a Path Forward." This is a non-partisan, community-based discussion that invites individuals from all walks of life to come together and reflect on how immigration shapes—and is shaped by—the values of American democracy. Falmouth Public Library, Wednesday, November 19, at 6:30 p.m.

Make your voice heard today!

Contact Information for Your Legislators and Governor

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Letters to the Editor

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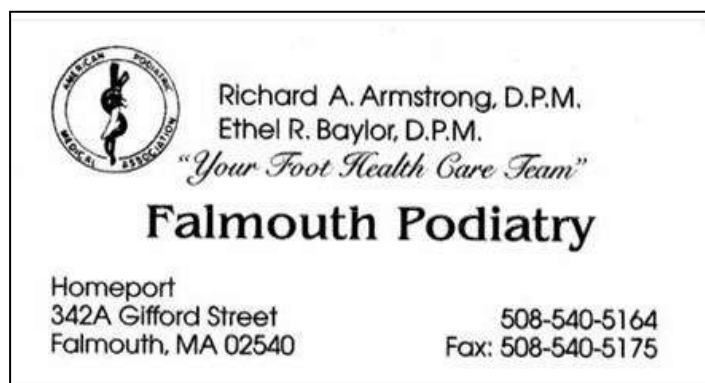
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Nominating Committee

Chair	Kathy Mortenson
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*Member of Steering Committee

Meeting and Event Calendar

December 2, 6 p.m. **Board meeting on Zoom**

January 27, 6 p.m. **Board meeting on Zoom**

Contact us:

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welcome

To our new member:
Robin Bowerman
And our returning member:
Nancy Robbins Taylor

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

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