



League of Women Voters[®] of Falmouth Bulletin

October 2025

Steering Committee Report

DEI's Trajectory Now

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion's trajectory is not just about the future. It's also about losing parts of past success.

You may believe there is nothing you can do about the national trend, but there are things you can do to make DEI a part of your life and the lives of those around you. Hear Dr. Seyana Mawus's talk "Everyday every way - Developing Equity and Inclusion," October 16, at 4:30 in Hermann Room, main branch of the Falmouth Library. Register with our DEIB chair dongibbons49@yahoo.com.

Many of the DEI headlines you read are tactics to tear apart DEI successes and ensure these successes will not be repeated. High schools and universities are finding it difficult to teach about the history of parts of our society. Schools are being asked to abandon affinity groups that allow students who sometimes feel apart to get to know others of the same groups. For example, as the faculty member who headed the gay medical school students, I found they were thrilled a gay faculty member helped them feel OK.

An article in the Sunday, October 5 *New York Times* detailed that funding was stopped for a \$2.1 billion subway line in Chicago, a line that would have brought large numbers of

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Save the Date!

Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration

Cultural Center

Falmouth Museums on the Green

Sunday, October 12, 3–5 p.m.

Dr. Seyana Mawusi presentation on DEI

Hermann Room, Falmouth Public Library

Thursday, October 16, 4:30 p.m.

Film Screening: *The Third Harmony*

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship,

East Falmouth,

Sunday, October 19, 3 p.m.

Continued on next page

Legislative Committee Report

Civics

I had a cordial and productive meeting with Mike Feeney, Social Studies Department Head at Falmouth High School, on Friday, October 3. He is in preliminary discussions with his leadership and is hoping to suggest an activity at the schools that would involve League members. Stay tuned.

Legislative

We have reserved the Hermann Room at the Falmouth Public Library for our annual public meeting. It is scheduled for Monday, March 16, to accommodate the schedule of our three legislators, Senator Dylan Fernandes (top), Representative David Vieira (middle), and Representative Thomas Moakley (below). 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 all three of our legislators support this bill.



— ***Judy Ziss, Chair***
Legislative Committee

Steering Committee Report, cont.

people from a disadvantaged neighborhood to work downtown, thus bypassing the necessity of myriad bus lines. The rationale for curtailing the funding was an investigation into race-based contracting. As someone who grew up southeast of Chicago, I remember countless stories of corruption with the same old contractors getting all the jobs. Reserving some contracts for disadvantaged groups helped break up the monopoly. My first job after college was for a construction technology magazine at McGraw-Hill. I talked to many contractors about these programs and they liked what they produced.

The last time I went to my hometown in Indiana, the hotel clerk would not give my husband and me a room with a single king bed. We convinced them we wanted what we booked, but that might not happen today. People are being allowed to use their own beliefs for public business, and not what is good for the public.

Please register to hear Dr. Mawusi describe what “equity” means to various audiences and how we need to think that equity is not uniform. She has served as a college professor, as a principal in elementary and middle schools, and consulted with leaders to help them rethink and reframe their personal and professional lives. She will give us options for making DEI a part of our lives and perhaps a part of the lives of those around us.

— ***Don Gibbons***
Chair, DEIB Committee
Steering Committee

Indigenous Peoples Day

Falmouth Celebrates Indigenous Peoples Day in Story, Song & Art

The second annual Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration will be held Sunday, October 12, from 3 to 5 p.m. in the Cultural Center of the Falmouth Museums on the Green, 55 – 65 Palmer Avenue, Falmouth. The League of Women Voters of Falmouth is a co-sponsor of this event.

First Nations people will be honored with a Proclamation by the Falmouth Select Board and a reading of a Land Acknowledgement that recognizes and respects the Wampanoag people as original stewards of what is now known as the Town of Falmouth.

The afternoon program will begin with a conversation and reflection on the significance of Native traditions with Chief Earl H. Mills, Sr. and his daughter, Roxanne Mills Brown.

At 96 years young, Chief “Flying Eagle” Mills is known as a traditionalist and someone who combines the preservation of Wampanoag culture with modern roles and a broad education. Chief Mills was the owner and head chef of the Flume Restaurant in Mashpee, as well as a teacher and Athletic Director at Falmouth Public Schools until his retirement in 1975. With his late wife Shirley Mills he was instrumental in revitalizing traditional Mashpee powwows in the 1950s.

Chief Mills has authored works documenting Wampanoag history and culture, including *Son of Mashpee: Reflections of Chief Flying Eagle, A Wampanoag*, with Alicja Mann; *Talk-*

ing with the Elders of Mashpee: Memories of Earl H. Mills, Sr.; and Cape Cod Wampanoag Cookbook: Wampanoag Indian Recipes, Images and Lore, with Betty Breen.

Roxanne Mills Brown is the Director of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Education Department whose work integrates culturally-based language and traditions into local schools. Her emphasis is to strengthen and support Native students’ identity alongside their academic achievement. She has worked to foster opportunities for tribal youth that embrace a holistic Wampanoag approach to life.

Mills Brown formerly served with the Bureau of Indian Affairs before retiring from the Senior Executive Service in 2013. She holds a B.S. in Elementary Education from the University of New Mexico, and a Ed.M. in Administration, Planning, and Social Policy from Harvard University, Graduate School of Education.

The conversation and discussion with the audience will be facilitated by cultural anthropologist Sandra Faiman-Silva. Dr. Faiman-Silva is a League member, the Falmouth Liaison to the Barnstable County Human Rights Advisory Commission, and a Falmouth Town Meeting member. She has authored numerous articles and books, including *Choctaws at the Crossroads: The Political Economy of Class and Culture in the Oklahoma Timber Region*, which was named as finalist for the C. Wright Mills Award by the Society for the Study of Social Problems.

Continued on next page

Indigenous Peoples Day, cont.

Mae Alice Baird (her traditional name, Sweetgrass), will reflect on the importance of the Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project. “With the Wôpanâak language back in practice, Wampanoag people can bring back ceremony and prayer,” she said. “You can speak to the creator as our ancestors did, You can understand how your ancestors viewed the world, physically, spiritually and emotionally.”

Throughout the afternoon, musical interludes will be provided by Mashpee Wampanoag flutist Emma Jo Mills Brennan and Native Tlingit guitarist Kim Moberg. Indigenous artist Ocean Eversley will present artwork and poetry that honor cultural resilience, truth, memory, and survival. A closing friendship circle will conclude the celebration.

The Falmouth Museums on the Green is located at 55 – 65 Palmer Avenue, Falmouth. Parking is available in their lot on Katharine Lee Bates Road at the rear of the campus. Light refreshments will be served. The event is free and the public is cordially invited.

Ranked Choice Voting Meeting

On Thursday, September 18, the League hosted a film screening and panel discussion about the often-misunderstood topic of ranked choice voting in the Hermann Room of the Falmouth Public Library. The film was a 34-minute documentary called *Majority Rules 101*; it explained the process of ranked choice voting using an Alaska election as an example, and suggested that ranked choice voting, or RCV, could have multiple advantages. Among these are the fact that the candidate with the highest overall support will win, the campaigning is usually more civil, and voters are spared the cost and delay of run-off elections.

After the film, a panel discussion was held with Edwyn Shoemaker, the executive director of Voter Choice Massachusetts and Ranked Choice Boston, and Celia Nolan, training director with Rank the Vote, pictured below with the League members who planned and conducted the event.

If you missed the film, you can watch it at home at <https://majorityrulesfilm.com/101>.



Lynne Rozca, Felicia Bordick, Susan Loucks, Janet Lauer, Celia Nolan, Edwyn Shoemaker, Sheila Scott-Gordon, and Marinna Martini.

Scharfman Grant Use Encourages Voting

Felicia Bordick has submitted her report on the Scharfman Grant to the State League, and should be commended for the excellent letter and postcard-writing campaigns that she organized and executed with the help of League members. Here is information from her report about this project:

As a recent recipient of the Scharfman Grant, I am happy to see it offered again. With the \$400 grant money, I purchased 700 postcard stamps to support an effort that would serve multiple goals: getting out the vote in multiple states in the upcoming November 4th elections, recruiting new members to join our LWV in Falmouth, and encouraging community members to participate in this civic activity to encourage others to get out and vote without the burden of the cost of materials involved.

The Scharfman Grant paid for the postage, the postcards, and lists of addresses of voters in Virginia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Georgia. The nonpartisan script reminding the voter to vote in the upcoming election was provided by online gotv resources, and I provided the cost of accessory materials.

This get-out-the-vote effort was launched with a social gathering at my home. I invited new LWVF members and some inactive members and introduced the action of sending personally addressed postcards to voters out of state. The next step was to set up weekly times and locations for ongoing sessions of socializing and writing postcards to voters. We grew our number of participants and developed a friendship based on a common goal, reminding fellow citizens with important elections in their states that your vote is your voice and you want to be heard.

The 700 postcards with the 700 stamps paid for with the Scharfman Grant have been mailed; mission accomplished. However, the friendships, the camaraderie, and the meetups continue. With an unexpected donation of 400 letter stamps from a participant, a new effort of sending Vote Forward letters to voters is in process and will be completed by October 24. That is the mailing date for these letters, which do not come with a script but rather allow the volunteers to write in their own words why it is important to exercise your right to vote in every election.

I purposely chose not to take photos for several reasons and the gotv gatherings will continue for a few more weeks. We will then take a break and reorganize in 2026 in anticipation of the 2026 midterm elections.

My deepest appreciation, not just for the Grant but for the incentive that drove the motivation to do something more!

With gratitude,

—Felicia Bordick
LWVFalmouth
Chair, Voter Service Committee

Editor's Note: The Lotte E. Scharfman Memorial Citizen Education Fund was established in memory of a League of Women Voters president who died January 13, 1970. Lotte Guste Eichenwald. Scharfman was born on June 14, 1928, in Vienna. A refugee who escaped with her family from Austria during World War II, she devoted her life to working for the democratic process and to helping citizens gain access to government. She is widely credited with coining the phrase "Democracy is not a spectator sport." The Fund currently supports a variety of voter service and citizen education programs.

Film Series on NonViolence

INDIVISIBLE FALMOUTH & FALMOUTH IMMIGRANT RIGHTS COALITION

present a film series on

NONVIOLENCE IN ACTION

This series of four films is an introduction to the history of nonviolent resistance movements around the world, showcasing the strength of people power without violence. A discussion will follow each film.

Sunday, October 19, 3 pm at the UU Falmouth, 840 Sandwich Rd, East Falmouth

- ***The Third Harmony*** (2022, 44 mins, Documentary from The Metta Center for Nonviolence)

Wednesday, October 29, 4:30 pm at the Falmouth Public Library, Hermann Room, 300 Main St

- ***A Force More Powerful, Part 1: India and Nashville*** (1999, 51 mins, Documentary)

Wednesday, November 5, 4:30 pm at the Falmouth Public Library, Hermann Room, 300 Main St

- ***A Force More Powerful, Part 2: Denmark and Poland*** (1999, 52 mins, Documentary)

Wednesday, November 12, 6:30 pm at the Falmouth Public Library, Hermann Room, 300 Main St

- ***Cesar Chavez*** (2014, 1hr 42 mins, PG-13)

The final film about labor organizer Cesar Chavez provides some context for the Falmouth Public Library-sponsored presentation about immigration, Thursday, November 19. See information about this program below.

**“Nonviolence is the greatest
and most active force in the world.”**

--Mahatma Gandhi

FALMOUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY presents ...

Wednesday, November 19, 6:30 pm Talk at the Falmouth Public Library, Hermann Room

- Antonio Massa Viana presents **“RESTORING THE PROMISE: A discussion about Immigration, Democracy and a Path Forward.”** This is a nonpartisan, 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.

We thank our hosts, the Falmouth Public Library and UU Falmouth (Unitarian Universalist Fellowship).

Make your voice heard today!

Contact Information for Your Legislators and Governor

Governor Maura Healey
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Letters to the Editor

The Falmouth Enterprise

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General email: newsroom@capenews.net.

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Nominating Committee

Chair	Kathy Mortenson
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*Member of Steering Committee

Meeting and Event Calendar

October 16, 4:30 p.m.	Discussion of DEI with Dr. Seyana Mawusi, Hermann Room, Falmouth Main Library
October 28, 6:00 p.m.	Board meeting on Zoom
October 29, 11 a.m.	Luncheon, Upper Cape Tech restaurant, Bourne (RSVP only)
November 25, 6:00 p.m.	Board meeting on Zoom

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welcome

To our new member:
Jean Crossman

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

maryfran55@earthlink.net
eileenmattingly@yahoo.com