



League of Women Voters® of Falmouth Bulletin

Summer 2019

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Contact Us

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Visit our web site
www.lwvf.org
Visit our Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/LWVofFalmouthMA/>

Member Event Calendar

August 2019

- 13 Noon** **Brown Bag Porch Party**
Judy Stetson's Porch
- 27 7:00 pm** **Board Meeting**
Gus Canty Center, Falmouth

September 2019

- 22 2-3:30 pm** **Kick Off the Grove Project**
Museums on the Green, Falmouth
- 24 7:00 pm** **Board Meeting**
Gus Canty Center, Falmouth

LWVF Board of Directors 2019-2020

STEERING COMMITTEE

First Vice-President		Sylvia Szulkin , Steering Committee Chair	
Second Vice-President		Alice Carey	
At Large		Doris Epstein	
At Large		Joanne Treistman	
Webmaster		Joan Boyer	
Secretary	Marcia Easterling	Membership	Jacqueline Webster
Treasurer	Meghan Hanawalt	Voter Service	Carol McKeon
Observer Corps	Denise Morreale	Natural Resources	Richard Johnson
At Large	Kathy Mortenson	Legislative	Judith Ziss
	Misty Niemeyer	Publicity	Olivann Hobbie
Social Media	Penny Duby	Follow-Up Coordinator	TBD

Bulletin Editors: **Denise Morreale, Brenda Nolan**

*If you wish to join the League, membership dues are \$50 for an individual membership and \$25 for an additional household member.
Send your check made out to LWV of Falmouth, P. O. Box 450, Falmouth, MA 02541.
Include your name, mailing address, email address and phone number. You do not have to be a resident of Falmouth to join.*

MESSAGE FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE

Sylvia Szulkin, Chair of the Steering Committee

We hope that all of you are enjoying what has turned out to be a meteorologically and politically "interesting" summer. Our League generally does not publish a Bulletin or present a public program during July. However, the upcoming double centennial celebrating the passage of the 19th Amendment and the founding of the League of Women Voters has kept our local League quite busy. The Falmouth League's Centennial Committee, chaired by Richard Johnson(rtj04@verizon.net), has come up with a list of events to mark the occasion. You will receive an e-blast of events, dates and locations from Kathy Mortenson within the next month, once all plans are solidified. Richard's committee will need your participation to make this a spectacularly significant year for our League.

The Local Study Committee co-chaired by Doris Epstein and Sylvia Szulkin will resume its study of the effectiveness of the Town of Falmouth's appointed volunteer committees in September. If you are interested in joining the committee please contact Doris (dwepstein@comcast.net) or Sylvia (szulkin@comcast.net). You will receive notification of the first meeting dates.

The Legislative Committee chaired by Judy Ziss is already in contact with our elected state and Congressional legislators on bills of interest to the national, state and local Leagues. Please contact Judy if you would like to be part of the League's legislative team. (judith_ziss@comcast.net)

We look forward to seeing you at Judy Stetson's world-famous brown bag porch party on Tuesday, August 13 at noon.

On a celebratory note we conclude with sincere and loving congratulations to Doris Epstein on her 95th birthday. Doris's family asks you to join them in a toast to Doris at the Falmouth Art Center/Artists Guild on Friday, August 9 from 5-7 p.m. Doris's paintings will be on display in the second floor gallery until the end of August.

LWVF FRIENDS 2019

Sally Fritz
Christina Jacobi
Winnie Mackey

Robert and Barbara Schneider
Freddy Valois

ANNUAL BROWN BAG LUNCH ON JUDY'S PORCH PLEASE COME!

Annual Brown Bag Lunch on Judy Stetson's big porch
Tuesday, August 13th at noon



Once again, rain or shine (the porch is big and dry) we will gather for lunch on Judy Stetson's porch at NOON on Tuesday, August 13. Judy's address is 261 Quissett Avenue. There will be a big sign with 261 on it so you won't miss the driveway. There is parking in a field by the street or proceed up the driveway for parking closer to the house.

All members and friends are welcome especially anyone interested in joining the Falmouth League. The lunch is informal and a great way to meet other League members. Bring your own "brown bag" lunch. Drinks and cookies are provided by Judy.

Please mark your calendar (for those of us who still use paper) for Tuesday, August 13th. Call Judy for directions at 508-548-2768. For more information, call Kathy Mortenson, 508-457-4410

In Memoriam

Bill Mackey
Natalie Trousof

It is with great sadness we pass on the news that Bill Mackey has died. He and his wife, Winnie, have been wonderful Friends of the League for many years. Our love goes out to Winnie.

The Enterprise July 5 obituary of Natalie Trousof of Woods Hole mentioned, among her many civic projects, that she was a member of the League of Women Voters of Falmouth and participated in the group's Observer Corps. Long time member, Judy Stetson remembers that she was certainly a pleasure to know and an asset to the League.

LOCAL STUDY COMMITTEE

Message from Doris Epstein, Chair



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

The Local Agenda Committee studying the Town of Falmouth volunteer committees will resume its work after the summer hiatus. The next meeting is Thursday September 5th at 10:30 at Doris Epstein's house. We welcome any and all new members to our committee and will offer good discussions, time limited assignments to ultimately benefit the Town as well as food and drink. Do join us.

FALMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS REGISTERED TO VOTE

Kathy Mortenson

On May 31st, Judy Fenwick once again gathered a group of League members and others who registered over 50 seniors at the Falmouth High School graduation rehearsal. There were 187 students graduating this year. Michael Palmer, Falmouth Town Clerk, spoke to the students this year about the importance of registering to vote and voting in all elections.

Thank you to the volunteers for taking time to register new voters.

FALMOUTH LEAGUE CENTENNIAL SEPTEMBER PROGRAM

By Richard Johnson, Chair

The September meeting of the LWVF will be held on Sunday September 22 at the Museums on the Green, and will focus on the upcoming centennials of the Ratification of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution and of the founding of the League of Women Voters. We will have tea and cake, a musical program of some of the songs of the suffrage movement by Stephanie Miele, present details about how we intend to honor these centennials, and discuss where we go from here on women's and voting rights.



The current issue of the *Library of Congress Magazine* is devoted to Women Suffrage, with many articles and features tracing the history of the movement, and offers to purchase a pin or bag, or books memorializing the struggle.

Attached is a copy of this issue which may be locally viewed or printed.



suffrage
issueLCM_2019_0708.l

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

By Jackie Webster, Chair

Welcome to the following new LWVF members who have joined us recently: Lysbeth Abrams, Tara Franklin, Karen & Peter Hargraves.

Renewals for membership in LWVF were due on July 1, 2019. For your convenience, a renewal application is available with this bulletin. We hope you will continue to support the League by renewing your membership this year.



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FALMOUTH LEAGUE ATTENDS STATE CONVENTION

By Sylvia Szulkin, Steering Committee Chair

Four members of the Falmouth League—Meghan Hanawalt, Sylvia Szulkin, Denise Morreale and Richard Johnson, -- were privileged to attend the Massachusetts State League Convention held at the Westford Regency Hotel on June 7 and 8, 2019. Titled 100 Years: Looking Back, Moving Forward, the Convention highlighted the twin centennials of the passage of the 19th Amendment and the founding of the United States and Massachusetts Leagues of Women Voters. All members of our chapter were eligible to claim one of the six voting seats allotted to our chapter; other members could have attended as observers. Our chapter offered to pay the entry fee of the six voting members of our delegation. Four members claimed the opportunity. Here are some of highlights that the rest of you missed:



1. An electrifying keynote speech by Bill McKibben, internationally-noted environmental activist, author and Distinguished Scholar in Environmental Studies at Middlebury College. Bill explained the necessity for immediate action to slow damage and prevent further impacts from fossil fuel pollution. Yes, you've heard that message in other venues, but likely not with the mesmerizing detail and alarming visuals that Bill provided. On September 20 of this year, young people around the world will stage a climate strike. Bill urged us all to join in. He emphasized the special role the League can play in combatting climate change given the League's status as a non-partisan voice for reasoned, researched political advocacy. Delegates to the League Convention approved a resolution declaring a "Climate Emergency". All chapters of the Massachusetts League were urged to familiarize their legislators with the reasons cited in the Declaration. You will find the Declaration and related information on the State League's website: WWW.LWVMA.ORG.
2. A compelling featured speech by Virginia Kase, the new CEO of the League of Women Voters U.S., who has the distinction of having been arrested outside the U.S. Capitol protesting the nomination of now-Justice Brett Kavanaugh during her first day in her new League position. Ms. Kase, who is forthright and plain-spoken, has served in several executive positions in the non-profit sector. She emphasized the power of women to effect social change.
3. A very informative featured speech by Dr. Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, Professor of History and of African and African American Studies, as well as Chair of the Department of History at Harvard University. Professor Higginbotham spoke about the role of black American women in the suffragist movement, starting in the mid-nineteenth century. Racism amongst even the most well-known white suffragists has been well-documented but little discussed until the current centennial. At the request of several Leaguers, Professor Braithwaite has agreed to make her speech available to the League. A spirited exchange of views occurred among four freshman female legislators on Beacon Hill about their experiences getting elected and serving their constituents. The new legislators come from different ethnic and economic backgrounds and different parts of our Commonwealth.
4. A thoughtful discussion of protecting the integrity of our elections from the vantage points of experts in three different areas of the process: the design of election technology, the configurations of electoral units and the design of legislation and regulations to protect equal access to the right to vote.

5. The chance to meet, learn from and enjoy the company of Leaguers from all over the Commonwealth, many of whom are engaged in interesting collaborations with community organizations that Falmouth may want to consider.

So, please pay attention to your Bulletin and those e-blasts from Kathy Mortenson calling attention to League news.

OBSERVER CORPS REPORTS

Denise Morreale, Observer Corps Chair

On June 20, 2019 the following members presented their reports: Stephanie Miele- Board of Health, Kerry Walton- Affordable Housing Commission, Maggie Sweasy- Board of Selectmen, Mariam Cronin- Water Quality Management, Meghan Palanza- School Committee and Richard Johnson-Zoning Board of Appeals.

An Observer for the League of Women Voters of Falmouth attends public Town Governmental meetings, makes notes on what happens and reports to the League. The Observer is there only to Observe compliance, not to speak to the issues or answer questions on adherence to the Open Meeting Law. The reports were very thorough and well received by the audience.



Natural Brush Clearing and Poison Ivy Control

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

After the presentations and question and answer period, the attendees heard from Judith Fenwick, Town Meeting Rules & Procedures Committee and Charter Review Committee, informing us about the new Handbook for Town of Falmouth members of Boards and Committees.

Our current Corps members have dwindled slightly. Jennifer Alai is now a member of the Library Board of Trustees, Aileen Jensen has left her post of Planning Board Observer and Laura Brothers has left the Substance Abuse Commission. There are many opportunities to become involved with the Observer Corps. If you are interested, please contact me.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OBSERVER REPORT

The Town of Falmouth has a school committee comprising of 9 volunteers, who must be voted on to the committee during the town election. Each committee member is voted on for a rotating 3 year commitment. The Committee chair and vice chair are also newly elected every year by the committee members. Just recently a new chair and vice chair were elected; William Rider, chair and Kelly Welch, vice chair.

The Falmouth School Committee mission is "to educate students so that they are engaged in their education in a way which develops their capacity to pursue their goals and fosters lifelong learning". The members take this mission to heart, which is apparent in their interactions. In observing the committee, it became obvious that the committee members take their roles seriously. They are engaged and enthused about the work they do. The members are respectful of each and the multiple people who they interact with during the course of their work.

Every meeting is structured the same, with time for open comments from the public, new business and updates from administration. They are usually scheduled every second and last Tuesday of the month, however this may change depending on town meetings or other conflicts.

The Falmouth Public school website contains more up to date reflections of the committee meeting dates. The town website was updated with the agenda and notes of the meetings but the meeting schedule and locations were not updated as frequently on the town website.

This was relevant this year because the school committee and specifically, the new Falmouth School Superintendent moved the meetings to other locations in town in order to make the meetings more accessible to a wider audience. For instance, the committee meetings met in the elementary schools as well as the regular meeting location of the school administration building.

Each meeting also receives an update from the following individuals; School Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Technology, Director of Human Resources, Director of Finance and Operations, Director of Student Services, Director of Curriculum K-6. Each director provides a short update on recent events, conferences they attended, curriculum, or staff updates.

The committee is kept abreast of most, if not all, initiatives within every school in Falmouth. Examples include but are not limited to; elementary success goals from the individual principals, No Guff week activities, senior projects and a new guide dog that attends Morse Pond with his new owner, the guidance counselor.

The topics that are addressed are vast. The committee discusses such topics as; School Choice, addressing chronic absenteeism, and offering school handbooks as well as other documentation for non-native English speakers. This year the committee is also undertaking the decision if advertisements should be allowed on the new fence that will surround the FHS new football field. What initially may seem like a simple approval decision becomes a well discussed and thoughtful conversation as concerns are addressed and debated.

The school committee is also responsible for approving various monetary costs and activities for the schools. For example; band and chorus trips, student foreign exchange programs, and provide an update on the new field that is going in at FHS, which was a significant item from last year's committee. They also discuss financial donations made to the schools.

This was the first year for the new Falmouth Superintendent, Dr. Lori Duerr, who immediately went on a 'listening and learning tour' throughout town. That was also the premise of moving the committee meetings to other locations outside of the school administration building. Dr. Duerr also created a student 'committee' that she met with regularly that comprised of student representatives from 1-12 grade. She wanted their input on matters facing the schools. She is also in attendance in many of the school related activities, for example, the Science Fair, and All Bands Night.

The committee is currently undergoing the very thoughtful process of updating each of the school's policies which appears to be a significant undertaking, updating wording as well as reviewing appropriateness and modernizing.—Submitted by Meghan Palanza

BOARD OF HEALTH OBSERVER REPORT

One of the regular items of business continues to be the granting of variances for septic upgrades. Installation of alternative technology systems is becoming more frequent and that leads to the problem of non-compliance where the required schedule of inspections is not maintained. The Health Department must follow up on this. Some people come before the Board requesting relief from the number of inspections required. These requests can be granted if the system runs in accordance with the Board's monitoring systems compliance requirements and has had 8 consecutive inspections with favorable results. The Board can allow a reduction to one inspection per year as long as the nitrogen reading is in compliance. If not, the number of inspections must revert to the number in the original contract. The Board has spent a great deal of time this year in refining and clarifying the language for compliance so that it will be consistent and fair to both year-round and vacation residences. It is also important to educate a homebuyer who purchases a home where an I/A system is already installed, as the new owner is responsible for maintaining the system. An open hearing was held on June 3rd so that the Board could address questions from the public. On June 17 the revisions were presented and finalized.

Last year a great deal of time was spent discussing swimming pool safety after a drowning incident at a public pool. There were many open hearings with representatives from different pools around town. Guidelines were set but some questions remained. Scott McGann reported that the Sea Crest has a wristband system to prevent unauthorized access. However, bystanders found an unresponsive child in the pool. An adult, not the child's parent, was responsible for supervision of the child. The float line separating the deep and shallow ends of the pool was not attached at the time but, other than this, no safety violations occurred. The Falmouth Health Department did an inspection the next day and the pool reopened. The Board of Health suggested adding a cautionary note on the web site about supervision of children. The Chamber of Commerce could do this as well. Representative Mary Doyle appeared with a variance request from Great Harbors. Great Harbors Association has concerns over the requirement for having adult supervision in addition to lifeguards at their pool. Mary Doyle who represented the association stated that the group feels that they have enough supervision under their current association rules that state that children who have been swim tested are allowed at the pool without an adult but in the presence of lifeguards. The association feels that there should be separate rules for lifeguard vs. non-life guarded pools. They want to allow 12-15 year old swim-tested children to be unaccompanied as was the association's previous procedure. A discussion determined that Great Harbors has established a responsible safety program.

The issue before the Board this year that garnered the most publicity was the proposed needle exchange. On July 30 Karen Riconda from the AIDS Support Group of Cape Cod gave a presentation to the Board on free services that her group hoped to deliver to the Town of Falmouth including services for prevention and treatment of drug related illnesses, testing, syringe access and retrieval, overdose services, and prevention education. She presented statistics about the increase in HIV among drug users and overdose deaths. The group needed Board approval to obtain state funding. The Board was enthusiastic about this as it is supported in the mission statement and wrote a letter in support of the project. The question of a site was discussed and Ms. Riconda stated that the group would be working with the town to find a suitable site. A site was selected in East Falmouth that apparently was not acceptable to the neighbors. This was the beginning of a great public outcry. A complaint was lodged against the Board and Scott McGann for breaking the open meeting law by not placing the address of the site on the agenda. On December 17, a large group of angry neighbors came to present its concerns during the open statement time at the beginning of the meeting as well as one EMT who spoke in favor. The Board was very precise in explaining why it could not enter into discussion or debate of non-agenda items but promised that concerns would be addressed. On January 12 a meeting was held at Falmouth High School for the purpose of

listening to citizen concerns and taking questions. Excerpts from previously submitted letters were read. The board emphasized that it has no control over the site. The questions were read and discussed at the following Board of Health meeting. There was also a group of citizens present at this meeting with more questions and comments. Many people hoped that the Board would rescind the letter of support but this did not happen. Representative David Viera recommended suspending the letter in order to discuss a new location with the state. Eventually the Aids Support Group decided that the East Falmouth location would not be safe for their clients and decided to look for another location.

The health department is in the process of reviewing codes and fees for rental units and the necessity of having the personnel to do inspections to be certain that units are meeting the code requirements. June is a busy time in dealing with renters' complaints as many of them do not wish to leave their winter rentals. It takes 20-40 hours of labor for 1 housing complaint as these complaints require site visits, court appearances, and paperwork. In June there might be 3 calls for housing complaints in 1 day whereas in January there might be 3 calls in a month.

Laura Kelley from Protect Our Cape Cod Aquifer (POCCA) requested that the Board write a letter asking for the Town of Falmouth to cease using Glyphosate (a.k.a. Round-up) and other chemicals on Town owned land. As there has been increasing evidence that Glyphosate can cause non-Hodgkins lymphoma, the Board decided to introduce a moratorium on the use of Glyphosate effective immediately and to remain in effect until March 31, 2020. The moratorium on Glyphosate may be lifted at an earlier date if the Board of Health concludes that the benefits of Glyphosate to the Town outweigh the risks. During the period of the moratorium, the Board of Health will conduct a broad examination of pesticide use by the Town to evaluate risks and explore adopting safer alternatives to those pesticides in current use. The Board of Health requests that interested stakeholders participate in a working group to ensure a broad representation of views. Variances from the moratorium for specific uses of Glyphosate will be considered on a case- by-case basis by the Board of Health. The Board then addressed whether and how to formulate a letter to the state regarding the EverSource plan to use 9 herbicides including Glyphosate on land in Falmouth. Having passed the moratorium, the Board of Health thought that it had a stronger position from which to recommend selective pruning instead of Glyphosate use to manage vegetation.

There have been three applications in Falmouth for a body art establishment since regulations were drafted based on input from state protocols. There are two areas for licensure: the physical facility and the practitioner. The Board is quite stringent on these requirements.

Food establishment inspection continues to be a priority. Food establishments will now have less time to correct problems. A violation must be corrected within 21 days. If a second inspection determines that the problem has not been corrected, closure policy will take place.

There was recently a sting operation regarding tobacco products, including e-cigarettes. Approximately 4 establishments were fined for selling to minors. The problem seems to be with the display of the products, making them too accessible.

Last year the Board created a list of goals for discussion and action. They continue to work on these goals determining which goals have been achieved and which still need attention.--
Submitted by Stephanie Miele

WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT OBSERVER REPORT

Overview

The Water Quality Management Committee (WQMC) is tasked with improving water quality in Falmouth's estuaries, primarily by removing nitrogen. The Committee focuses on addressing the most polluted south facing estuaries first, avoiding tax increases, and identifying technological alternatives that will minimize the need to deploy sewers town wide. The committee is using adaptive management: test, implement, test, react.

They are preparing a required update to the comprehensive wastewater management plan (CWMP) for the south facing estuaries which will summarize the results of their research to date and recommend the next big project for 2025: sewerage a portion of Great Pond. This project will require an additional discharge site: decision about the site has to be made by 2021. It is a big decision: alternatives identified to date are likely to use the full \$60MM available in the 2021 capital plan for waste water treatment. Selectmen need to approve the plan by September to meet the December 31, 2019 deadline of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA).

They are also developing a draft comprehensive waste water management plan for Oyster Pond. This plan will probably be IA (innovative alternative Septic) focused.

The Team

The Committee has 7 members appointed by the selectmen. It is a stable, hardworking team of knowledgeable members. Eric Turkington is Chairman, Virginia Valiela is Vice-Chair. The meetings are well managed. Members have high quality discussions. Selectman Doug Brown attends many meetings. Town employees are frequently in attendance when the agenda covers their area or responsibility (shellfish, sewer plant, and storm water). The Committee has a paid consulting firm, Science Wares, which provides technical and administrative support. The Committee also makes heavy use of paid consultants to monitor water quality or prepare technical reports. Most meetings are televised and can be watched on FCTV on demand. Although the general public is not usually in attendance, representatives of homeowners associations or interested environmental groups attend periodically. The press, particularly the *Falmouth Enterprise*, frequently publishes articles about the proceedings. The committee members are hardworking, highly committed to achieving their objectives. Appointment to this committee requires many hours of work outside the formal committee meeting. They are members of working groups for this and other committees in town impacted by their initiatives, accept cross appointments to other committees (Shellfish Advisory Committee), use their credentials as scientists to help secure research funding that benefits town, sponsor warrants for town meeting.

Open Meeting Law compliance appears top of mind

Meetings are properly noticed. There was a challenge regarding accuracy of agendas that was decided in the committees favor by town counsel. Minutes are reviewed promptly and added to the town website after approval but not monthly. Recently minutes have been enhanced to include a list materials of presented at the meeting. Members show an awareness of their communication restrictions, correct each other if lapses seem imminent.

Compliance with MA section 30 B

Section 30B compliance is becoming more top of mind as more high value, multi-year contracts are on the docket. Members are aware that they have the responsibility to comply and have sought guidance, including from the Town counsel, when questions arose.

In summary, this is a hardworking, well run committee which uses strong management and scientific skills to find economically feasible solutions to removing nitrogen from our estuaries.

--Submitted by Mariam Cronin

NOTE: Water Quality Management announced that meetings would no longer be able to be televised due to the death of a cameraman. This committee had a viewership and the citizens, including some League members, may want to be made aware of the situation



League of Women Voters
P. O. Box 450
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Summer 2019 Bulletin

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