



League of Women Voters[®] of Falmouth Bulletin

October 2023

Steering Committee Report

Town Meeting is coming up next month, always an interesting time for the League and its members. If you have been following *The Falmouth Enterprise*, you'll know that Article 6 on the Warrant asks Town Meeting to fund the design and permitting of a sewer system extension to more of the shore of Great Pond, and to expand the Wastewater Treatment Plant accordingly. Town Meeting declined to fund this in the spring. Since that vote, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has revised the Title 5 Septic laws for Cape Cod. DEP now requires the Town to file watershed permits for each nitrogen-sensitive watershed in town, describing the methods with which water quality will be improved over the life of the permit. The Select Board has accepted this challenge, as the alternative would require homeowners to replace every Title 5 system with an Innovative Alternative septic system within 5 years.

Sewering is a sensible approach in the densely developed areas along the south shore coastal ponds, but the permits for less densely developed areas are likely to include Innovative Alternative septic systems and Urine Diversion systems to reduce the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus leaching into our groundwater and ponds. Article 13 on the Warrant would authorize the Urine Diversion pilot project, but DEP has already urged the town to apply to them for provisional acceptance of urine diverting toilets as an Innovative/Alternative technology, to streamline the process.

What would an Innovative/Alternative septic system mean for you? Technology is advancing rapidly through proprietary system development and non-proprietary systems. Many of these are being tested at the Alternative Septic System Test Center. The

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Director of the Test Center, Brian Baumgaertel, will speak on this topic on Thursday, October 12, at 7 p.m. at the Hermann Foundation Room in the main branch of the Falmouth Public Library. Please come with your questions and concerns. The presentation is sponsored by the LWVF Natural Resources Committee.

—Richard Johnson
Natural Resources

Save the Date
Screening of *Just Mercy*
Discussion to follow
Hermann Room
Falmouth Public Library
November 9, 6 p.m.

Membership Report

Membership Update

Please join me in welcoming new members: Helen Bresnahan, Colleen Cunningham, and Robert Vander Pyl!

We would also like to thank several of our recent past members who have moved out of the area or are no longer members. We are very grateful for their time and service to the League and the Falmouth community: Avis and Marvin Grosselin, Joyce Johnson, Thelma Fenster, and Marilyn Zacks.

We are nearing the end of our renewal drive! To date, 118 members have renewed (96 primary members, 22 additional household members). In addition to our four lifetime members, 13 new members, and about nine members from last year who have not responded regarding renewals, our current membership is now 135 members. Final reminders have been sent out, however, past members can re-renew online or by sending in a check; see details on our League website.

The Committee's efforts will now be focused on updating the Membership Directory, distributing it to members, and recruiting new members. An eblast will be sent when the new directory is ready.

Speaking of new members — Do you know of anyone you think may make great new LWVF members? Please consider talking to them about the League and directing them to materials on the website, or put them in touch with me and I will speak with them about joining. In particular, if you know of any students interested in joining the League, let them know that Student Membership is free, whether enrolled part of full-time.

As an extra incentive, any student who signs up before October 31st will qualify to enter a drawing for \$100 Stub Hub gift card. They can fill out the form on this site https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSezn7rCKvcVs8KL_WWo2XnYu6791qu5z-Z4OzE_chUwpAFiDA/viewform, or I can email the form to the student.

Growing our membership and increasing the diversity of our membership is important for the future of our League!

Please reach out with any membership-related questions (mistyniemeyer13@gmail.com).

— Misty Niemeyer
Membership Chair

Meet Our New Member, Helen Bresnahan

Helen answered a number of questions from the membership committee as follows:

Why are you joining the LWVF? Inspiration and motivation to join LWV Falmouth came about when I realized that I wanted to be with women who can speak about present day policies that affect all women.

The topics that are most important to me: the effects of national policies on women including abortion, gender bias, and the care of our older generation.

My career was as an elementary school teacher for 25 years.

Community interests include creating a new library in the Town of Bourne, climate change, and recycling.

Books, music, film? I am presently reading *The Wager* by David Grann, author of *Killers of the Flower Moon*. *The Wager* interests me because my father was in the Merchant Marines and saw much of the seas and oceans sailed in the book. Music of Jazz Greats interests me because it is very creative. *Oppenheimer* was a fine biographical film and provoked a different appreciation of the person and physicist.

Continued on Page 5

Voter Service

At a recent meeting of the Voter Service Committee, we decided the Committee would consider maintaining an Instagram account for LWVF. Also under consideration is sponsoring a poster-making activity for students with a “Get Out The Vote” theme. Posters would be publicly displayed with QR Codes leading to vote411.org.

The next meeting of the Voter Service Committee will be Tuesday, Oct. 17, at 2 p.m. In November a special meeting will have a speaker who is an expert on voting machines. We welcome new friends!

Get Out The Vote Postcard Writing Event!

Come enjoy coffee, tea, and donuts on Tuesday, Oct. 17, from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m., while socializing and meeting new friends. We will write postcards to Virginia registered voters reminding them to vote in the Nov. 7 election. This is a non-partisan “get out the vote action.” RSVP to WeGOTV.ma@gmail.com for addresses. We provide all the materials and instructions for the postcards.

— **Felicia Bordick**
Chair, Voter Service

Reminder: Offshore Wind Webinars

Massachusetts and other New England states are planning on offshore wind as a major factor in meeting renewable energy generation and emissions reduction goals as we transition off fossil fuels. Learn about the value of critical offshore wind projects and threats to their timely deployment. Each session has a separate Zoom registration. See full descriptions and registration links for each session on the [LWVMA website](https://www.lwvma.org). This series is co-hosted by LWVMA and New England for Offshore Wind (NE4OSW).

What's Up with Offshore Wind? Current Status - Future Plans - Getting It Done

Webinar II, Nov. 16: Opportunities and Obstacles: Costs and Benefits of Offshore Wind

Webinar III, Jan. 18: Conflicts and Solutions: Overcoming Offshore Wind Opposition

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

The first Domestic Violence Awareness Month was observed in October 1987, the year of the first national domestic violence toll-free hotline. In 1989 the U.S. Congress passed Public Law 101-112 designating October of that year as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. By that time, LWVMA had been in the fight for more than 15 years.

This session, the League is supporting two game changing bills H1547/S1077 and H1399/1079 (Coercive Control and Abusive Litigation). There is another bill related to domestic violence prevention that the League is supporting:

[H249/S146 An Act to mandate domestic violence and sexual assault awareness education for aestheticians, barbers, cosmetologists, electrologists, hair-dressers, manicurists, and massage therapists](#)

[A salon was a] uniquely public/private space..a space for otherwise private grooming—and private conversations...[Salons were] places that women “get their hair done and let their hair down.” The salon was coded as a place for conversations to take place.

—from “A Short History of Hairdryers” by Katrina Gulliver

Abusers monitor and isolate their victims to maintain control. Salons are one place where victims are not isolated and can disclose abuse. This bill would help salon employees recognize and respond to abuse disclosures.

Celebrate Domestic Violence Awareness Month! Contact your state senator and representative, make them aware of these bills. Ask the Judiciary Committee and Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure to report these bills out quickly and favorably.

[Courtesy of Palma McLaughlin, LAC-Children and Family Issues]

Remembering Alice Carey

I met Alice through the League of Women Voters in 2016. I had moved to full-time residence in Falmouth and was joining various groups, casting around to become settled in a new community. I'd never been to a League event, but I believed in the League's mission, and I thought I would find like-minded women in the League.

And so I met Alice. What a gift! Alice was everywhere in the League. Co-chair of the Steering Committee, enthusiastic volunteer for every endeavor: local study projects (plural), the Centennial Committee, civics programs in the schools, annual meeting planning, national consensus studies, voter registration drives, Field Service meetings. Where ever a League volunteer was needed, Alice was there. The list would go on, but I was about 20 years late to her party at the League and only know what I saw and what she told me.

Personally, I vaguely remember her at an initial meet-and-greet, some general meetings, but then, with her encouragement, I joined the Voter Service Committee which she was then chairing. I was quickly impressed...and a bit awed...by the energetic discussions, creative planning and clear dedication of that group. (Many of the members are still here today).

And then a few committee meetings in, Alice asked me to have coffee to talk about "my interests." I arrived at Coffee Obsession to find Alice had secured a large coffee table and was pulling out of her weathered League tote bag an array of notebooks, binders, and folders. I can still see her innocent smile and steely twinkle. You all knew her and you can picture her too. No doubt you can predict what happened. I was "Alice-charmed" into chairing the committee when I barely knew what this committee did! Every reservation I presented was dismissed with Alice's cheerful "no-problem, can-do" attitude.

"You don't like to speak before groups? Someone else will fill in."

"Time commitment? Why, joining the Board means only one more meeting a month."

"It's a great Committee and they'll all step up. And I'll stay on the Committee and guide you through."

And she did.

Every organization has its core of "do-ers" and Alice was certainly that for the Falmouth League. She was equally committed to her own liberal values and to the League's non-partisan principles. She was always ready to jump in and forge ahead. And when she couldn't participate herself, she provided full-hearted, cheer-leading to whoever was.

And that was the thing about Alice...her positive attitude, her belief that things would work out if you stayed away from the negative. She lived that and I am grateful for her example.

I was fortunate to have maintained a friendship with Alice even after we both left Voter Service. It was a treat to visit her "house in the woods," to share fish chowder from Crabapples as we watched wind surfers at Old Silver Beach, and to go for Cranberry Bog ice cream at Somerset. I will treasure the conversations—her reflections on life, on the joyous beauty in the world, on the principles that make life meaningful.

—Carol McKeon



Alice Carey (left) and Judy Stetson work to encourage potential voters to register.

Legislative Committee

The Legislative Committee is in transition. Our membership is changing and the legislative issues we hope to address are expanding. So we are getting set for an exciting and, I hope, a productive 2023-24 legislative season.

First, membership. We were saddened that Mary Tamucci decided to concentrate on other pursuits. She has been a valued member of our group, and we will miss her. Fortunately, though, we have two valued remaining members, Margaret Cooper, who is my experienced predecessor and mentor, and Kerry Walton, who lends a scientist's eye to our pursuits. We are excited to announce that four new members have joined the committee: Bob Mascali, Annie Holden, Moira Powers, and recent Meet and Greet attendee Colleen Cunningham. With this expanded group, we should be able to give bills introduced in the new legislative session the attention that they deserve.

Now on to issues. We have some holdovers. We will continue working for Common Start, which deals with early childcare and education. Affordable housing and gun control also continue as priorities. Because of interests within the Falmouth League, we are watching over a bill to require hybrid governmental meetings and one to fund regional roadways. We have also decided to work for passage of the death with dignity bill after the LWVMA added this bill to its list of bills it supports. And we are supporting two bills that are somewhat obscure: one to allow candidates to use campaign funds for childcare and another to regulate the use of facial recognition technology.

On a local note, we expect to continue to lobby against the threatened industrial wastewater release at the closed Pilgrim nuclear power plant, and expect to work to enhance monitoring of materials stored there in dry casks. We also will be dealing with a new bill that seeks to bring a commuter rail to Buzzard's Bay and, eventually, to the Cape. Legislation is full of surprises, so we never know what other important new issues will be coming our way.

As you can see, we have an ambitious agenda, but we also have an enlarged team to address it. We welcome your comments and input.

—**Judy Ziss**

Chair

Legislative Committee

New Member Helen Bresnahan, cont.

Biography: I was born nearby in Wareham. At the time there were no maternity hospitals on Cape Cod. When I was a child, my family lived in the villages of Bourne, Centerville, and Monument Beach until 1957. My father's position changed and my family moved to New Jersey. Except for summers, we lived in Parlin, NJ. I attended nursing school and Jersey City State College, acquiring my B.A. and M.A. in Education. Am I "local" to the area? I think so, but except for our Native Americans, I would consider myself a washashore, the *Mayflower* and *Fortune* were very leaky.

Fun things make me happy: My husband Charlie, my 43-year-old son and 9-year-old grandson, family, weddings, birthdays, smiles, flowers, white walls, new cars, and travel.

What drives me: to know at the end of the day, I did all I could do in the time given me. Calming me: waves, silence, watching birds fly, and meditation.

I would like to work in Legislative, Civics, or Membership committees, but not all at once.

Your inspiration? My late mother inspired me because of her ability to move forward. Even though facing walls, she moved forward, often breaking down a wall.

In the next 10 years, I hope to set goals aligned with LWV-Falmouth goals.



THE FALMOUTH POND COALITION

Presents

Freshwater Pond Health: Challenges & Solutions

Tuesday, October 17, 2023

5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

UU Falmouth Meeting House

840 Sandwich Road, East Falmouth, MA 02536

Space is limited. Register at www.falmouthpondcoalition.org

<i>Implications of Freshwater Pond health for:</i>	<i>Topics to be Presented Include:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Aesthetic benefits▪ Recreational use▪ Property values▪ Pond vegetation and wildlife habitats▪ Health risks and remediation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Making the Case for Freshwater Pond Health <i>Kim Comart, Founder, Falmouth Pond Coalition</i>▪ How to Love Your Pond <i>Kristin Andres, Director of Education and Outreach, Association to Preserve Cape Cod</i>▪ Quality Pond Living Through Better Chemistry <i>Kara Sliwoski, Water Resources Scientist, Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation</i>▪ Wastewater Management Technologies: What are your options? <i>Bryan Horsley, Project Director, Massachusetts Alternative Septic System Test Center</i>▪ Urine Diversion: Another Tool in the Toolbox <i>Arthur Davis, Operations Director, and Julia Cavicchi, Education Director, Rich Earth Institute, Brattleboro, VT</i>

AGENDA

5:30 – 6:30 P.M. Exhibits and Information about Pond Health including various Urine Diversion appliances

6:30 – 8:30 P.M. Panel Presentations and Table Discussions



Meet and Greet



The LWV Falmouth welcomed thirty members and guests to a Meet & Greet at the David Center for Ocean Innovation. The newest building on the WHOI Quissett Campus was the perfect space for us to mingle, snack, and learn about each of the League's committees. Thanks to committee chairs and their delegates for sharing their work — all of us learned something new. Kurt Achin, Membership and Outreach Coordinator from FCTV, was also there to share FVTV's involvement in the community. Special thanks to Sheri, Justin, and Ann who helped secure this space.

Welcome to the LWVF newest members!

— Meghan Hanawalt



A Quote for Today:

"We do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate."

—Thomas Jefferson

Have a favorite quote about elections and voting? Send it to the editors.

Emerging from History's Footnotes: Mildred Harnack

The name Mildred Harnack doesn't come to mind when discussing World War II spies and those active in the German resistance. Nor does her German husband Arvid's identity come to light. And that is exactly how both of them wanted it to be. As the author Rebecca Donner (Mildred's great-great niece) notes in the Introduction to her book *All the Frequent Trouble of Our Days*: "Her aim was self-erasure. The more invisible she was, the better her chances of survival."

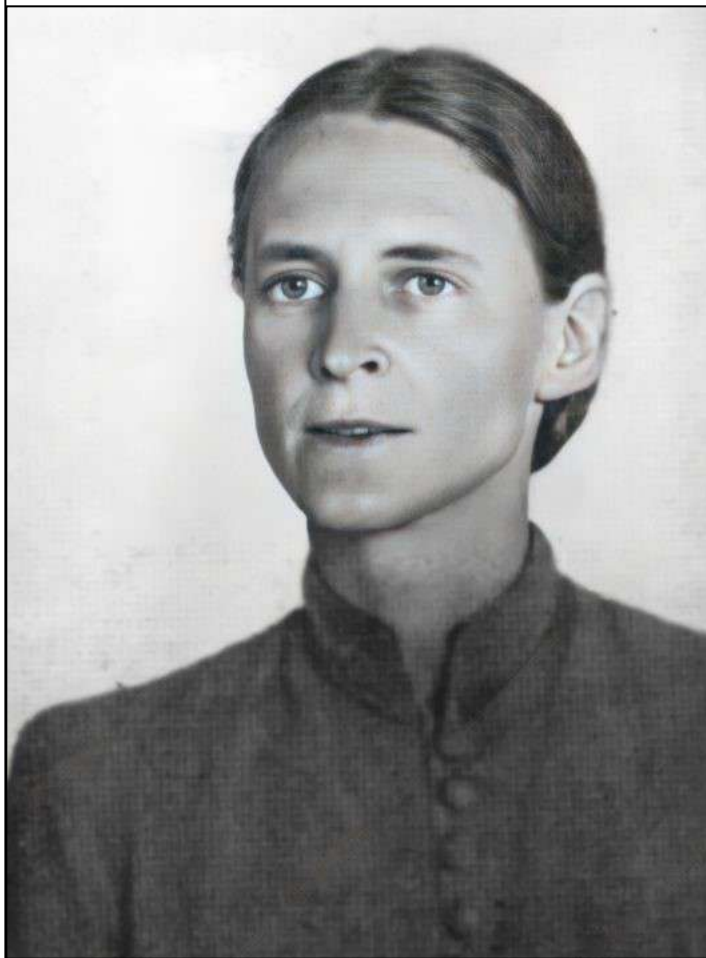
Survival was tenuous for many in Germany as Hitler came into power. Mildred had traveled to Berlin in 1930, enrolled in a doctoral program at the University of Berlin, and was hired by the university to teach an undergraduate course called American Literary History. Mildred presented to her students authors such as Faulkner, Dos Passos, and Dreiser, not the "safe" American authors of the previous century, which the administration assumed she would choose. Her selections most likely were the cause of her contract not being renewed in 1932. As Donner notes, Mildred, as an adolescent, had been inspired by the women's suffrage movement, and always assumed she could speak her mind. Speaking out was becoming dangerous in the Germany of the 1930s.

Shortly after losing her job at the university, Mildred was hired to teach English at the Berlin Night School. This school was different from university, as the students were poorer, primarily working class, and most were unemployed. These students were the impoverished victims of post-World War I Germany — precisely the citizens the Nazi Party was attempting to recruit.

Donner explains that Mildred's class at the Berlin Night School was called simply English. However, she moved beyond grammar and sentence structure to encourage the students to read broadly in areas of philosophy, literature, and political theory. After classes, she began to host meetings in her apartment to discuss social issues; all who

attended agreed these meetings should be kept secret, even though the German resistance had barely begun.

Mildred also began an English club that any student could join. They met in a cafe, and Mildred invited speakers to each gathering. "The focus of this club [was] political, not linguistic," Donner notes. It was from this group of students that Mildred began to recruit members for a resistance movement, what she and Arvid called "a circle of acquaintances." These Circles were small in number and loosely organized, meeting in locations that varied from a member's house to outdoor parks — to maintain a measure of safety. Members often were unaware of each other's names, all to protect them should they be imprisoned, interrogated, and tortured to reveal the identities of those in the Circles.



Emerging from History's Footnotes: Mildred Harnack, cont.

Mildred and Arvid's Circle members debated tactics to halt the Nazi's rise to power. It had become increasingly difficult to persuade Germans to fight back; leaflets, posters, rallies, meetings, and marches had been prohibited. The penalty for joining such activities was prison. By 1935, the Harnacks realized that the Circle was too small and too weak. "The Circle had been fighting fascism with books and leaflets ... A stronger weapon [was] needed, one that [would] penetrate the very core of the Nazi government and destroy it from within," Donner observes.

With this in mind, Arvid took a job with the German Ministry of Economics, where he handled confidential information. He was in daily contact with high-ranking Nazis, with access to their documents. He masqueraded as a fervent Nazi, even to the extent of joining the Nazi party. He was recruited to spy for the Russians, and while in Washington, D.C., on ministry business, he attempted to warn contacts in the Treasury Department about Hitler's plans for war. Arvid also offered to provide information to the State Department regarding Hitler's preparations. All turned a deaf ear to Arvid's warnings.

Mildred continued working with the Circle, producing leaflets and pamphlets antagonistic to the Nazis. She also pledged to assist Jews with visas so they could escape Germany. Her connections at the U.S. embassy in Berlin helped her in this endeavor.

As the Gestapo tightened their net around the Harnacks and others in the German resistance, Arvid and Mildred decided in September 1942 to flee Germany, and escape by boat to Sweden. Before they even boarded the ship, they were arrested in a small village in Nazi-occupied Lithuania and imprisoned in Berlin. After months of torture and interrogation, Arvid and Mildred were brought to trial. Arvid was sentenced to death, Mildred to 6 years hard labor. On December 22,

1942, Arvid was hanged with six other men who were in the resistance. Mildred's sentence was overturned by Hitler; on February 16, 1943, she was beheaded.

Rebecca Donner has meticulously researched this period in German history and Mildred's part in the German resistance. Records were kept after the war by the Army's Counter Intelligence Corps, but were classified secret/restricted, her case was buried; not until 1998, were the records made available. News of Mildred's execution did leak to the press, and Donner quotes a 1947 story that ran in the *New York Times* under the headline "Hitler Beheaded an American Woman as a Personal Reprisal in 1943." The article stated: "With knowledge of the German underground movement, Mildred Harnack stood up courageously under Gestapo torture and revealed nothing." *The Washington Post* a few days later noted that Mildred was "one of the leaders in the underground against the Nazis."

—Mary Fran Buckley



Editor's Note: If you would like to learn more about Mildred Harnack-Fish, a PBS documentary on her life can be found at <https://www.pbs.org/video/wpt-documentaries-wisconsins-nazi-resistance-mildred-fish-harnack-story-GermanCC/>.



Stephanie Miele
Certified Piano Technician

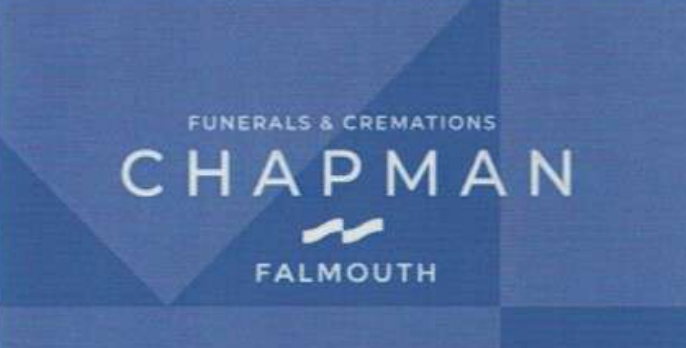
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Letters to the Editor

The Falmouth Enterprise

Letters can be mailed to 50 Depot Avenue,
Falmouth, MA 02540 or e-mailed directly
to the editor at saito@capenews.net.

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Email to letters@capecodonline.com or mail
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Hyannis, MA 02601.

The Boston Globe

Send an e-mail to letter@globe.com or mail
to Letters to the Editor, The Boston Globe,
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LWVF Board of Directors 2023-2024

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*Member of Steering Committee

Meeting and Event Calendar

October 12, 7 p.m.	Presentation by Brian Baumgaerten on A/I Septic Systems and Urine Diversion. Hermann Room, Main Library
October 24, 7 p.m.	Board meeting on Zoom
November 9, 6 p.m.	Film screening and discussion of <i>Just Mercy</i>, Hermann Room, Falmouth Main Library
November 28, 7 p.m.	Board meeting on Zoom

Contact us:

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Website: www.lwvf.org

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 below. Include your name, mailing address, and phone number.

If you prefer, go to our website at www.lwvf.org. Click on "Join" to join or renew and pay online.



Submissions for the November issue of the LWVF Bulletin are due on November 1, 2023. Please send copy, photos, and other material to both of these addresses:

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eileenmattingly@yahoo.com