



League of Women Voters[®] of Falmouth Bulletin

October 2024

Steering Committee Report

Most democracies around the world elect their presidents by the number of total votes cast nationally: one person, one vote.

The United States does not. Instead, our country uses an indirect method called the Electoral College. Each state has electors. The number of electors is the same number as the total number of a state’s senators and representatives in Congress.

Every four years after the November election, each state’s Electors meet at their state Capital to formally cast their ballots. All but two states have a winner-take-all policy, so the Electors cast their votes for the presidential candidate receiving the most votes in their state. Electoral votes in Maine and Nebraska are given out proportionally.

The League of Women Voters believes the Electoral College should be abolished and that it is time to move to a more direct popular election of presidents. The majority of American people agree. They oppose the Electoral College because we have now had five U.S. Presidents elected without winning the popular vote. The last example was Trump in 2016 who lost the popular vote by almost three million votes and yet won the Electoral College by 74 votes.

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One way to abolish the Electoral College is for states to adopt the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact (NPVIC). “Under the NPVIC law, no voter will have their vote cancelled out at the state level because their choice differed from majority sentiment in their state. Instead, every voter’s vote will be added directly into the national count for the candidate of their choice. This will ensure that every voter, in every state, will be politically relevant in every presidential election — regardless of where they live. The agreement would commit electors to vote for the candidate who wins the national popular vote,

Continued on next page

Steering Committee Report, cont.

even if that candidate loses the popular vote within their state. (nationalpopularvote.com)

The NPVIC was introduced in 2006, and as of April 2024 has been adopted by 17 states and the District of Columbia. These jurisdictions have 209 electoral votes, 39% of the Electoral College and 77% of the 270 votes needed to give the compact legal force.

A more permanent solution would be to amend the Constitution itself, a laborious process involving a 2/3 affirmation from the House and Senate and approval from 38 out of 50 states.

More than six in ten Americans (63%) would prefer to see the winner of the presidential election be the person who wins the most votes nationally. Roughly one-third (35%) favor retaining the Electoral College system, according to a Pew Research Center survey of 9,720 adults conducted August 26-September 2, 2024. Either way, most Americans support abolishing the Electoral College before it's clear failures erode public confidence in American Democracy. (pewresearch.org).

**—Sheila Scott-Gordon
Second Vice President**

Editors' Note: The League of Women Voters has launched a campaign, "One Person, One Vote." The following is from their website at <https://www.lwv.org/opov>:

It's no surprise that most American voters want to eliminate the Electoral College. Just as we advocated for a more representative democracy in the early days of the women's suffrage movement, we're doing so now.

We're creating the One Person One Vote campaign to demand that the people's voices be heard."

The One Person One Vote campaign aims to educate, engage, and activate the American people.

...To achieve a new system for electing future presidents by direct popular vote, we must use a multi-pronged approach to:

- *Educate, engage, and activate communities to support a constitutional amendment to abolish the Electoral College;*
- *Inform voters on how the Electoral Count Reform Act (ERCA) will impact the 2024 elections; and*
- *Pass the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact by 2028.]*

In Memoriam

Sallie A. Giffen

May 19, 1940 -

September 18, 2024

Save the Date

Thursday, November 21, 7 p.m.

Gus Canty Center

**Natural Resources Presentation
On Food Waste Composting**

Candidates Night

The Falmouth League of Women Voters, in partnership with FCTV, will host a candidates night at 7 p.m., Wednesday, October 16, in the Falmouth High School Auditorium. Doors will open at 6:30 so the public can meet and greet the candidates.

The candidates who will participate and be offered the opportunity to address the audience answering various pertinent questions as well as sharing their own priorities if elected to office are these candidates:

State Representative Seat, 3rd Barnstable: David Vieira, Incumbent, Republican and Kathy Fox Alfano, Democrat.

State Senate Seat, Plymouth and Barnstable County: Matthew Muratore, Republican, and Dylan Fernandes, Democrat.

U.S. Representative for Massachusetts's 9th Congressional District: William Keating, Incumbent, Democrat and Dan Sullivan, Republican.

Uncontested seat: Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket State Representative Thomas Moakley won in the primary.

If you wish to submit questions to the candidates, please email them to Marcia Easterling at measterling7@comcast.net no later than Sunday, October 13. All questions will be screened by the Voter Service Committee for repetition and fairness, and given to moderator Mindy Todd.

The public is invited to attend this League event in person or to view the program on FCTV Public Channel 6, fctv.org (<http://fctv.org/>), Roku, and Apple TV.

Cape Cod Speakers Series

"BREAKING POINT: STEVEN LEVITSKY ON DEMOCRACY'S STRUGGLE"

Internationally renowned author and political scientist addresses threats to democracy

WEST BARNSTABLE, MA- The Cape Cod Speaker Series, Inc. (ccss) is pleased to announce its second program. On Thursday, October 17, from 7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., at Cape Cod Community College's Tilden Arts Center, Harvard professor and New York Times best-selling author Steven Levitsky, a leading expert on democracy and authoritarianism, will tackle urgent questions of our time: ***Why is democracy faltering here, but not in other wealthy, diverse nations? How can we safeguard it?***

As the United States navigates toward a multiracial democracy, this shift has triggered a backlash threatening the core of our political system. Levitsky will highlight essential challenges facing our country and call for bold political reform.

Levitsky's research focuses on democratization, authoritarianism, political parties, weak and informal institutions, and the crisis of democracy in the United States.

He is co-author (with Daniel Ziblatt) of the award-winning ***How Democracies Die*** and ***Tyranny of the Minority: Why American Democracy Reached the Breaking Point***.

Audience members are invited to ask questions during the event's second half. To purchase tickets, go to [Cape Cod Speaker Series \(capecodspeakers.org\)](http://CapeCodSpeakerSeries.capecodspeakers.org). Discounted tickets are available for students, college and high school faculty, and administration.

Election 2024: The Truth about Election Lies

On Thursday, September 26, the League of Women Voters of Falmouth, in partnership with FCTV, hosted a discussion by that title, featuring Falmouth Town Clerk Michael Palmer and League member Larry Moore, both of whom brought expertise on an aspect of election security.

Mr. Palmer spoke about the voting process in Falmouth and the various safe ways that voters could have their ballots secured and tabulated, including early voting, mail-in ballots, and automatic voter registration. He explained that when someone registers to vote while getting a driver's license, that person must show a U.S. birth certificate, U.S. passport, or a U.S. naturalization



*Town Clerk
Michael Palmer*

certificate, so that no noncitizens are able to vote. He demonstrated the use of "poll pads" to prevent the possibility of double voting. He also explained that voting machines and vote tabulators are carefully tested before the election. He assured the audience that the results would "reflect the will and intent of the voters."

Mr. Moore, the founder and former CEO of the Clear Ballot Group, described how strict government regulations and stringent testing

limit voting and auditing systems to only those systems proven to be accurate. He explained how systems are tested in a heat chamber for a week to be sure they are durable; they even have battery back-ups in case the power goes out at the polling place. He



*Clear Ballot former CEO
Larry Moore*

believes that the greatest dangers to a fair election actually lie in political actions outside the voting booth, including gerrymandering and voter suppression.

The presentation on FCTV can be viewed by checking times on the website at <https://fctv.org/watch/public-schedule/> or by watching YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ONarop9WTL4>.

Many members of the League of Women Voters of Falmouth were instrumental in presenting this program. Janet Lauer and the Board wish to extend special thanks to Barbara Kanellopoulos for coordinating the speakers; to Bruce Woodin, Janice Rook, Nancy Copley, Gayle Simundza, and Richard Johnson who facilitated the presentation that evening; and to Mary Fran Buckley and Eileen Mattingly for publicity.

DEIB Report: LWVMA Offers a Consensus on Reparations

At its 2023 convention, the LWVMA made a commitment to study reparations for Black Americans. Twelve members of the League from across the state, including LWVF member Meghan Hanawalt, spent much of the past year studying reviews and documents around the issue. Their study, complete with many footnotes, is at <https://lwvma.org/lwvma-reparations-study/>.

The next step in trying to figure out what LWV members want, is to hold local consensus meetings. These meetings are not to vote, but to try to decide what part of the room believes in a particular proposal. One person in the room can't block a proposal; by the end of the meeting the group has to decide Yes, No, or No consensus — it's not an individual question. There are several questions around four key issues: Why are reparations needed? Who should receive reparations? What reparations should be provided? How should reparations be provided? The last question at the meeting will be: Should we support reparations?

The individual League chapters need to have their consensus documents in to the Massachusetts board in mid-February to have documents ready for a vote at the annual convention. To meet this deadline, our consensus has to go to our board meeting the last week in January.

The full questions document will not be available until early December. Wanting to avoid a member meeting during the holiday season, the DEIB committee will be holding a consensus event in January. The committee will be sending an email to all LWVF mem-

bers asking if they would like to be part of the meeting.

As part of the study process, the Reparations Study Committee is offering a series of group discussions on Zoom throughout the fall of 2024, facilitated by Debra Dagwan and Jeffrey Gold, centered on Ta-Nehisi Coates' foundational essay, "The Case for Reparations" at <https://lwvma.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/THE-CASE-FOR-REPARATIONS.pdf>.

To sign up for these group discussions, go to the Web page in the first paragraph above and scroll down to "Reparations Study Committee Event and Google Group." Events are scheduled for October 17, November 21, and December 12; each event is a one-and-done.

If anyone wants to be involved in developing the event, please contact me at dongibbons49@yahoo.com.

—**Don Gibbons**
DEIB Chair

Some readings on Reparations

<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/why-we-need-reparations-for-black-americans/>

<https://www.sir.advancedleadership.harvard.edu/articles/historical-context-and-an-urgent-call-to-action-for-african-american-reparations>

<https://slaveryandjusticereport.brown.edu/sections/confronting-slaverys-legacy-the-reparations-question/>

Poll Monitors Needed

Important Note: If you wish to be a poll monitor during this election, please let Town Clerk Michael Palmer know. You may reach him by phone at [508-495-7360](tel:508-495-7360) or by email at michael.palmer@falmouthma.gov. Please identify yourself as a member of the League of Women Voters of Falmouth.



Help Make November 5 a Secure Election

In this crucial election year, our democracy needs us more than ever, and you can help the November 5 election run safely, smoothly, and securely. Between now and Election Day, we are doubling down on our work to ensure that all eligible Massachusetts voters have access to the ballot. One way we are doing this is by building a team of volunteers to monitor polling places.

With our partners in the Election Protection Coalition, we are recruiting and training non-partisan poll monitors who will be sent out to high-priority polling locations across Massachusetts on Tuesday, November 5. We want to recruit at least 50 League volunteers (including spouses and friends).

Will you [sign up](#) to be a poll monitor with LWVMA?

Poll monitors will help ensure access to the ballot for all eligible voters who wish to participate, assist voters who encounter challenges, and report any complications to our Election Protection Command Center in real time. We are working on building a team of hundreds of volunteers and we need your help!

The job is one three-hour shift on Election Day, at one polling location. You will be able to choose both the shift time and the polling location that works for you. Volunteers do not need any special qualifications, though if you are fluent in a non-English language, you are especially needed. Volunteers will have to complete a mandatory training session that details what to look for and how to react. Both in-person and virtual training sessions will be available starting in late summer and early fall.

More information is available at [Protect the Vote](#).

Can you help? If so, please sign up at the [LWVMA Protect the Vote link](#). Signing up now is not a firm commitment but will put you on the list for additional information about training programs and, later on, the polling places and shifts to be covered.

Let's prove the League can turn out more than 50 volunteers to make sure the November election is open to all.

This email was sent to all members.

Falmouth's First Indigenous People's Day Celebration

Falmouth community members will honor Indigenous Peoples with a program of stories and spoken word on October 14, at 11:30 a.m. at Peg Noon Park, next to the Falmouth Public Library. The event will take place rain or shine. (Bring a chair.)

The Indigenous Peoples Day event will include a Proclamation, Land Acknowledgment Statement, spoken word, a display of indigenous art, and historical and personal accounts. A closing friendship circle will conclude the celebration. A group of Falmouth residents and representatives of local endorsing organizations have planned this first, annual celebration of First Nations people with the theme—***We Are Still Here: Honoring Falmouth's Indigenous First Nations People.***

In 2021, Falmouth Town Meeting voted to change the name of the holiday celebrated on the 2nd Monday in October to Indigenous Peoples Day, recognizing that the time had come to recognize the First Nations people who occupied our region for more than 12,000 years, and whose presence was evident in Falmouth's village names, place names, historical records, accounts, and the presence of three vibrant indigenous Wampanoag Nations on the Upper Cape and Martha's Vineyard: the Mashpee Wampanoag, Herring Pond Wampanoag, and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah).

Sandra Faiman-Silva, chairperson of the Coordinating Committee, hopes that this will become an annual event. "Indigenous Peoples Day celebrates and honors the Indigenous peoples of the Americas and commem-

orates their shared history and culture. It began as a counter-celebration to honor indigenous peoples in the Americas who were nearly exterminated in the post-contact European conquest." Indigenous artist and poet Ocean Eversley will read her original poem, "Reasons to Be a Living Gift." Her uplifting poem will begin the event and invites the community to "abide by the wisdom of Indigenous elders who teach the significance of the Four Directions: Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, and Responsibility."

Organizational supporters of Falmouth's First Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration include: Calliope Poetry for Community; Cape Cod PRIDE; Coalition for Social Justice; Falmouth Art Center; Falmouth's Juneteenth Celebration Committee; L.I.N.K. Cape Cod (Linking Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Knowledge); No Place for Hate Falmouth; Ocean Eversley Art; Saint Barnabas Episcopal Church of Falmouth; Waquoit Congregational Church; and the League of Women Voters of Falmouth.

For further information, see the poster on the next page, or email Sandra Faiman-Silva at sfaiman@aol.com.



October 14
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Peg Noonan Park,
Main Street
Falmouth

FALMOUTH PROUDLY CELEBRATES THE 1ST



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

"We Are Still Here"

← **MONDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2024** →
11:30AM

**PEG NOONAN PARK
MAIN STREET, FALMOUTH, MA**

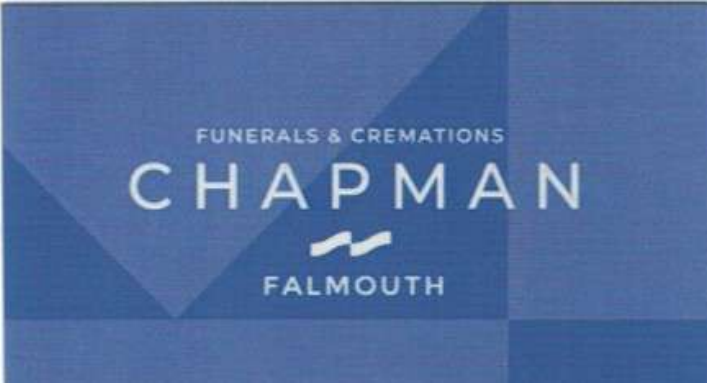
Rain or Shine

**ALL ARE INVITED TO
GATHER & RECOGNIZE
ALL INDIGENOUS PEOPLE**

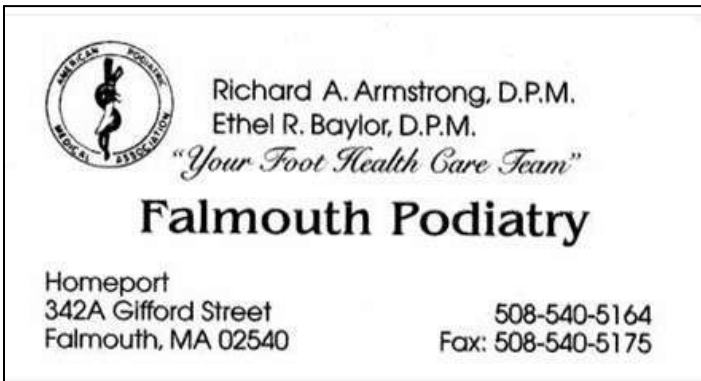
ENDORSERS: Calliope Poetry ~ Cape Cod PRIDE ~ Coalition for Social Justice ~ Falmouth Art Center ~ Falmouth Juneteenth Celebration Committee ~ L.I.N.K. Cape Cod (Linking Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Knowledge) ~ No Place for Hate Falmouth ~ St. Barnabas Episcopal Church of Falmouth ~ Waquoit Congregational Church ~ Ocean Eversley Art ~ League of Women Voters Falmouth




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2024 Friends of the LWVF
 Maria Moniz
 Robert and Barbara Schneider

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 2024-25

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Nominating Committee

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*Member of Steering Committee

**Shared Chairmanship by Richard Johnson*, Kathy Mortenson, Denise Morreale, John Carroll, Sally Palmer. Richard Johnson is Board Representative.

Submissions for the November issue of the LWVF Bulletin are due on November 5, 2024. Please send copy, photos, and other material to both of these addresses:

maryfran55@earthlink.net
eileenmattingly@yahoo.com

Meeting and Event Calendar

October 14, 11:30 a.m., Peg Noonan Park, Falmouth	Indigenous People's Day Celebration
October 16, 7 p.m., Falmouth High School Auditorium	Candidates Night
October 17, 7:30-9:00 p.m., Tilden Arts Center, CCCC	Steven Levitsky on Democracy's Struggles
October 22, 7 p.m.	Board meeting

Contact us:

Address: 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 \$65 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 League of Women voters 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/massachusetts/falmouth>. Just click on "Join" and pay online.

