THE CAPE COD VOTER
VOLUME 57  ISSUE 1            SEPTEMBER 2016

CALENDAR

Tuesday September 6
9:30am
Board Meeting
Cape Cod Five, Dennis Branch

Thursday, September 8
Polls open from 7am to 8pm
Massachusetts PRIMARY
VOTE -- Your vote is critical!

Thursday, September 15
5:00 - 7:30pm
Opening Membership Meeting with
speaker Sen. Dan Wolf
Lorusso Building Solarium, CCCC

Sunday, September 25
3:00pm
Jimmy Tingle Live!
Tilden Auditorium CCCC
Benefit Civic Education Grant Fund

LOOKING AHEAD

Tuesday, October 4
9:30am
Board Meeting
Cape Cod Five, Dennis Branch

Saturday October 15
9:30 - noon
Candidates Forum
Tilden Auditorium CCCC

Saturday October 22
10am - 2pm
Charter School Consensus Mtg
TBA

Monday, October 24
Early voting begins. Through Nov. 4

www.lwvcapecod.org
IMPORTANT MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Special guest speaker Senator Dan Wolf

Thursday, September 15
5:00 - 7:30 PM
Cape Cod Community College
Lorusso Building - Solarium on the Top Floor
Park in Lot 10 or 11

Appetizers/Light dinner buffet

From Karen Mazza, Youth Service Chair

Our opening meeting will focus on the topic of charter schools, which is the subject of an upcoming LWVMA study in which local leagues will be asked to participate. The expansion of charter schools is also the subject of a hotly contested ballot question for the November election. Past LWVCCA President Karen Mazza served this year on the LWVMA Charter School Study Committee preparing materials for the study. Karen is a retired Assistant Superintendent of Schools and led the process of education reform for 15 years in the Chelmsford public schools. She will introduce the evening’s topic, give members a preview of the issues that will be presented in the study and provide some foundational understanding of the issues prior to Senator Wolf’s address.

Senator Wolf served on a committee of four State Senators who drafted the Rise Bill this past legislative session, which was hoped to be a compromise bill that would satisfy both advocates and critics of charter schools. Sadly, it did not garner support from either group -- and the House chose not to collaborate on a joint bill. Senator Wolf will speak about what he and his co-authors were trying to achieve, what the crucial issues are that need resolution and why it is so difficult to find a workable compromise. Having worked to address the concerns of both charter advocates and charter critics, he understands the points of view expressed by each group.

Please join us for this important informational meeting. It will help you prepare for the charter study we’ll do in October and understand the issues involved in the November ballot question.

REGISTER BY SEPTEMBER 9
so we can plan for food and seating

Register by e-mail with Amy Harris at amyharrisjge@gmail.com.
Save the date! Sunday, September 25, 3pm
JIMMY TINGLE TO RAISE FUNDS ~ AND LAUGHS ~ FOR CIVIC EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

From Karen Mazza

LWVCCA is pleased to be hosting an afternoon with comedian Jimmy Tingle to benefit the League’s program of mini-grants to support civic education at the middle and high school levels.

“Jimmy Tingle for President” will be held at the Tilden Arts Center Auditorium at CCCC on Sunday, September 25 at 3pm. Tickets are $45. (Student tickets $5 with student ID.) Tickets may be purchased online at lwvcapecod.org and will also be available at the door. If you prefer to pay by check payable to LWVCCA, please send to Ira Seldin, 321 Deer Meadow Lane, Chatham 02633. We’d really like to have a great advance sale ~ so please spread the word and sign up early if possible. Please also distribute the flyer in this VOTER to friends and networks of which you are a part.

Jimmy Tingle--comedian, commentator, activist and entrepreneur, has worked as a humorist and commentator for “60 Minutes II”, MSNBC and has appeared on “The Tonight Show,” CNN, “Late Night with Conan O’Brien,” “Fresh Air” with Terry Gross and in his own HBO comedy special. He is a 2010 graduate of Harvard’s Kennedy School and was that year’s graduate school commencement speaker. His newest project is a social enterprise and solo show entitled, “Humor for Humanity,” which seeks to raise spirits, funds and awareness for nonprofits, charities and social causes.

The LWV Civic Education Fund of the Cape Cod Foundation is the initiative of the LWVCCA with the support of the LWV of Falmouth. Our goal is to raise funds to support grants of $750 each to any Cape area school district that applies. Information about applying to the grant program or donating is available at www.capecodfoundation.org.

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government. You may see further information about the grant program, including a list of last year’s awardees, on the LWVCCA website www.lwvcapecod.org under “civic education”.

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Jon Vaughan
A gallery with a different point of view
A BUSY SUMMER AND AN EVEN BUSIER FALL
FOR VOTER SERVICE

June 19 -- Debate--Democratic Primary candidates for State Senate -- Held at Cape Cod Media Center in Dennis and moderated by Florence Seldin. Three candidates were present: Julian Cyr, Sheila Lyons and Brian Mannal. As candidates introduced themselves, Brian took everyone by surprise by announcing that he was withdrawing from the race, citing his desire to spend more time with his family. He then left the event. Moderator Seldin handled the change of events smoothly and continued the debate between the remaining two candidates. About 30 people attended including supporters of both candidates and a number of League members. Note: This debate was taped and is available on demand at http://capemedia.org. Click on the Today’s schedule and Video on Demand option…enter democratic state senate primary in the search box at top right.

August 24 -- Second debate for the two remaining Democratic primary candidates for State Senate, Sheila Lyons and Julian Cyr. Cosponsored by the Cape and Islands Democratic Council and Yarmouth Democratic Town Committee. Special thanks to Joan Craig for a great job as Moderator and to Debbie Beal, Nancy Erskine, Marilyn Gullett, Karen Mazza, Chris Meade and Richard Utt who assisted. About 75 people attended, submitting questions ranging from veterans benefits to charter schools, county government, wastewater, Pilgrim, homelessness and living-wage jobs.

GOTV SUB-COMMITTEE
GOTV (Get Out The Vote) and new-this-year-Early Voting option. Incoming Voter Service Chair Debbie Beal has been working with a new Get-Out-The-Vote subcommittee to produce an informational brochure for voters in all Cape towns. Committee members--Debbie, Elaine Bono, Suzanne Finney, Anita Rogers and Richard Utt--checked in with town clerks across the Cape to determine polling hours, locations and especially how each town would be handling this year’s first-ever Early Voting Option which runs from October 24 through November 4. These fact-filled brochures will be available at LWVCCA events throughout the election season.

Friday, September 23 -- Voter Registration at Sturgis Charter Public School West
Saturday, September 24-- Voter Registration at Harbor Community Health Center, Hyannis

Earlier in the summer, intrepid subcommittee members Elaine Bono and Suzanne Finney decorated a float which they drove in the Hyannis Fourth of July parade encouraging all to vote. With 30,000 people along the parade route, it was great visibility for the League.
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
LWVCCA President Scotti Finnegan has been traveling in Europe this summer.

Dear Members ~ Happy Summerall! You know it’s that time of year when we are in disbelief that summer is almost over and Fall is waiting to gently move in. This year, gently will not describe the weeks of political campaigning that will be the sound track for the next two months.

I thought I would take this opportunity to consider two of the principles of the League. The first—“We believe that democratic government depends on informed, active participation based on citizens’ right to information.” The 24/7 news cycle challenges us to sift through enormous amounts of information to determine what is fact and what fiction; what is civil and what is incendiary. The League is a highly respected non-partisan, civil voice which has a necessary and relevant place in this and every election campaign. Let’s challenge ourselves to sift through the noise and continue to be the voice of informed and civilized debate.

A second principle on my mind says, “The League believes every citizen’s right to vote must be protected”. Some states pass laws to protect elections from voter fraud that are actually laws that limit voters’ rights. These laws effectively exclude minorities and disadvantaged citizens who are less likely to have “credentials” acceptable as IDs at the polls.

The League of Women Voters initiated the Voters Bill of Rights of Massachusetts--jointly signed by the League and Secretary of the Commonwealth William Galvin on June 16 2004. This document was designed to ensure that all voters clearly understand their voting rights. At the signing LWVMA President Madhu Sridhar said, “The strength of a democracy is measured in large part by the full and valued participation of its citizens. At a time when we are absorbed in upcoming partisan politics, we want to continue to focus on the central player in our democracy—the voter.” (From LWVMA website under Voting and Election Information.)

Twelve years later, this statement is as powerful as it was when first signed. Perceived voter fraud is not an issue in Massachusetts ~ and thanks to the League and its commitment to civic education and voter information, all Massachusetts citizens can be informed of their rights as voters. The mission and principles of the League of Women Voters are vital to the realities of the 21st century and to this election season.

I look forward to seeing you all at the members meeting on September 15.

Until then, Happy Summerall!

Scotti Finnegan
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

From Legislative Chair Renate Sands

The 189th session of the Massachusetts Legislature ended on July 31, 2016. Several bills supported by LWVMA passed this session including--

-- Improved access to public records
-- A strong pay equity bill
-- An energy diversity bill that increased the state’s reliance on renewable energy sources
-- Expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit

None of the bills relating to the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant which our league has followed appear to have passed. Another bill we followed, H1796 (Preventing adolescent substance abuse) was incorporated into the Opioid Abuse Prevention bill.

In the next session the MA League will again work for bills related to election reform. They will also continue to work on criminal justice reform bills. Major strides were made in considering bills to reform the criminal justice system and the work done on this will carry over to the new session which begins in January, 2017.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

From Phyllis Walsh

Please welcome Anita Rogers to our League. After a career in Human Resources Management, Anita earned her Master’s in Social Work in 2007 and she worked at Elder Services of Cape Cod until her retirement last year. She was invited by Bea Auty, a long-time LWVCCA member from Orleans, to attend our annual meeting and to join the League. She and Bea serve on a Mission and Social Concerns Committee at their church. Anita is now an active member of the LWVCCA Voter Service Committee. She and her husband Ernie have lived on the Cape since 1989. They can be contacted at: PO Box 266, Orleans MA 02662, (508) 255-6360, earogers2@comcast.net
LWVUS NATIONAL CONVENTION STUDIES REDISTRICTING

LWVCCA member Suzanne Finney attended the LWV national convention in D.C. in June. This is her report.

The League was in action. The 2016 Convention, held at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel from June 16 – 19 brought the local leagues together. People from all of the states were there, from Massachusetts to California, from Minnesota to Texas, all ready to vote on resolutions and motions, apply themselves to workshops and tactical training for our future. They were a force of one. Each day plenary sessions were held in the Thurgood Marshall Ballroom. The Massachusetts contingent had 32 people, California 104, and the other number of delegates varied from state to state. In total, there were 674 delegates who attended and then there were more members attending. Both men and women were there.

The redistricting position presented to the delegates was accepted. Some of the standards on which redistricting plan is based, and on which any plan should be judged, must:

Be enforceable in court; and require:
   i. Substantially equal population
   ii. Geographic contiguity
   iii. Effective representation of racial and linguistic minorities

Must provide for (to the extent possible):
   i. Promotion of partisan fairness
   ii. Preservation and protection of “communities of interest” and
   iii. Respect for boundaries of municipalities and countries

The complete version of the LWVUS position is on our website. (continued)
A motion was proposed by Minnesota about the rules to become a member. Another area addressed was the age limit to become a member of the board. There was a mutual decision that the League should bring in younger members. In order to do this, ideas were suggested such as to use Twitter and Instagram besides Facebook, the other we decided to lower the age to 16 from 18. The Minnesota motion was passed with some changes to it. Another motion was presented by Colorado about our position on Behavioral Health. This motion passed.

Later there were training sessions and workshops for all who attended. Some areas addressed were how to organize an event together and how to invite people to events who had lost interest in the League. A suggestion was to meet an interested person one on one and mention what the League's activities are and invite them to an event. Other workshops included Vote 411, Immigration, Get-Out-the-Vote and Bringing Gun Safety to America.

On the last day recognition to the outgoing board and introduction of the newly elected officers, directors, and nominating committee were introduced and the President Chris Carson, who spoke. Then it was adjourned.

Meeting and learning from other league members across the United States with the same goal in mind was wonderful experience. The next convention in 2018 will be held in Chicago. Anybody can attend.

**BOARD MEETING NOTES, JUNE 2016**

*From Joan Bernstein, Board Secretary*

On June 7th, outgoing and incoming board members met to plan for next year. Important calendar items include board meetings on the first Tuesday of each month, a performance by Jimmy Tingle, a political satirist, on Sept. 25th at the 4C’s to support the Civic Education Grant Fund, a members’ orientation preparatory to the Charter School study and consensus (Sept.), Holiday Brunch Dec. 3, Legislative breakfast in Feb. or Mar., and the Annual Meeting on May 18, 2017. The executive committee will prepare the new Handbook over the summer. The board decided to eliminate the roster of elected officials from the Handbook inasmuch as the listings often become out of date after elections and the up-to-date information is provided in our Directory of Elected Officials. Other topics discussed included membership development, issues at the national convention, an opportunity to work with a consortium to prepare a questionnaire for all state candidates and a potential follow-up to LWVUS consensus meetings on the constitutional amendment process and money in politics.
Editor’s Note: You may notice that the VOTER has a different look this Fall. At its June meeting, the Board also voted to solicit ads from local merchants to run in the VOTER and help to subsidize our work. Please patronize these businesses and acknowledge their support.
SEPTEMBER 25, 2016
3:00 P.M.
TILDEN ARTS CENTER
CAPE COD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS CIVIC EDUCATION FUND OF THE CAPE COD FOUNDATION OFFERING GRANTS TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO SUPPORT EXPERIENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

COMEDY FUNDRAISER FOR SCHOOLS WITH JIMMY TINGLE

Jimmy Tingle is a comedian, commentator, and entrepreneur. He has worked as a humorist and commentator for “60 Minutes II”, and MSNBC and has appeared on “The Tonight Show”, CNN, “Late Night with Conan O’Brien,” and in his own HBO half-hour comedy special. His newest project is a social enterprise and solo show entitled, “Humor for Humanity,” which aspires to raise spirits, funds and awareness for nonprofits, charities and social causes.

STUDENT TICKETS - $5 WITH A VALID STUDENT ID
ALL OTHERS - $45

Tickets are available for purchase online at www.lwvcapecod.org or available at the door.