

THE CAPE COD VOTER

VOLUME 50, ISSUE 7

MARCH 2010

CALENDAR

Tuesday, March 2
9:30 am

LWVCCA Board Meeting
Dennis Cape Cod 5 Bank

Thursday, March 4
10 am

Chatham/ Harwich Unit
Home of Betsy Bray

Monday, March 8
Unit
9:30 am

Mid and Upper Cape
Osterville Library North Rm.

Tuesday, March 16
9:30 to 12:00

Unit Meetings Subcommittee
Media Center, White's Path

Friday, March 19
7:30 – 9:30 am

Legislative Breakfast
Ardeo at Kings Way, Rt. 6A

Monday, March 22
1:00 pm

Health Care Committee
Channel 17, South Yarmouth

Wednesday, March 24
7:00 pm

Public Meeting
Harwich Community Center
“Don't Just Stand There – Run for Public Office”

Come Hear Our State Legislators
Who Represent The Cape
Breakfast – March 19
See Details and Coupon

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

A reflection and request from your president ~

A recent past weekend, I was visiting in the DC area and toured the Newseum. This museum of the news contains 14 major galleries and 15 theaters and immerses the visitor in the world's greatest news stories and issues affecting the news such as technology..

One gallery that caught my attention was the First Amendment exhibit. This amendment guarantees five basic freedoms. Of those five, I was particularly struck by the Freedom of Speech aspect. Recent political campaigns, the national health care debate and even local issues here on the Cape have all raised the issue of civility in free speech for me.

One of the consequences that I've observed is that the lack of civility seems to feed misinformation and drive polarization which in turn seems to drive stagnation or the inability to get anything constructive done. We have a new kind of Congressional gridlock This also bothered former Massachusetts Senator Paul Kirk who was interviewed in January by the Cape Cod Times. Following this interview, the CCTimes ran an editorial titled, "Restore Civility: Politicians must work for greater good, not partisan gain." Near the conclusion of the editorial, the writer stated, "Kirk is right in his assessment and we believe there is plenty of blame to go around for the mess we are in. Can we fix it? Can we bring back a level of civility to our politics? We hope so."

I hope so too. I truly believe our democracy is dependent upon fixing it. I took the issue to the February board meeting where we had a brief discussion on what a League role might look like if we were to work for a more civil public square. Perhaps it might involve some kind of forum. Perhaps a rally of some sort to indicate that there is widespread concern. What might our goal(s) be? Our conclusion was that we needed more information about the possibilities and the interest in the topic.

And so, as president of our grassroots organization, I turn to you, the membership, for your opinion. What do you think about the level of civility in our society? Do we need more? Is there a role for the League to play? Is there some kind of achievable goal?

I invite you to contact me to let me know what you think. You can call the League number which is on your handbook or email me.

I hope you will enjoy the rest of the information in this edition of the *Voter*. And I hope to see you at an upcoming meeting.

In League,
Judy Thomas

BOARD NOTES

February 2010

Nancy Curley reported that the Budget Committee needed two or more additional members. Freddie Fitzgerald and Joan Bernstein volunteered and Judy Thomas said she would attend ex officio.

Judy Thomas reported that Debbie Aikman has reported, for PNP purposes, the total membership in our League is now 127: 68 local single; 18 first household; 17 second household; 14 national; and 10 honorary.

Judy Thomas and Elizabeth Levy will give town meeting presentations at the Nauset and Chatham/Harwich Newcomers meetings.

Judy Thomas asked the Board for ideas and comments on the LWUS policy positions in preparation for its program planning and convention in June. She suggested that its position on campaign finance be emphasized in advocacy. The Board agreed. Joan Bernstein suggested that the League should take a position against discrimination due to gender orientation. She also suggested a position against agricultural subsidies that enable American farmers to undercut prices charged by developing nations and hinder free trade. If possible, Judy will include these in her on-line report to National. The Boulder, Colorado League has suggested that the LWVUS move "Fair Elections Now" from second to first tier advocacy.

The Board agreed. The Palo Alto, California League proposed a study of the role of federal government in funding public education. The Board agreed to support.

Judy Thomas suggested a forum in September in the form of a rally or town meeting on "Civility in the Public Square." She asked for a task force to come up with a more concrete proposal. The Board agreed. Betsy Bray and possibly Nancy Erskine volunteered.

Betsy Bray reported that the Annual Meeting will be held on May 15 at the Road House Café, 488 South St. in Hyannis. The price will be \$26 including tax and tip for a choice of scrod, pasta or chicken, salad and dessert.

Betsy also reported that "The Child Care Challenge: What it Means What you Can Do" will be the title of the forum to be held on April 24 at the Harwich Community Center.

Panel members will be: Dr. Sherri Killins, MA Commissioner of Early Childhood Education and Care, Elizabeth Aldred, Grants and Advocacy Coordination, Children's Place of Cape Cod, Pat Policastro, Family Day Care Coordinator, Cape Cod Child Development and Kristen Lind, Training Coordinator, CACCI Childcare Network. Co-sponsors will be WE CAN and Children's Place of Cape Cod.

Elizabeth Levy reported that the Town Meeting Guides have been reprinted and are ready for distribution.

The Voter Service Committee is working on a program, "Don't Just Stand There, Run!" for mid- to late March at the Harwich Community Center.

Elaine Bono is working on the Legislative Breakfast and asked for questions, especially on the environment and health care, to submit to the legislators. She will redo the Directory of Elected Officials as soon as Senator Brown gets settled with office and telephone number.

The deadline for the March *Voter* will be February 24.

Betty Floyd, Secretary

Don't Just Stand there, Run

Three years ago our League ran a program designed to encourage active participation at all levels of government, from local selectman to state legislator. Our panel included a town clerk, a media person, a retired legislator, and people who had run, and lost, in election campaigns.

The turnout exceeded our expectations, over-crowding the room we had engaged. Several attendees actually did go on to run for various offices.

This March we are repeating the program. Included in our line-up of speakers are Barnstable Town Clerk Linda Hutchenrider, Selectman and League member Florence Seldin, ex-County Commissioner Mary Leclair, Editor in Chief, Cape Cod Times, Paul Pronovost, and retired State Legislator Shirley Gomes.

Whether you are considering a public office for yourself, or are just interested in hearing an outstanding panel, plan to attend on March 24th at 7:00 p.m. in the Harwich Community Center.

Elizabeth Levy
Voter Service Chair

NEWS FROM NATIONAL

LWVUS 2010 Legislative Priorities (NEW) After a review of congressional action in 2009 and a discussion of expected activity in 2010, the LWVUS Board of Directors has adopted the following Legislative Priorities for 2010: Global Climate Change, Health Care Reform, and Money in Elections (campaign finance reform). On the Legislative Watch List are: Arms Control, DC Voting Rights, Election Reform, Ethics and Lobbying Reform, and UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

This Watch List includes issues which need to be monitored for action opportunities in the 111th Congress. It is understood that the Board will have opportunities to review the priorities throughout the year to make changes if the situation requires it. It should also be noted that DC Voting Rights and CEDAW are perennial legislative priorities that the LWV has worked hard for in the past and is committed to working for successful passage.

NEWS FROM LWVMA

LWVMA Votes to Oppose the Initiative Petition to Repeal 40B

Opponents of our state's affordable housing zoning law (Chapter 40B) have gathered sufficient signatures to place its repeal on the November 2010 ballot. During this process many local Leagues have been contacted by this group to support their initiative.

40B (the Comprehensive Permit Law) was designed to address local zoning and land use restrictions which limited the availability of affording housing. The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts (LWVMA) supported the passage of this in 1969 and has continued to support its implementation.

The LWVMA has been asked to support efforts to defeat the repeal initiative, and the State Board, which is responsible for taking positions on state issues, voted to join the Community Advisory Committee of the Campaign Against the Repeal of 40B.

The decision is based on, among other considerations, our position on Affordable Housing, which is based on the LWVUS position on Basic Human Needs. In addition, from 2003-2007, the Affordable Housing Study Committee did a comprehensive review of the subject, including a review of 40B, which led to a modification of the state position. The Program and Action Committee plans to have an information packet available for local Leagues by early September.

Chatham/Harwich Unit Meeting

Thursday, March 4, 10 a.m, at the home of Betsy Bray, Harwich. "Meeting the Real Beatrix Potter".

UNIT MEETING - MID AND UPPER CAPE

The Program

Paul Niedzwiecki, **Executive Director of** the Cape Cod Commission, will be our guest speaker at the Mid and Upper Cape unit on Monday, March 8, 9:30 A.M., Osterville Library - North Room. His topic will be waste water management - a timely topic for all of Cape Cod. He will bring us up to date on progress to date and the challenges facing the Cape Cod region. This promises to be a stimulating, informative and provocative morning for our league members, their guests and everyone concerned about protecting our Cape Cod waters. There will be ample time for questions following his talk so bring your questions and comments.

League members from all Cape units are welcome to participate and encouraged to bring guests and potential league members. The Osterville library's north room is spacious and

comfortable and will lend itself to interaction with our guest speaker. There is ample parking behind the library with easy access to the building. Coffee and refreshments will be available.

Directions from Route 6 - A Scenic Drive

Take Exit 5 (Marstons Mills - Rt. 149 exit) south. Once you're heading south, bear to the left which is Osterville/W. Barnstable Rd.. (Do not take Rt. 149 which forks off to the right.) Keep heading south on Osterville/W. Barnstable Rd. through the blinking light on Race Lane to the stop light at Rt. 28 (Falmouth Rd.). You'll see Mahoney's Garden Center on the SW corner. Rt. 28 is approx. 2-1/2 miles from Rt. 6. From this point you have two miles remaining to the library.

Cross Rt. 28 at the stop light continuing on Osterville/W. Barnstable Rd.. It will dead end at Main St./S. County Rd.. Turn left and continue into the center of Osterville past some shops. Turn right onto Wianno Ave.. The library is one block from your turn on the right hand side of the street across from the Post Office. Park on the street or in the parking lot in the back of the library.

I caution you that your GPS may mislead you so I encourage you to follow the directions above.

Wimpys' Restaurant in the center of Osterville is available for lunch for those who wish to extend the unit discussion.

Please e-mail or call me at 508-420-6111 if you have questions. Phyllis Walsh

HEALTH COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

The Health Care Committee welcomes all interested members to our meetings. We're now preparing for a consensus on the Cape Care plan and invite any member who is interested in knowing more about this plan to join us at our meeting on March 22nd. Dr. Brian O'Malley, who has worked long and hard to bring advocates together to develop and promote a health plan for Cape Cod will be at our March meeting to explain Cape Care's provisions and answer questions about the plan. As you probably know, the plan was recently introduced to the Massachusetts legislature by Rep. Matt Patrick. Our League must now decide whether or not to lend its support to the plan through our consensus process.

Visit to TriTown Septage Facility, Orleans, MA, February 17, 2010

Guest article by Jane Corlette, Environment committee member

Members of the League met on Wednesday morning, February 17 at the TriTown septage facility on Overland Road in Orleans. Mr. Jay Burgess, Manager of the facility, graciously explained the history of the facility and during a thorough tour, explained its operations and capabilities.

The TriTown facility is jointly owned by the towns of Brewster, Eastham and Orleans but the land on which it is sited is owned wholly by Orleans. It began operations in 1989 after licensure from the State of Massachusetts. Licenses are renewed every five years and the current license will expire in 2013. It opened as a state-of-the-art facility although subsequent problems, some unanticipated, required an upgrade in 1997. The upgrade included additional technology to reduce excess liquid from septage and a change in tanks

to deal with contaminants.

The facility is a small complex of buildings off Route 6A in an industrial zoned area. While within the plant there are some areas that have some odor of human waste, these areas are subject to negative pressure from the HVAC system and the air passes through a wet scrubber and a mist of hypochlorite before being passed through carbon filters and released to the outside. From the exterior of the building, there is no perceptible odor.

The facility treats septage (the product of human wastes from cesspools and septic systems) that is pumped by individual contractors and brought to the plant for treatment as well as the solid wastes from small centralized sewer systems for resorts and housing complexes. It accepts septage not only from the three towns that own the facility but also from other Cape towns for a fee. The plant is financially self-sufficient and maintains a small capital budget for necessary repairs and upgrades.

Because the facility is limited under its license to a release of no more than 45 thousand gallons of treated wastewater per day, it attempts to encourage homeowners to have their septic systems pumped during the late fall and winter season in order to maintain moderate volume throughout the year and to avoid being overwhelmed with demand in the summer months.

The treated wastewater is released into rapid infiltration beds that flow into Namskaket Marsh and ultimately into Cape Cod Bay. Continued monitoring of these releases have shown no untoward effect on the Marsh or the Bay.

From the time a septic truck arrives at the plant to the release of treated wastewater and the shipment out of solid waste, there are a number of steps. Initially, the septage is pumped into filtering pools that will filter out larger objects (examples include toys, cell phones, false teeth – anything that could fall into a toilet or sink and disappear down the drain). Subsequently, the septage is pumped to a “thickening” station where a wide conveyer belt allows the water to pass through the belt and be separated from more solid wastes, or sludge. The water is then diverted to a biological purification system and the sludge to tanks for dewatering.

The sludge is pumped into a large pressing machine at more than 100,000 tons pressure per square inch and the water that is removed is again sent for purification. The sludge, once pressed into solid bricks, is loaded onto trucks and sent to a private company in Yarmouth that disposes of the solid sludge either for further disposal off Cape, for sale for composting or other uses.

The purification of the wastewater is done through a series of processes. First, the wastewater is pumped to a large cistern where any remaining sludge is allowed to settle to the bottom and mechanical rakes guide it to a pipe where it is returned to the plant to a sludge tank for further treatment. The cleaned wastewater is then pumped to a Rotating Biological Contactor (RBC), a sort of quanset hut filled with 100,000 sq.ft. of rotating plastic blades covered with bacteria that eat most of the remaining sludge. The wastewater,

not yet totally clean, goes through this same process again in another series of RBC's and finally is passed through a disinfection process under ultraviolet light twice when it is now clean enough to be released into the marsh.

This process for treated wastewater – while most bacteria, ammonia, and phosphorus are eliminated or are found at low levels – does not denitrify the wastewater. The TriTown facility's State permit currently allows the release of wastewater that does not exceed 50 mg/IN of nitrogen. The actual performance of the plant is better than that since the average release is between 20 and 35 mg/IN. Newer technology, which would be costly to install, could reduce this amount considerably, to less than 10 mg/IN. In addition, there is no current technology to remove pharmaceuticals from wastewater.

LWVCCA ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

Friday, March 19, 2010, 7:30-9:30 am

Ardeo at Kings Way, Rt. 6A, Yarmouth Port

This is a special annual opportunity to meet and hear our state legislators speak on timely issues of importance to League members. Spouses and guests welcome! Don't miss it!

Coffee will be available starting at 7:30 am. Buffet breakfast will be served at 8 and includes freshly baked muffins, danish, fruit, scrambled eggs, bacon & sausage, home fries, waffles, coffee, herbal teas, and assorted juices. Cost is \$16.

Directions to Ardeo at Kings Way (via Rt. 6):

Take Rt. 6 to exit 8 (Union St./Station Ave.). Go north on Union St. about a mile until road comes to a T (gas station in front of you). Go right onto 6A, following 6A for about a mile, passing two pizza restaurants on the right and a small plaza and Manchester Rd. on the left. Kings Way is on your left (small white sign. (If you reach Peterson's/ RiteAid plaza or the Dennis town line, you've gone too far.) Go past the guard house and the tennis courts on your left. Take the next left into the parking lot of Ardeo.

Fill out and send in the coupon below, along with your check. ***Reservations must be received by March 13.*** Any questions? Call Elaine Bono, 508-375-9421.

REGISTRATION FORM
LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST
FRIDAY, MARCH 19, 2010, 7:30 AM

Please note the location—Ardeo at Kings Way, Rt. 6A, Yarmouth Port. Cost is \$16 per person and includes a full buffet breakfast, tax, and gratuity. Make your check payable to LWVCCA and send to:

Elaine Bono, 19 Pine Grove, Yarmouth Port, MA 02675

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

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