



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FALMOUTH

P. O. Box 450, Falmouth, MA 02541

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Bulletin – November 2011

Member Events Calendar

November 2011

- 17 7:30 pm Meeting: LWVUS National Education Study
Bring last page of this bulletin
(Dinner at Peking Palace at 6:00 p.m.)
- 22 7:30 pm Board Meeting at Falmouth Hospital (Board Room)

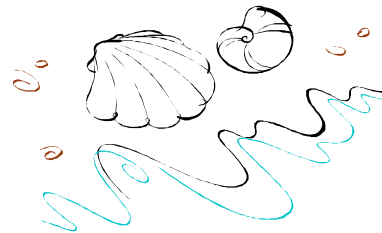
December 2011

No Meetings

LWVF BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2011-2012

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Second Vice-President	Barbara Kanellopoulos
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If you wish to join the League, membership dues are \$50.00 for an individual membership and \$25.00 for an additional household member.

Send your check made out to *LWV of Falmouth* to the address shown above.

Please include your name, address and phone number.

You do not have to be a resident of Falmouth to join

STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

Alice Carey

LOCAL HEADS UP!

The LWVF November 17 Membership Meeting is at 7:30 p.m. in the Civil Defense Room at Town Hall. It will engage all members in arriving at consensus on the National League's study: "The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education".

The scope of the study includes:

- History of the Federal Governments role in public education
- Funding and equity issues
- The Common Core Standards/Assessment

At this meeting, there is much to consider within limited time limits. A summary of the history of the Federal Governments role in public education is on the last page of this Bulletin as an explanation of the first area of concern in the study.

Please bring a copy of this report with you to the November 17 meeting.

Don't forget to join us at Peking Palace for dinner before the meeting at 6 p.m.

Preparations for Elections 2012 are well on the way. A key issue for all League members should be the question of voter fraud. Excerpts from the *National Voter* of October, 2007 is provided herein to assist in understanding what is happening across the country. In Massachusetts, bills have been introduced requiring the presentation of government issued photo id's at the polls. None of these bills have been approved. As November elections approach, members should be alerted to any petition drives to further these goals.

The Politics of Voter Fraud

Americans can be forgiven for believing that voter fraud is threatening the integrity of our elections. Fortunately, Barnard College political science professor Lorraine Minnite's report, *The Politics of Voter Fraud*, takes a hard look at the issue. What she finds exposes many of these deceptive tactics ...

Minnite finds that voter fraud, defined as the intentional corruption of the electoral process by a voter, is extraordinarily rare. Put another way, Americans are twice as likely to be hit by lightning than to have their vote cancelled out by a fraudulently cast ballot.

Still, there's a well-funded, well-organized campaign underway to make Americans believe that voter fraud is a serious problem. Allegations of voter fraud, however baseless, are used by partisans to build public support for laws and regulations that make it more difficult for minorities and low income voters to cast their ballots. One favored tactic is to form



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organizations that claim to protect voting rights but, instead, work tirelessly to keep claims of fraud in the news, and then offer solutions that happen to disenfranchise voters likely to support their opponents.

Since 2005, Georgia, Indiana and Missouri have passed strict laws requiring voters to show a government issued photographic ID at the polls; only gubernatorial vetoes prevented passage of similar laws in Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. These rules are likely to have a profoundly negative effect on the voting rates of minorities, low-income Americans, the elderly and the disabled. A report by the Brennan Center for Justice found that 25 percent of adult African-Americans, 15 percent of adults earning below \$35,000 a year, and 18 percent of seniors over the age of 65 do not possess a government-issued photo ID.

Arizona now requires voter registration applicants to prove their citizenship when they try to register to vote. It's no secret who these restrictions affect. In 2004, 15 percent of all African-American and Latino voters were registered to vote as a result of an organized drive; an African-American or Latino voter was 65 percent more likely to have been registered to vote by an organized drive than a White voter. In the final analysis, spurious allegations of voter fraud give rise to yet more roadblocks on the path to full participation in political life for historically

disadvantaged Americans.

Buyer Beware

When it comes to claims of voter fraud and the accompanying solutions to this "problem," Americans need to adopt some good advice from the marketplace: buyer beware. Purveyors of voter fraud allegations deserve all the suspicion Americans normally reserve for used car salesmen.

Tough questions are in order:

- What's the evidence?
- Who's making the claim or proposal?
- What's their agenda?

Closer scrutiny might well reveal that the real perpetrators of voter fraud are the ones making the claims.

(Excerpted from *National Voter*, Oct. 2007)

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LWV OCTOBER MEETING: NATURAL RESOURCES

Pamela Polloni

Water Quality and the Environment are the Falmouth League's continuing action items, and natural resource protection was our topic at the October 20th meeting. Our local position on Natural Resources is built on the LWV US national position, which is: To promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems in the public interest.

For this meeting we relied on our own members to address specific topics of local concern from their own interest and expertise. Virginia Valiela gave a clear and complete review of the history of wastewater disposal and treatment in Falmouth and spoke about town meeting's support for the recommended wastewater treatment actions that include testing alternatives to town-wide sewerage. The existing sewage treatment facility is underutilized and can accommodate more sewage as long as discharge of additional treated wastewater is sited outside of the watershed to West Falmouth Harbor. A November town meeting warrant article supporting a land swap with the Steamship Authority would accomplish this.

Margaret Cooper told us about her video of a workshop on why lawn care needs to be organic, which she is making available on DVD (I have a copy that members are welcome to borrow).

Ruth Brazier and Ginny Gregg answered questions about Falmouth's solid waste management and learned that those present generally support the proposed "pay as you throw" plan.

I talked about the work of The 300 Committee, the Town's Open Space Committee, which has helped conserve 2300 acres since 1985. I also spoke of the importance of

Falmouth's maturing upland woodlands, which are not adequately protected from development. Our upland woods are not protected by the wetland protection act, yet they are critical to the quality of our coastal waters, wetlands, and wildlife habitats. In 2008, the planning board recommended increasing the goal of preserving Falmouth's open space land, from 25% to 30%, so the land acquisition work continues. The Conservation Commission owns but does not have the resources to manage these lands. Thus, along with acquisition of open space by fee purchase and conservation restriction T3C has taken on the expanding role of Town conservation land management, and this has become a significant challenge for a nearly all-volunteer organization. The 300 Committee now stewards more than 1400 acres of conservation land and is working to restore and protect wildlife habitat in our conservation lands.

Educational outreach is another aspect of the work to protect our natural areas. Much (80%) of Massachusetts' woodland is privately owned and much of that not secured from development. Woodland conservation provides benefits to both the landowner and the community through protection of Falmouth's environmental quality. This year, the UN International Year of Forests, is an especially appropriate time for recognizing the value of Falmouth's woodlands. Just last month the Massachusetts Executive office of Energy and Environmental Affairs produced the Massachusetts Climate Change Adaptation Report, Sept. 2011, Mass. EEA, which states that: "Upland forests provide important functions including support for a variety of habitats and wide-ranging biological diversity, purification of air and water, moderation of subsurface and overland water flow, and the sequestration of

carbon in both the above-ground growing vegetation and in the organic components of forest soils.” Many newcomers to Cape Cod don’t appreciate our pine/oak woodlands, and, when landscaping their new homes, they clear the trees and plant popular ornamental species. They don’t realize the value of our maturing forests or that the plant communities of the Cape are adapted to growing in sandy, excessively drained soils. I recommend that the League continue following Falmouth’s open space management and continue to support protection of our upland woods. We could consider recommending that the town find a way to hire a conservation land manager.

A serious problem resulting from minimal management of conservation lands is the spread of invasive species, which are a serious threat to the biodiversity of our landscape. The Massachusetts Invasive Plant Advisory Group considered the threat to natural communities and rare species and worked with nursery growers to slow the spread of certain non-indigenous species with the biologic potential for rapid and widespread dispersion. Several of these, including burning bush, *Euonymus alatus*, and Japanese barberry, *Berberis thunbergii*, are now prohibited from sale and propagation in Massachusetts. Within the past six years a new

invasive has shown up in Falmouth and in other parts of the state, the Mile-a-Minute Vine, *Persicaria perfoliata*, an annual plant that grows rapidly during the summer and bears fruit that is eaten and spread by birds

(http://massnrc.org/pests/pestFAQsheets/milea_minute.html). A Guide to Invasive Plants in Massachusetts 2nd Edition is available from the Mass. Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program

http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/nhesp/publications/nhesp_pubs.htm.

Kathy Mortenson brought us up to date on the bottle bill and will ask the LWV board to write in support of the update. Kathy then invited all to tour Falmouth’s wastewater treatment plant.



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LOCAL STUDY COMMITTEE REPORT

Doris Epstein

On October 21st we took to the paper in a big way. That is, the Effective Government committee of LWVF had a full page ad in the Falmouth Enterprise (half gifted by Bill Hough) naming all Town Meeting members with telephone numbers. Purpose was to promote a more interactive environment between voters and their representatives. An op ed piece by two of our members occurred the same day stressing the importance of precinct meetings where factual questions about Warrant Articles might

be in order and where conversations might take place between constituents and reps. With several meetings having taken place, Town Clerk Michael Palmer noted an increase in attendance. We shall maintain focus on Town Meeting and associated activities.

Already we have become aware of areas that might be strengthened in the Charter. We have begun our first review of the entire Home Rule Charter, about 25 pages, and shall hone our thinking about all its Articles as we go through it at least a second time.

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LWV OF MASSACHUSETTS ACTIVITIES

Joan Boyer

The LWVMA Phonothon is now in progress. I am looking for volunteers to make some phone calls for me (from your own home). Please let me know if you can help (call me 508-564-6644). As the new Treasurer of the State League, I have determined that the State needs to raise \$50,000 each year to stay in business. This is even after we have reduced our expenses over the past year by moving into a smaller space, cutting the rent by a third, along with cutting the phone/internet fees in half. Another cost saving was moving from an Executive Director to an Office Manager position. No one wants to consider raising the PMP dues charged to local leagues, so we really need your help to meet our goal! I hope you will donate generously.

I have been trying to support local Treasurers and am very busy, as it is LWV tax reporting time in November.

Last Saturday, I attended the President's Breakfast as Falmouth's representative. The State Board is really working hard to provide value to local leagues and is welcoming ideas. Those present seemed really enthused and plan to meet again in the spring. A President's Council has begun along with a President's website and blog.

At the meeting, everyone volunteered their most successful fundraisers over the past few years—the biggest money maker seemed to be house tours. Pam Holland, State Membership Director spoke on energizing members and attracting new members. Voter Service initiatives were also discussed. Internet tools for local leaders were presented. I discovered we can get a free phone number from Google. It was a very good meeting.

THANK YOUs
Kathy Mortenson

The Board would like to thank Pam Polloni, Margaret Cooper, Ginny Gregg, Ruth Brazier and Virginia Valiela for providing valuable updates on local natural resources issues at the October League meeting.

The Board is most grateful to the Falmouth Enterprise for publishing the entire list of Falmouth's Town Meeting members in the October 21, 2011 newspaper under the heading "DEMOCRACY starts with YOU."

FALMOUTH WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY TOUR

Kathy Mortenson

The Natural Resources Committee would like to thank Charlie Pires, Chief Operator of the Falmouth Wastewater Treatment Facility for giving 15 citizens on October 27th an in-depth tour of the Facility on a very cold and wet day. Every Falmouth citizen should tour the Wastewater Treatment Facility!


On Thursday, October 27th the League sponsored a tour of the Facility and 15 citizens did take the tour of the Facility. Charlie Pires, Chief Operator gave a most comprehensive overview of the Facility showing us maps of Falmouth and how sewage moves to the plant.

Once wastewater arrives at the plant, it is now treated to a tertiary level. It was cold and rainy but intrepid Leaguers and citizens climbed up and down steep staircases to view every stage of the treatment.

Almost twenty years ago the League sponsored a tour of the Facility and League members who remembered that tour were amazed at the improvements to the Facility. The town of Falmouth is most fortunate to have Charlie Pires and his dedicated staff working at the Falmouth Wastewater Treatment Facility.

LWVF FRIENDS FOR 2011-2012

Dorothy and Duncan Aspinwall
Frank Egloff
Sally Fritz
Avery Funkhouser
Christina Jacobi
Winnie and Bill Mackey
Polly Montgomery
Dorothy Ryder
Robert Schneider
Deborah G. Senft
Andrew Szent-Gyorgyi
John and Freddy Valois
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OBSERVER CORPS REPORT PLANNING BOARD 2010 – 2011

Barbara Kanellopoulos

Planning Board Members: Patricia Kerfoot (Chair), Ralph Herbst, Richard Latimer, Charles Swain, Kenneth Medeiros, Robert Leary, and newly elected member James Fox.

Meetings Observed: November, December of 2010. January through June, 2011. (I was away from April 26, to May 5, 2011.) Meeting time: Tuesdays, 7:00 P.M. Sub-committee meetings are also held at various times. Meetings are held in the selectmen's meeting room or in the civil defense room. No executive sessions were held during this period. Present at meetings: Brian Currie, Town Planner; Marlene McCollem, Assistant Town Planner. No excessive absences have been noted.

The Planning Board's Role: Assisted by the Planning Department, the Board studies and makes recommendations on Falmouth's long-term growth, reviews site plans, subdivision plans, and special permit applications of Falmouth property owners. The Board also responds to requests from other Boards, such as the Board of Appeals and the Board of Health. It also reviews bylaws and regulations and recommends changes when the Board believes them to be outdated. Brian Currie and his assistant are available to clarify current zoning bylaws, to initiate changes in zoning, and to find ways for the Board to be more efficient in dealing with preliminary plan reviews. Applicants and their representatives are given time to speak and are treated courteously. The Open Meeting Law is observed. Meeting agendas are posted. Meetings are conducted with civility.

Observations

In the past year the Board has dealt with complex issues thoughtfully, thoroughly, and even expeditiously. It was successful in getting Town Meeting approval of a map change for the water resource overlay district. The Board had been studying current DEP data indicating that a map change was needed and took action when it became clear that an accurate mapping of the district would also benefit a property owner.

The Board was also successful in getting Town Meeting approval of a one-year moratorium on new applications for the building of wind turbines. Members believe that their regulation requires an up-to-date, equitable bylaw. They're hopeful that the moratorium will give them time to produce one.

The Planning Board often enters into discussions with other boards and committees. One of the Board's strengths is the willingness of members to listen carefully to members of other boards, to petitioners and their supporters, as well as to the Town Planner and his assistant. Although they're good listeners, members of the Planning Board are not always persuaded by what they hear and feel free to disagree. For example, the Planning Board decided, after much discussion, that a nutrient management bylaw proposed by the Board of Health did not merit its support.

Central Issues: As in other years, the Board must deal with conflicting demands for open space, farming, contractor's yards, industrial parks, businesses, affordable housing, and conservation. Updating the Local Comprehensive Plan is a continuing concern. Town-wide participation in constructing a vision of what kind of community Falmouth should be twenty or thirty years from now is still lacking, in spite of efforts to engage residents in decision-making. In the months to come, planning for Falmouth's future will not be far down on the Board's agenda.

ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION: HISTORY

- **Northwest Ordinance of 1785** – Education supported financially and thought to be a national concern.
- **Constitution, Article 1, Section 8** Congress was granted the power to lay and collect taxes to provide for the general welfare.
- **10th Amendment – 1791**- The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited to the States are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.
Because public education was not specifically granted to the federal government, it became a local and state responsibility to fund.
- **14th Amendment – 1868** – All persons born or naturalized in the U.S. are citizens and therefore have the rights and privileges of life, liberty or property, and are within the jurisdiction of equal protection under the law.
- **1862 and 1890 – First and Second Morrill Act** granting public land to colleges across the country. Later called the Land Grant act.
Donation of public lands to states to be used for the endowment, support and maintenance of at least one college where the leading objective would be to teach agriculture and mechanic arts.
- **1896 – Plessy v Ferguson** – Ruled that “separate but equal” policies would be legal for public schools.
- **1954- Brown v Board of Education of Topeka**- Ruled that “separate but equal” is not legal.
- **1917 – Smith-Hughes Act**
- **1946 – George-Barden Act**
These two acts focused upon support of agriculture, industrial and home economics training for high school students.
- **Lanham Act of 1941 and Impact Aid Act of 1950** provided additional funding to communities/schools affected by the presence of military and federal employees.
- **GI Bill, 1944** provided funds for returning veterans to attend college.
- **NDEA - 1958**- The Russians launched Sputnik and the space/science race was on.
- NDEA provided teachers with graduate fellowships to improve the teaching of science, mathematics, and foreign language instruction at both elementary and secondary levels.
- **1965 – A Comprehensive set of programs including Title 1 program for federal aid to the disadvantaged** that is periodically updated.
- **ESEA** explicitly prohibits a national curriculum and President Obama’s “Blueprint” does not mention a national curriculum.
- **ESEA** provided professional development, instructional materials, and resources to support parental involvement.
- **Called No Child Left Behind**

NDEA = National Defense Education Act

ESEA = Elementary and Secondary Education Act
