

THE VOTER

April 2020

Letter from the President

We are in unprecedented, historic times; a historic year and election amidst a global pandemic. Every aspect of our lives has been irrevocably changed as we adapt to a distanced, virtual way of life. It is necessary to save lives, flatten the curve, and protect our healthcare and essential workforce. Adaptation is one of our most powerful human traits.

Would it surprise you to know that **our founders faced similar challenges**? In 1918, the Spanish flu was a sweeping, devastating pandemic taking anywhere from 50 to 100 million lives. Because it disproportionately impacted men, women were allowed to enter the workforce and help with the war effort. This helped demonstrate to many that women deserved equal rights, in the workplace and at the ballot box, setting the stage for the ratification of the 19th Amendment and other legislation.

Despite the overwhelming tragedy, loss, and a terrifying pandemic, women stepped up to fight the impact of the pandemic and to work toward creating a democracy that included them.

Why am I digging up old history? Well, they say that history doesn't repeat itself, but it definitely rhymes. We are facing similar uncertainty, financial and economic loss, and a brutal view of cracks in our society and systems meant to help people through tough times.

Like our founders, it's our job to step up and face these challenges in the ways we know how: empowering voters and defending democracy. It is even more crucial now that we encourage our friends, family, neighbors, and community to be civically engaged. It is our job to remind them of how voting and participating in the census are powerful ways to ensure that for future challenges we have an adequately funded and prepared public health infrastructure ready to combat global pandemic and protect communities and leaders willing to invest in our civic and social infrastructure.

I know it's easy to feel powerless and overwhelmed right now. It will take a long time for us to recover. However, we can take a little bit of control back at the ballot box and in the census.

In League,
Linsey



*April 18 Annual Meeting Teleconference:
Are You Prepared?*

ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, April 18

MEMBERS ONLY

Please review the proposed bylaws, budget, slate of officers, and programs for the 2020-2021 year. Active members will vote on these items via video conference.

We will be holding the 2020 Annual Meeting via video conference this year on April 18!

When: Saturday, April 18 at 10 a.m.

Where: Video conferencing link to follow

Members will vote on:

- New members for our Board of Directors (see below)
- The budget for 2020-2021
- Program/action issues
- Bylaws changes

In accordance with our bylaws, the materials to be reviewed at the meeting have been made available to the membership. You can find the materials - which includes the proposed bylaws and bios for the slate of candidates - on [our site](#). More materials are being added so keep checking back.

Please note: **Only members who are current on their dues have voting privileges.** [Check our list of current members to see if you are listed.](#) If you feel there is an error, please contact [the office](#) as soon as possible with information on your most recent dues payment so that we can rectify the issue.

Current LWVSPA membership
roster

The Slate: Up for Board of Directors



Linsey Grove
President
2020-2021



Robin Davidov
1st Vice President
2020-2021



Amy Keith
2nd Vice President
2020 - 2021



Gina Gallo
Treasurer (2-year term)
2020 - 2022



Nita Carroll
Director (2-year term)
2020 - 2022



Ann Dieterle
Director (2-year term)
2020-2022



Beate Marston
Director (1-year term)
2020-2021

The Slate: Up for Nominating Committee



Nancy Tait
Member
2020-2021



**Keeley Sheehan
LaForme**
Member
2020-2021



Amy Weintraub
Chair
2020-2021



Three Easy Ways to Protect Democracy (While Practicing Social Distancing)

With safer-at-home orders and social distancing becoming the norm for many of us, you may have been wondering what to do with your passion for protecting democracy. Well, we have three very easy - and effective - things you can do right now that will go a long way toward strengthening our democracy.

Fill out your census!

Did you know that Florida receives \$44 billion in federal funding? Filling out the census is the best way to ensure we keep receiving those sorely needed federal funds. It only takes seven minutes, so go do it right now! (Also worth noting: Some of those federal funds are used to support public health, and we've all just gotten a crash course in how critical our public health systems are to national security!)

Register to vote online!

Just go to RegisterToVoteFlorida.gov to register to vote online. You'll need your Florida driver license or Florida identification card on hand to complete your registration.

Request a vote-by-mail ballot!

As we've been seeing with presidential preference primaries around the country, the coronavirus response has the potential to disrupt elections in the near future. Prepare now by [requesting a vote-by-mail ballot](#)! You can take additional steps to ensure your vote-by-mail ballot is counted by either dropping it off in person at the Supervisor of Elections office ahead of an election or by dropping it in the mail with plenty of time ahead of the election, and then checking online to ensure the ballot was received.

And as a bonus step for you overachievers out there:

Tell your friends and family to do these things, too!

Social distancing doesn't mean an end to our efforts to protect democracy and empower voters; it just means we have to get a little creative with how we do it.



Do You Need Assistance? Let Us Help

We're here to help in this time of need!

We want to reach out to our members who may need assistance. We have volunteers willing to help with running errands and pick ups and drop off of necessary supplies.

We're sorry, but financial assistance is not available.

If you're in need of help - or you wish to make yourself available to help others - please get in touch with [Julia Sharp](#).

We're all in this together!



Wanted: Volunteers With Digital & Content Skills

We're working on a big project to update our website. If you're good at design, user experience, photo editing, content creation, or storytelling, and you'd like to contribute to the Website Redesign subcommittee, please join us!

When: Thursday, April 9 at 5 p.m.

Where: [Online video conference](#)

We will be meeting a lot over the next two months; check the League calendar for

3 EASY THINGS YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW TO PROTECT DEMOCRACY (SOCIAL DISTANCING EDITION)

1. Fill out the **census**. It takes less than 10 minutes!
2. **Register to vote** at RegisterToVoteFlorida.gov.
3. Sign up to receive a **vote-by-mail ballot** at VotePinellas.com.



future meetings. Most meetings will be short to get feedback and input.

Questions? Email Lisa Yacso at lisayacso.league@gmail.com.

P.S. Thanks to Pinellas Community Foundation for the funding to make this happen!



Changes to Action Teams for the Coming Year

With the 2020 election season well underway, some of the LWVSPA's action teams have made some changes to their programming for the upcoming year with the aim of putting more focus on voting- and democracy-focused activities. Those action teams are:

- **Gun Safety:** The Gun Safety team is going on hiatus through the rest of the year so its members can focus on voting-related activities. The team's [Gun Safety Action Guide](#) remains active and live on our site.
- **Reproductive Rights:** The Reproductive Rights team is folding into the new Social Justice team.



Help Us Raise Money for the Tampa Bay Abortion Fund!

Help the Tampa Bay Abortion Fund make abortion access a reality for Tampa Bay women in need.

The need for abortion care does not change with the coronavirus worldwide pandemic. If anything, the need for access is greater than ever before.

As part of pushback against a nationwide wave of anti-abortion policies, LWVSPA has formed two teams to participate in the Fund-A-Thon for the Tampa Bay Abortion Fund through the month of April. Originally conceived as a Bowl-A-Thon (complete with bowling at a real bowling alley) it has, due to the pandemic, been remade into an online fundraiser.



LWVSPA's teams are:

- ["You Will Not De Fetus"](#) captained by Amy Weintraub and Caitlin Constantine
- ["RU 486-ers"](#) captained by Gerni Oster

The Tampa Bay Abortion Fund, which is in its second year of operation as a nonprofit, is a group of volunteers who help those struggling to access abortions and other forms of reproductive healthcare due to low finances.

The LWV has a long held position that abortion is a necessary part of health care; people should have full insurance coverage, and community care means making sure people can access the abortions they want and need.

Support Tampa Bay women in need by clicking on the links above to donate (any amount!) to one of LWVSPA's Fund-A-Thon teams.



What's Happening Around LWVSPA?

Education

- **Co-chairs:** [Nikki Fleming](#) and [Barbara Meloche](#)

Gun Safety

This team is on hiatus through the 2020 election season.

Food Politics

- **Next Meeting:** Monday, April 20 at 7 p.m.
- **Location:** Conference call (605-472-5621; code: 555498)
- **Co-chairs:** [Julie Kessel](#), [Jen Underhill](#) and Wendy Wesley

Immigration

On March 30, Customs and Border Protection confirmed it was operating under new guidelines to deport child border crossers to countries where they feared violence. Per law, unaccompanied children are eligible for extra protections under the 2008 Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA). However, CBP has now confirmed that it is expelling all border crossers, including unaccompanied migrant children and other asylum-seeking children who have crossed without family members.

As Arizona issued a statewide stay-at-home order on March 31, wall construction near the border town of Ajo, Arizona has not just continued, but intensified. All along the U.S.-Mexico border, wall construction has continued during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a reported 197 miles of additional walling currently under construction.

The Immigration Action Team checked in via Zoom, and at present our primary focus is staying at home and self-care so we will remain healthy and be ready for education and advocacy actions in late summer.

- **Next meeting:** Monday, April 27
- **Location:** Conference call, contact [Jack McCullough](#) for information
- **Chair:** [Karen Coale](#)

Media/Publicity

This team is always looking for people who are interested in media relationship, social media, publicity and more.

- **Next meeting:** Thursday, April 9 at 5 p.m.
- **Location:** Virtual conferencing
- **Chair:** [Lisa Yacso](#)

Membership Services

- **Next meeting:** Thursday, April 9 at 6 p.m.
- **Location:** Virtual conferencing
- **Chair:** [Stacey Jurewicz](#)

National Popular Vote

- **Co-chairs:** [Deb Mazzaferro](#) or [Marty Shapiro](#)

Nominating

Membership on this committee is set by conditions in LWVSPA bylaws (election or Board appointment).

- **Chair:** [Amy Weintraub](#)

Reproductive Rights

This team is on hiatus through the 2020 election season.

Sustainability

This team is currently on hiatus.

- **Chair:** [Laura Crabtree](#)

Voter Service

- **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, April 28 at 6:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Conference call
- **Co-chairs:** [Robin Davidov](#), [Maryellen Gordon](#), [Caitlin Constantine](#), [Amy Keith](#), [Stephanie Owens](#)



Upcoming Events

Apr. 16: St. Pete 2020 Solar Co-op Info Session

6-7:30 p.m. @ Online video session

[Facebook](#)

Apr. 18: Annual Meeting

10-10:45 a.m. @ Online video session

[Facebook](#)

May 12: St. Pete 2020 Solar Co-op Info Session

6-7:30 p.m. @ Online video session

[Facebook](#)



For Other
Upcoming Events

Click here to visit our website for the latest updates on action group meetings and other events.



Membership: Are You Up for Renewal?

Join us. Renew your membership. We make a difference.

We need your support to continue our work in the community and at state and national levels. Whether you want to be an active member or a supporting member, your dues help advance the League's mission.

We invite you to [renew today!](#)

Renew / Join Now

We offer five levels of membership:

- Gold for \$250*
- Silver for \$125*
- Household for \$78*
- Individual for \$52
- Student for \$26

*Includes two members residing at the same address.

Note that LWVSPA keeps only about \$7 (!) of your basic dues paid at the Individual (\$52) or Household (\$78) levels. The rest goes to LWV-FL and LWV-US. Your local League has to raise almost all of its funds with voluntary contributions.

If you join at our Gold level (\$250) or Silver level (\$125), all the extra dues stay with our local League and we will recognize your generosity at our Annual Meeting.

You can also offer your financial support by upgrading your membership, offering an additional monthly, quarterly or annual donation, and encouraging others to do the same.

Consider including the League in your estate planning. Your gifts allow us to continue our education, advocacy and leadership programs to forward our mission in Making Democracy Work in the St. Petersburg area. If you would like to discuss an estate planning contribution or other gift, please **contact our office**.

The following memberships are up for renewal during this 3-month span. We invite you to **renew today!**

February 2020

Diana Acostandei
Michael Bauer
Diane Cato
Caprice & Jabaar Edmond
Susan Holderness

Lois Milne
Beth Murphy
Susan Puntillo
Yvonne Solis

March 2020

Cecilia Allen
Sheila Bernhard
Stuart Bernhard
Janet Blair
Karen & Dave Coale
Karla Correa
Linda Eaton
Carol Fishet
Ann Fox
Jessica Jacobs

Nancy Jacobson
Julie Kessel
Judy Lybrand-Kuhn
Cara McCown
Hailey Ostwalt
Julia Sharp
Caroline Shasek
Jenna Sierra
Rebecca Wilson

April 2020

Jacqueline Barszewski
Mary Berglund
Cecelia Donovan
Cathy Harrelson
Katie Hatfield
Kay Lahdenpera

Dwight Lawton
Quinn Lundquist
Jovana Markovic
Lynne Schrum
Beth Settle
Sara Wallace



2019-2020 League Leadership

OFFICERS

President: Linsey Grove
First Vice President: Robin Davidov
Second Vice President: Maryellen Gordon
Secretary: Ken Wrede
Treasurer: Caroline Bloodworth

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ama Appiah
Caitlin Constantine
Amanda Dodge
Stephanie Owens

Visit our website for more information about our local leaders.

Click here for more information about our education and advocacy groups.

EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, COMMITTEE LEADS

Voter Service: Robin Davidov, Maryellen Gordon, Caitlin Constantine, Amy Keith, Stephanie Owens
Gun Safety: On hiatus
Immigration: Karen Coale
Reproductive Rights: On hiatus
Census: Gina Gallo
Food Politics: Julie Kessel, Jen Underhill, Wendy Wesley
Sustainability: Laura Crabtree
National Popular Vote: Deb Mazzaferro, Marty Shapiro
International Relations: Judy McSwine

Media/Publicity: Lisa Yacso
Membership: Stacey Jurewicz
Nominating: Amy Weintraub
Office Administrator: Julia Sharp



League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area

[Email](#) | [Website](#)

Telephone: 727-295-5255



The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.