

THE VOTER

April 2021

Letter from the President



Dear Leaguers,

As we wind down the legislative session and the League year, it's a great time to reflect on the accomplishments of a historic, challenging year. This time last year, we were preparing for a COVID-safe Annual Meeting, canceling League events, and promoting public health measures amid an incredible election. While we're still not out of the woods, we have a vaccine on the horizon and a better understanding of the virus itself.

Despite it all, our volunteers worked tirelessly to register and empower voters in safe ways, continue to do advocacy and outreach virtually, and conduct the business of the League in new and creative ways. For example, we shifted our candidate forums to online formats in partnership with local media organizations like the Catalyst. We also launched a new website that is more user-friendly and reflective of the quality of our League.

We're planning on sharing more of our accomplishments for the year, honoring our volunteers, and chartering next year's course at our Annual Meeting; please make sure to save the date of April 17 from 10 am to Noon. Register here: [Annual Meeting Registration](#).

In League,
Linsey



TAKE ACTION

ACTION ALERTS

These next couple of weeks will be crucial in tracking key legislation as bills start to move more quickly through committees, before making their way to the Senate and House floors.

Now is the time to make your voice heard. Stay in touch via the [Capitol Reports](#) and watch your email for **Action Alerts**.





ANNUAL MEETING



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We will be holding the 2020 Annual Meeting via video conference this year.

When: Saturday, April 17 at 10 a.m.

Where: [Register Today](#)
(Video conferencing link to follow)

Members will vote on:

New members for our Board of Directors (see below)

Budget for 2021-2022

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.

Please review prior to the annual meeting:

Report of the Nominating Committee - slate of candidates for Officer, Board Member, and Nominating Committee positions

Budget Packet

Proposed "Program" (advocacy team areas)

Bylaws changes



THE SLATE: BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Linsey Grove
President
2021-2022



Robin Davidov
1st Vice President
2021-2022



Amy Keith
2nd Vice President
2021-2022



Fern Azarian
Secretary
2021-2023



Jackie Azis
Director
(2-year term)
2021-2023



Gretchen Johnson
Director
(2-year term)
2021-2023

Beate Marston
Director
(1-year term)
2021-2022

Betsy Wells
Director
(2-year term)
2021-2023

★

THE SLATE: NOMINATING COMMITTEE



Keeley Sheehan
LaForme
Chair
2021-2022



Amy Weintraub
Member
2021-2022



Ken Wrede
Member
2021-2022

LWVSPA PODCAST LAUNCHED!



THE OFFICIAL PODCAST OF THE
LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]
OF THE ST. PETERSBURG AREA

Follow Us!

The very first podcast launched March 31, 2021. This episode is the first in a series to dive into the Engage St. Pete report.

Access via Spotify and Apple Podcasts, Today!

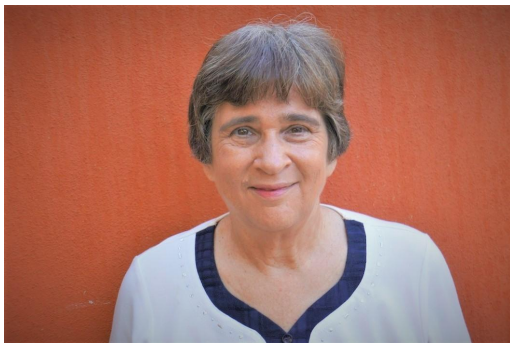
EVENTS

Dr. Robeck Racial Disparities in Health Care

**Tuesday, April 13, 2021
6:00–7:00 pm**

let's chat
*Conversation Centered Around
A Local Leader or Theme*

Register Today!



Join the LWVSPA for the third of its bimonthly series of interactive videoconferences, hosted by the Membership Committee, to allow members to get to know one another and the League.

Ilene Robeck, M.D., the presumptive new LWVSPA Health Care Action Team Lead, will be our guest for April.

Membership Chair, Amy Weintraub, will pepper Dr. Robeck with prepared questions about racial disparities in health care delivery and outcomes, asking our guest to reflect on her experience and study of this issue. Participants will feed more questions via chat.

Zoom features will be put to use to make this hour of conversation as interactive as possible, including the use of breakout "rooms" for small group discussion, as well as the use of the poll feature for trivia questions and opinion sharing.

Note: *This is an event for members only. Advance registration required: After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.*



Orientation for New &

NEW MEMBERS



Prospective League Members

Thursday, April 29,
2021 at 6:00–7:00pm

Get Plugged In to the

League's Work!

As one of the most active advocacy and policy education groups in Pinellas County, the League's current issues include voter engagement, environmental sustainability, gun safety, campaign finance reform, immigration, education, health care access, international relations, and reproductive rights. Come learn about the League's strategies to influence change and how you can join in!

Our New Member Orientation is designed to orient folks who are curious about the League, as well as those who've been members for less than a year. Our hope is that everyone will find what interests them and get involved as expediently as possible.

Advance registration required: REGISTER TODAY

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

LEAGUE LEGACY



ONE HUNDRED YEARS - KEEPING THE CELEBRATION GOING

By Voter Team Member Loren Corrieri
lorenc4re@tampabay.rr.com

During the recent Century for a Century fundraiser, badges for accomplishments were awarded honoring six suffragists. We wanted to know more about each of them and will be highlighting one of these remarkable women with you each month.

MARY MC CLOUD BETHUNE (1881-1965)

"Faith is the first factor in a life dedicated to service. Without it nothing is possible, with it nothing is impossible."

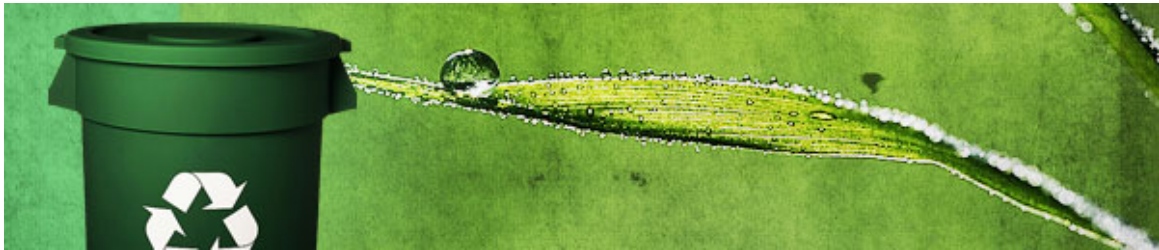
This philosophy served Mary McCloud Bethune well. Who would have imagined that a five year old child of former slaves picking cotton in South Carolina would one day become an advisor to a U.S. president. Sometimes called "the Female Booker T. Washington", Mary was an educator, organizer, and political activist. She helped make significant advances for African Americans, especially women and children locally, nationally and internationally.

Below are just some of her many accomplishments:

- **Locally**- As a resident of Daytona, FL, Mary founded a private school for African American students which later became Bethune-Cookman University where she served as president.
- **Statewide**-As president of the Florida chapter of the National Association of Colored Women she focused on registering African Americans voters despite threats from the KKK.

- **Nationally-** Mary was co-founder of the United Negro College Fund. She is well known for serving as a special advisor to Franklin Delano Roosevelt on problems related to minority groups.
- **Internationally-** Mary was a member of the delegation that drafted the charter for the United Nations. Mary McCloud Bethune was honored by the state of Florida in 2018. The legislature designated her as a subject for Florida in the National Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol, interestingly replacing that of a confederate general.

APRIL FOCUS: SUSTAINABILITY TEAM



By Voter Team Member Olivia London
 olivia.e.london@gmail.com

The Tampa Bay region is, well, all about Tampa Bay - in more ways than many of us realize. Tampa Bay and the surrounding watershed and habitat provide the environment and natural beauty, including the coastlines, that our area is known for. Focusing on protecting and restoring Tampa Bay, says Laura Crabtree, head of the Sustainability Action Team and longtime marine biologist, helps the group find a focus within the broad topic of sustainability and ties into so many other issues, including sea level rise, water quality, and wildlife protection.

The Sustainability Action Team collaborates with Tampa Bay Watch, Tampa Bay Estuary Program, Surfrider Foundation, Keep Pinellas Beautiful, and other environmental organizations on projects to support the Tampa Bay Estuary, such as community cleanups, which provide a nice opportunity to get outside and volunteer in the midst of COVID-19. However, Laura emphasizes that while we can clean as much as humanly possible, environmental protection comes down to policies and decisions made at the city, county, and state level.

So much of what the League of Women Voters is about, says Laura, is being knowledgeable civic participants. That's where Laura and the Action Team really come in - researching the issues, providing education and information on how proposed policies will impact the environment, and sharing guidance on how to effectively and knowledgeably take action to advocate for the environment.

For those considering getting involved with the Sustainability Action Team, the group is looking for volunteers interested in keeping up with legislation and researching the issues in order to educate others and guide whether the League will lend support to community partners, contact local leaders, or engage with proposed legislation.

NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE NEWS



Conservatives for NPV

Floridians for National Popular Vote has added a new coalition member: Conservatives for NPV. The National Popular Vote preserves the Electoral College, must be enacted by state legislators, and does not require approval by the US Congress. As a non-partisan issue, we are delighted to have a conservative organization join our other coalition members, LWV Florida, Common Cause Florida and Making Every Vote Matter.

NPV Op-Eds and Education Campaign

Floridians for National Popular Vote has had success getting 22 Op-Eds published in newspapers around the state followed by numerous Letters-to-the-editor published.

Another campaign under way is a weekly educational series to all Legislators and their staff via email (Mail Chimp). The goal is to provide tidbits of quality information to dispel the negative concepts that a lot of people have about NPV.

Want to learn more? [Check out this article](#) written by Deb Mazzaferro for Floridians for National Popular Vote

IMMIGRATION TEAM RETIRES

Each year, in preparation for the Annual Program Planning Meeting, the Immigration Action Team identifies its areas for advocacy and related educational events/projects. However this year was different, because announcements at the national level indicated a dramatic change in immigration policy — one that addresses the main points outlined in the League's Position on Immigration. So we decided to pause our efforts.

Considerable creative and humane solutions will be needed to repair the current immigration system. As this process unfolds at the border and across the nation — we encourage you to access our League's website to gain an understanding of the changes taking place. We have several [fact sheets](#) covering many aspects of immigration and recent policies, and we encourage you to reference them.



I want to thank those who attended our educational forums such as the panel of DREAMers and our more recent Immigration Conversations — first at a local establishment and then via ZOOM.

My personal thanks goes to the Immigration Team whose creativity, persistence and professionalism produced first-rate educational tools and events. The most recent team includes Lydia Castle, Jack McCullough, Karen Raihill, Gina Rothlein, Lynne Schrum, Wendy Snyder, Robin Warren and Linda Whitley — who despite COVID were very active this past year.

I also want to acknowledge my appreciation for the creative advertising from the Communications Team, dependable help from Julia and Linsey's sage advice and openness to new ideas.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



By Voter Team Member Bonnie Hough
bonnie@banyannonprofitstrategy.com

Meet Natasha Samreny, the co-lead of the Marketing & Publicity team for LWVSPA. Natasha first got involved with the League about this time last year, when the pandemic turned life upside down and she saw a call for volunteers. Since then, her favorite League moment has been hosting the Get Out The Vote zoom event the weekend before the election, but what Natasha loves most about her work with the League is that she gets to connect with and support so many women who care deeply about so many different community issues.

Outside of her "League Life", Natasha is a stand-up comedian who loves to spend her time at St. Pete's many coffee shops, theaters, bars, and event venues enjoying other live music and performances. She especially loves Studio 620 - where she recently performing in a reading of Jack Kerouac. You can find all of her [upcoming shows here](#).

When I asked Natasha what she was most excited about for 2021, she said - without missing a beat - "Getting out of the house!" (Aren't we all?!)

VOLUNTEER!

HELP WANTED:

- **The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact** wants a volunteer to call organizations and associations to schedule zoom or in-person educational speaking engagements. We have volunteers all over the state who are prepared to speak as subject matter experts. [More info on Floridians for NPV](#). Contact Deb@CoachMaz.com
- **The Sustainability Action Team** is looking for volunteers interested in keeping up with legislation and researching the issues in order to educate others and guide whether the League will lend support to community partners, contact local leaders, or engage with proposed legislation. If interested contact Laura Crabtree Crabtree.league@gmail.com



Volunteer Corner Opportunities for You!

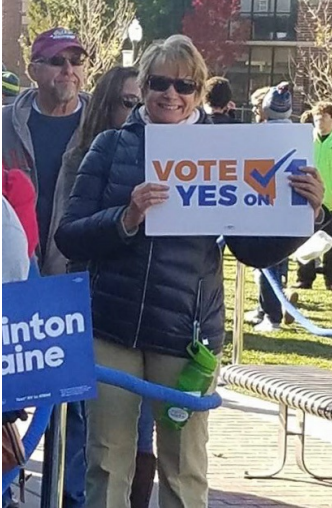
Gina Burchenal, Nita Shepherd





“CREAM OF THE CROP” – VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

Thumbs Up, Way Up!



Pat Fling, St. Petersburg Area chapter, and Cynthia Archbold, Palm Beach chapter are the March “Cream of the Crop” volunteers. The “Cream of the Crop” recognition goes to those volunteers who performed exceptional volunteer efforts during the month. Pat and Cynthia are members of the National Popular Vote (NPV) Interstate Compact team lead by Deb Mazzaferro and Marty Shapiro.

(Above, Pat Fling in Nevada at a demonstration to pass a gun violence prevention bill)

As volunteers for the Op-Eds and Letters to Editor efforts from December 2020 – March 2021, Pat and Cynthia joined their combined communications expertise to reach out to Editorial Boards across Florida securing agreements from 22 local newspapers to run OP-EDs on promoting the NPV. Using other volunteers across the state, they guided local constituents in writing the OP-EDs, to include editing the final product. They also followed up with local respondents who wrote Letters to the Editor.

Through their efforts, Pat and Cynthia reinforced the need for a national popular vote system by educating readers across Florida about the importance of having an alternative to the Electoral College system. The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact was introduced in 2006; the League of Women Voters United States has supported the NPV since 2010 after a thorough study of its merits. For more information go to Floridians for [National Popular Vote](#)



TELL US ABOUT YOUR TEAM’S “Cream of the Crop”

The Membership team is launching a new program to formally and publicly recognize a volunteer or volunteers from each team, or on the Board, who demonstrated exceptional service. This will be done on a monthly basis, so I really need your help to make this work. First off, I’m going to ask you to identify a volunteer(s) who you would like to recognize for exceptional volunteer work during the month. We want to know what the volunteer did and why you chose to recognize them. Of course, all volunteers are exceptional, but we want to recognize the ones that really stood out.

Our hope is to offer recognition in the form of a Facebook posting, a column in the Volunteer section of the monthly newsletter, a blurb on the

League's website, and a hand-written thank you note.

Like everything in this world this information is time sensitive, so I would need it back by the **25th of each month** to be posted the following month.

Please answer the following questions and email your responses to me, Beth Settle at samster1212@hotmail.com.

Team Name or Board:

Team Lead Name:

Name of Event:

Date of Event:

Volunteer's Name:

A short blurb on what he or she did:

How the volunteer's effort advanced the League's mission:

Please attach a photo of volunteer in action (if possible)

Short and sweet. Looking forward to hearing about all the wonderful things our volunteers are doing for the League.

Beth Settle at samster1212@hotmail.com,

Radical Gratitude Squad ☐, LWVSPA Membership Committee

Mark Your Calendars!

March 2- April 30 - Legislative Session (See [Capitol Reports](#))

April 17 at 10 a.m.- Annual Meeting

June - General Meeting

July 26 – Deadline to register for [St. Petersburg Primary Elections](#)

August - General Meeting

August 24 – [St. Petersburg Primary Election and St. Pete Beach](#)

[Special Election](#)

October - General Meeting

October 4 – Deadline to register for [Municipal General Elections](#)

November 2 – [Municipal General Elections](#)

December - Holiday Party (Covid permitting)



VISIT OUR WEBSITE

- [April Calendar of Events/Meetings](#)
- [Meet our Board](#)
- [Explore Issues](#)
- [Check Out our Blog Archives](#)
- [Engage!](#)

Renew / Join Now



Welcome New Members

Our League is proud to welcome these newest members!

Ashly Delaney
Nikki DiGiovanni
Peggy Flatley

Vivian Fueyo
Kristen Maddox
Lynn Ridley

Membership: Are You Up for Renewal?

April 2021

Mary Berglund
Cindy Campbell
Melissa Curran
Cecelia Donovan
Meg Ebner
Kay Lahdenpera
Dwight Lawton
Quinn Lundquist

Susie Paterson
Kay Paul
Kimberly Rodgers
Lynne Schrum
Beth Settle
Faye Tippy
Sara Wallace

March 2021

Sheila Bernhard
Stuart Bernhard
Janet Blair
Karla Correa
Julie Kessel
Genevieve Kiernan

Cora Kostka
Barbara Lagasi
Cara McCown
Anne Rawley
Rebecca Shaffer

February 2021

Diana Acostandei
Megan Albertson
Mary Bumgarner
Kurt Calderone
Jeanne Coleman
Brenna Dukes
Tim Dutton
Megan Firestone
Lisa Foushee
Vilma Fry

Darby Hall
Jane Holloway
Ekta Mangat
Lois Milne
Kathy Parker
Nick Pavonetti
Susan Puntillo
Lupe Torre
Lizzy Wells

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.

