

THE VOTER

August 2020

Letter from the President

Dear Leaguers,

This month saw the passing of an incredible civil rights leader and public servant, Rep. John Lewis. During a time where Americans are reckoning with a long history of systemic racism and its impact on our democracy, it is his words that remind us to keep fighting and making "good trouble." (Read Rep. Lewis' final words [here](#).)



I can think of no better way to memorialize his legacy than to ask our members to call their elected officials to tell them to support reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act and H.R. 1, the For the People Act, a House bill that's purpose is "to expand Americans' access to the ballot box, reduce the influence of big money in politics, and strengthen ethics rules for public servants, and for other purposes."

Many, like John Lewis, sacrificed so much to ensure that civil rights, like voting, were extended to all Americans. We honor his legacy by continuing that fight as voter and election watchdogs, voter service providers, and voting rights advocates.

In League,
Linsey



Everything You Need to Know About Voting in the Aug. 18 Primary

We're just days away from the Aug. 18 primary election — are you ready to vote?

Here are a few things you should keep in mind:

- **Request your mail ballot now.** If you haven't requested your mail ballot yet, please do it now at votepinellas.com. Go ahead; we'll be here when you get back.
- **Sign the back of your ballot envelope.** This is the top reason mail ballots are flagged for issues in Pinellas County! (And while you're at it, we encourage you to put your email address or phone number

vote
by mail · in person · every time

there too — if there's an issue with your ballot, you want to hear about it as soon as possible, don't you?)

- **Get your ballot in on time!** You MUST get your ballot back to the Supervisor of Elections by 7 p.m. on Election Day. The postmarked date is not enough. This is one of the main reasons why mail ballots are not counted — they don't get there in time!
- **Drop your ballot off in person.** Nervous about the postal service? The Supervisor of Elections has [23 locations](#) where you can drop off your ballot ahead of the election. Read the list carefully; it includes the dates and times when the ballot drop-off locations will be open. And make sure to put your ballot in the CORRECT drop-off box, i.e. NOT THE BOOK RETURN BOX.
- **Track your ballot.** You can use [this online tool](#) to make sure your ballot gets to the Supervisor of Elections office. It will also let you know if there are any issues with your ballot so you can be proactive about getting them resolved.

You can find the answers to [more common questions about voting by mail](#) on our [Voter Guide](#). You can also reach out to the [Voter & Election Protection team](#).

How to Get Informed About the Candidates

- **Candidate Forums:** If you didn't catch the excellent [candidate forums](#) the League put on over the past couple of weeks, you're in luck - they're available to watch online! We've already got four scheduled for September; details are available below.
 - Pinellas County School Board: [Facebook](#) | [YouTube](#)
 - 6th Judicial Circuit: [YouTube](#)
- **Voter Guide:** The [Voter Guide](#) for the 2020 primary election is live! You'll find responses for everything from State House races to the special city council election in Pinellas Park. Check it out before you vote, and make sure to share it on social media so others can use it too!
- **Our New Podcast:** Did you know we have a podcast? We do! It's called ["Your Vote, Your Voice"](#), and it's all about democracy and voting! If you're not sure what all of the offices on your ballot *do*, exactly, then you'll want to check out our latest episode. You can [listen here](#).
- **Local Journalism:** We have several local news outlets in our community that are excellent resources for local and county elections, including [Tampa Bay Times](#), [Tampa Bay Newspapers](#), [St. Pete Catalyst](#) and the [Weekly Challenger](#).

How to Empower Other Voters

- **Make sure they know how to vote by mail.** A lack of knowledge about voting by mail is a real obstacle faced by [many first-time mail voters](#). If you've voted by mail before, use your experience to help newbie mail voters understand how to do it.
- **Share accurate information.** Disinformation campaigns that aim to confuse people about our elections are ramping up. You will be doing a great service for our community and the integrity of our electoral process by taking the time to think critically and do your due diligence before passing on information to others.
- **Become a trained non-partisan poll monitor.** The Voter and

Election Protection team is recruiting volunteers to serve as mobile poll monitors and social media monitors ahead of the Aug. 18 primary. The virtual training will be held Aug. 5; you can [register here](#). More info can be found below.

- **Become a poll worker** (but only if you are comfortable doing so). One of the very real risks we're facing is a [shortage of poll workers](#) due to the pandemic. If you are at all comfortable doing so, please consider signing up to [become a poll worker](#).



Save the Date: Thursday Night Candidate Forums!

Spend Thursday nights in September with the LWVSPA and the candidates who are vying for your vote in the General Election!

The online [candidate forums](#) are an excellent way to hear directly from the candidates themselves, so make sure to mark your calendar so you don't miss them.

All forums will start at 7 p.m. on the [LWVSPA Facebook page](#).

- **Sept. 3:** Tax Collector
- **Sept. 10:** Sheriff
- **Sept. 17:** Commissioners
- **Sept. 24:** Supervisor of Elections

The graphic is a vertical banner with a dark blue background on the left and a light grey background on the right. On the left, the LWV logo is at the top, followed by the text 'LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ST. PETERSBURG'. Below that, it says 'SEPTEMBER ONLINE GENERAL ELECTION CANDIDATES FORUMS ON FACEBOOK LIVE @LWVSPA AT 7 PM'. At the bottom of the left side, the words 'SAVE THE DATES' are written vertically in white. On the right side, there are two red stars at the top, followed by the text 'THURSDAY NIGHTS WITH THE LEAGUE!'. Below that, there are four bullet points listing the dates and topics of the forums: 'SEPTEMBER 3, 2020 Pinellas County Tax Collector Candidates Forum', 'SEPTEMBER 10, 2020 Pinellas County Sheriff Candidates Forum', 'SEPTEMBER 17, 2020 Pinellas County Commissioners Candidates Forum', and 'SEPTEMBER 24, 2020 Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections Candidates Forum'. A vertical line of red stars runs down the right side of the banner.

All forums are co-sponsored by the [League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County](#).

It takes a lot of volunteer support to help us pull off these events. If you're interested in volunteering, email [Robin Davidov](#).



LWVSPA Wins Grant to Lead LGBTQ+ Voter Outreach Campaign



Through the generous grant from the Plus Project+ at the [Community Foundation of Tampa Bay](#), we will be leading an LGBTQ+ focused voter registration, outreach, and empowerment campaign in Pinellas County.

This campaign will focus on making civic engagement — specifically voting and participating in the census — fun, easy, and empowering for the LGBTQ+ community.

As part of this campaign, we'll:

- Fund LGBTQ+ Student Projects ([apply here](#) to become a student fellow) that are student-led and community and/or school focused

- for improved civic engagement;
- Execute an interactive mural in downtown St. Pete designed by local gay Latino artist [John Gascot](#);
- Ensure training for Voter Assistance volunteers focused on the unique challenges of trans and non-binary voters;
- Help produce a socially distanced, Hocus Pocus-themed drag performance near the Supervisor of Elections office at Mirror Lake during early voting for the General Election.

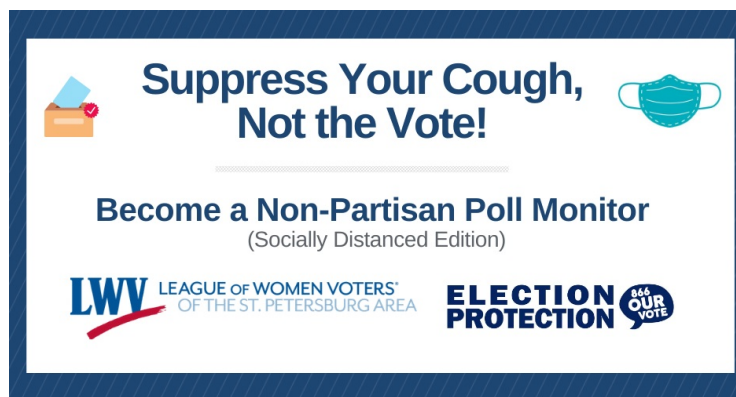
If you'd like to get involved in the execution of the Equality Voters campaign, please email [Julia Sharp](#).



Volunteers Needed: Poll Monitors, Postcard Writers & More

As you can already see, we've got a lot of work to do as we go into the final months before the November general election!

Whether you've been thinking about getting more involved with the League or you've just got a lot of energy ahead of the election that you'd like to put to use, we've got something for you to work on.



Non-Partisan (Socially Distanced) Poll Monitors

The Voter and Election Protection team is holding a training for poll monitors for the upcoming primary election. This time we're keeping it socially distanced, with mobile poll monitors who will help us keep actual eyes on polling locations around the county and social media monitors who will help us find and report mis/disinformation related to voting.

If you're feeling unsure about signing up for social media monitoring, please be aware that we need a lot of people of all technological abilities and who are part of all kinds of communities to help us with this! We will make sure you get all the training and support you need to be successful!

When: Wednesday, Aug. 5 @ 6:30 p.m.

Where: Online video session

Please [register here](#) and the video link will be emailed to you the day before the session. If you have questions, please email the [Voter and Election Protection team](#).

Postcard Writing

The League is participating in a statewide postcard campaign aimed at informing 250,000 returning citizens about how they can register to vote.

We've committed to filling out and sending 1,000 of them as of right now, so we need your help to make this happen.

If you are interested in participating, please fill out [this form](#) and we'll be in touch soon.

Newsletter Editor & Volunteer Coordinator

We're looking for two people who are interested in taking on ongoing roles with the LWVSPA: one to serve as the editor of the Voter and the other to serve as volunteer coordinator. You can read the role descriptions at the links below:

- [Editor of the Voter, our monthly newsletter](#)
- [Volunteer coordinator](#)

These roles are perfect for people who want to get involved with the LWVSPA but aren't sure about committing to a single action team. Each role requires about 5-8 hours a month, and you can do most of the work on your own time. You'll also have a lot of independence to make these roles your own!

If you're interested, email [Caitlin Constantine](#).



Get Plugged In: Join Our Bi-Monthly General Meetings

Our General Meeting for all members is your chance to get the latest updates on what's going on with the League, plus you'll get the chance to communicate directly with League leaders and other members.

- **When:** Wednesday, Aug. 19 @ 6-7:30 p.m.
- **Where:** Video conference call ([RSVP to receive a link](#))

As one of the most active advocacy and policy education groups in Pinellas County, the League currently has teams working on:

- Voter Guide
- Voter Registration
- Voter Education and Outreach & Candidate Forums
- Census
- Election & Voter Protection
- Immigration
- National Popular Vote
- Food Politics
- Social Justice
- Environmental Sustainability

Get info on all the League's strategies to influence change and how you can join in!



Member Spotlight: Alexis Quintal

This month, meet new member Alexis Quintal:

"I joined the League because I needed to educate myself better on the voting process and I also wanted to share that learned knowledge with others.

"As a marketing consultant, I collaborate with and



support local businesses and organizations, which gives me a platform to share that information with others.

"I recently joined the League in July, and immediately was recruited to join the Membership Committee. I have a lot of experience recruiting members from my previous involvement in non-profit organizations, and I also love to plan events that bring people together.

"I hope to use these skills to help keep League members connected during this virtual period.

"I am grateful for the experience to widen my network and get involved with civic engagement groups through the League of Women Voters."

- Follow Alexis online at: [Instagram](#) | [Website](#)
- Read Alexis' [blog post about voting by mail](#)



This Month's Digital Dining: Council Member Gina Driscoll and Food Insecurity

DIGITAL DINING



Join the Food Politics team for this exciting and highly relevant discussion featuring St. Petersburg City Council member Gina Driscoll as she tackles food access and insecurity in our community.

- **When:** Thursday, Aug. 13 @ 6:30 p.m.
- **Where:** Online video session ([RSVP to receive the link](#))

Driscoll will be talking about our city's resolution to support an independent advisory food policy council, ideas for a multi-pronged approach to food insecurity in St. Petersburg and recommendations to support more urban agriculture.

This is a great opportunity to learn more about how local government can have an impact on an issue that affects so many people in our community.

The Food Politics team encourages attendees to use this an opportunity to move along in their journey to a plant-centered diet, so they've identified some terrific plant-based dining partners and are asking you to order a meal from one of these eateries (listed on the [event RSVP page](#)) and take it home for the event. That said, everyone is invited to attend, no matter where your dinner comes from.



What's Happening Around LWVSPA?

Education

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

Gun Safety

This team is on hiatus through 2020.

Food Politics

The Food Politics team is preparing to host another of its popular Digital Dining events! This time, the special guest is City Council Member Gina Driscoll! Join the team as they discuss food insecurity in our community. That event is scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 13 at 6:30 p.m. You must register at [this link](#) to receive access to the Zoom call.

- **Next Meeting:** Monday, Aug. 17 at 7 p.m.
- **Location:** Conference call 605-472-5621; code: 555498)
- **Co-chairs:** [Julie Kessel](#), [Jen Underhill](#) and [Wendy Wesley](#)

Immigration

The Immigration team is gearing up to have its next Immigration Conversation on Aug. 24 at 6:30 p.m. Join them to get the facts about immigration so you can be an informed voter on the subject. You'll need to [register first](#) before you can receive the link.

- **Next meeting:** Monday, Aug. 24 @ 1:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Conference call, contact [Karen Coale](#) for information
- **Chair:** [Karen Coale](#)

Media/Publicity

- **Next meeting:** Wednesday, Aug. 6 @ 5:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Virtual conferencing
- **Chair:** [Lisa Yacso](#)

Membership Services

- **Next meeting:** Wednesday, Aug. 26 at 6 p.m.
- **Location:** Virtual conferencing
- **Chair:** [Amy Weintraub](#)

National Popular Vote

The National Popular Vote addresses the inequities of the "winner take all" system of awarding each state's electoral votes to the winner of a plurality in 48 states. It advocates for Every Vote Equal.

There are many calls by politicians, authors and social media influencers to abolish the Electoral system via an amendment. This is impractical and unnecessary as the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact is 70% of the way toward being implemented.

Formed in 2004 and using the states' rights, the NPVIC is passed by state legislators and goes into effect when 270 electors are pledged to vote for the winner in ALL 50 states.

For more information, visit [Floridians for National Popular Vote](#). You can find upcoming events by national speakers [here](#).

- **Co-chairs:** [Deb Mazzaferro](#), [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.

Social Justice

- **Next Meeting:** Thursday, Aug. 13 at 7 p.m.
- **Location:** [Online meeting](#)
- **Co-chairs:** [Linsey Grove](#) and [Stacey Kroto](#)

Sustainability

This team is currently on hiatus.

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

Voter Service

- **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, Aug. 25 at 6:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Conference call
- **Co-chairs:** [Robin Davidov](#), [Maryellen Gordon](#), [Caitlin Constantine](#), [Amy Keith](#), [Stephanie Owens](#)



Upcoming Events

Aug. 5: Non-Partisan Poll Monitor Training (Social Distance Edition)

6:30-8:30 p.m. @ Online video session

[Register](#)

Aug. 6: Restore the Vote: The History of the Voting Rights Act

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

[Facebook](#)

Aug. 13: Digital Dining with City Council Member Gina Driscoll

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

[Facebook](#) | [RSVP](#)

Aug. 19: All-Member General Meeting

6-7:30 p.m. @ [Online video session](#)

Aug. 24: Immigration Conversation

6:30-7:45 p.m. @ Online video session

[Facebook](#) | [RSVP](#)

Sept. 8: New Member Orientation

6-7 p.m. @ [Online video session](#)





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!](#)

July 2020

Baran, Evelyn
 Bonanni, Elinor
 Boyd, Jennifer
 Carroll, Nita
 Crabtree, Laura
 Darlington, Theresa
 Fite, Celia
 Flaherty, Lisa
 Hanewicz, Lisset

Hartwell, Barbara
 Hoekenga, Daniel
 Keith, Amy
 Kroto, Stacey
 Moorefield, Marti
 Nelson, Molly
 Shaw, Lisa
 Turley, Laura



OFFICERS

President: Linsey Grove
First Vice President: Robin Davidov
Second Vice President: Amy Keith
Secretary: Ken Wrede
Treasurer: Gina Gallo

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ama Appiah
Nita Carroll
Ann Dieterle
Beate Marston
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
Social Justice: Linsey Grove, Stacey Kroto

Media/Publicity: Lisa Yacso
Membership: Amy Weintraub
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.**