

THE VOTER

December 2020

Letter from the President



Dear Leaguers,

I hope this letter finds you and your family safe and well. It's been a month now since the election; I hope that many of you took time for yourselves to rest and recharge after an exciting, busy few months. I am profoundly thankful for the incredible work of our volunteers and their commitment to a safe, secure, accessible democracy. Despite all the barriers and challenges 2020 has thrown our way, you persisted and turned out for our community. We created meaningful, long-lasting partnerships with many organizations across the city and in turn, learned more about the diverse mosaic of communities that reside here in St. Pete. My hope is that we continue to build trust, offer a hand, and listen to those who seek to collaborate with us in making democracy shine for everyone in the Sunshine City.

My wish is for you to have a safe and reflective holiday season as we embark on the last part of our League year. Legislative session is right around the corner with Program Planning and the Annual Meeting in tow. If you are interested in helping with any of these events or activities, please let me know! We're planning on hosting a few advocacy trainings soon to prepare members for legislative meetings, working with policymakers, and understanding how to navigate our civic spaces. Stay tuned for more information!

Below, I'd like to give a special thanks to the tireless volunteers who registered, educated, and worked with voters in our community, hosted and supported our candidate forums, produced our award-winning Voter Guide, and served as poll monitors during an unprecedented, stressful election.

Stay safe and happy holidays,
Linsey

Election Season Volunteer Shout Out:

- Cynthia & Mark Barasz
- Meryl Blackman
- Dorothy Cappadona
- Heidi Davis
- Amy Durand
- Sue Griffin
- Mary Hanrahan
- Bill Johnson (our North Pinellas President!)
- Rebecca Lyons
- Patti Myers
- Doris Reeves-Lipscomb (another NPC member!)
- Natasha Samreny

- Vicki Smaridge
- Kathy Wagner
- Betsy Wells
- Livia Zien

Our Fearless Voter Services Leadership:

- Ama Appiah (Candidate Forums and Social Media)
- Caitlin Constantine (Election and Voter Protection)
- Robin Davidov (Candidate Forums and Speakers Bureau)
- Maryellen Gordon (Voter Registration and Returning Citizen Outreach)
- Amy Keith (Election and Voter Protection)
- Marti Moorefield (Voter Guide)



LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE ST. PETERSBURG AREA

CENTURY
for a
CENTURY

SPONSORS WANTED!

We're looking for local businesses and organizations to sponsor our Century for a Century Virtual Challenge!

There are a variety of sponsorship levels and ways to partner -- ***we need your help to reach out to potential sponsors and make the ask!***

Here is a PDF version of our sponsorship letter and information about the challenge. [Sponsor Letter](#)



Register Today!

As 2020 comes to a close, let's start 2021 on the right foot, pedal, or kick! Register today for our Century for a Century virtual challenge! This is a 6-week 100-mile race to fundraise for the LWVSPA. How you get those 100 miles is up to you! To register and/or donate to a team or individual participating in this event, [please click here](#).



LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE ST. PETERSBURG AREA





DID YOU GET OUR LETTER?

Many of us will remember the powerful words of the late Representative and Civil Rights Leader, John Lewis when he said, *"Your vote is precious, almost sacred. It is the most powerful nonviolent tool we have to create a more perfect union."*

As seen from the recent record-breaking numbers from our 2020 Election, nearly 150 million people cast a ballot according to the U.S. Elections Project. Our league made significant impact in getting out the vote and ensuring a safe and fair election.

One of the most impressive programs of your St. Petersburg Area league this year was the role of the Voter Protection Team -- the Pinellas County lead for the national Election Protection Coalition.

The coalition is a nationwide non-partisan organization that trained and supported volunteer poll monitors outside polling places on Election Day to help ensure that every eligible voter who wanted to vote is able to do so. What an accomplishment this was, evidenced by that massive voter turnout!

Help keep the momentum going, by supporting your League of Women Voters St Petersburg Area with your membership and donation. Please consider an end-of-year gift to our league.

If you received our letter, you may have already sent your check. If not, you can make a donation online right now!

[DONATE NOW](#)



Feast of Friends: a LWVSPA/Deuces Thank You Event for a Great Election Season!

As a BIG thank you to all of the League volunteers and community partners, we're hosting a Feast of Friends in partnership with the Deuces Live! on **December 20th, 2020 at 5pm**. This COVID-19-

safe event is a drive-in movie with local vendors. Location and movie TBD. **Stay tuned to our social media and weekly update for more information as it becomes available!**



TAKE ACTION TODAY!

The Social Justice Team has partnered with the Black Health Equity Alliance, the Foundation for a Healthy St. Petersburg, and over 150 organizations and community members to push for the passage of a resolution to declare racism a public health crisis in the city of St. Petersburg. We are currently working with Councilwoman Amy Foster on a comprehensive resolution. If you haven't already, we'd love more signatures for our sign-on letter. [Learn more and sign on](#)



MEMBER FOCUS: KAREN COALE

Immigration Action Team

Over the past four years, news headlines of children separated from their parents at the border, detention camps and deportation of non-violent undocumented immigrants have grabbed our attention and left us incredulous – How can these horrors be happening in our country? What can we do?

Karen Coale and her Immigration Action Team are working diligently to understand the issues, educate the public and advocate where possible for change.

More than 10 years ago, forward-thinking LWV members began a process to engage local, state and national league members to study key issues surrounding immigration. From that study a [position statement](#) on immigration was created. This one-page position continues



to guide the work of the LWVSPA Immigration Action Team and others at the state and national levels.

Karen came to LWVSPA in 2011, shortly after the national league's position on immigration was in place. Long-time league member Sue Schultz recruited Karen to help her start the St. Petersburg Area Immigration Action Team. Sue was familiar with the work that Karen was already doing with her church to advocate for Florida farmworkers, and Sue knew Karen would provide excellent leadership for the new team.

Today, the Immigration Action Team is comprised of a passionate core group of 10 people who reach out to nearly 80 LWVSPA members with an interest in immigration issues, form strategic partnerships with other non-partisan organizations and take action to change policies.

Along the way, Karen and her team have enjoyed some successes. In 2018 the Trump administration announced its Zero Tolerance Policy resulting in separation at the border of children and their families. Karen and her team worked in partnership with the local ACLU to protest with more than 700 people in St. Petersburg and tens of thousands of people throughout the country under the banner of "Families Belong Together."

The following year, on Mother's Day, the Immigration Action Team partnered with the Society of Friends to protest the detention of children in Homestead, Florida. On Aug. 3, 2019 the last of more than 3,000 children were taken out of the Homestead Detention Center. On Oct. 28, 2019 the federal government announced it would not renew its contract with Calibur, the private prison company running the detention center in Homestead. The facility was closed in November.

"There is so much power when we join forces with others," says Karen. And, there is so much work to be done!

Karen is positive we are on the cusp of change. With the new administration taking over soon, Karen says, "The immigration landscape is getting brighter. A number of changes have already been announced by the Biden team: Annual allotment of refugees will rise from 15,000 to 125,000 and DACA will be fully supported. The situation at our southern border is horrific and will take some time to address – including aid to those Central American Countries from which many refugees immigrated." But, Karen is energized and confident that change is coming.

If you are interested in soul-satisfying work, please contact Karen at kcoale@tampabay.rr.com or call (727) 204 9141. She has work for you with time commitments that range from 4-6 hrs/mo to attend events and contact legislators, to 10-15 hrs/mo to take on a project with the core team. Karen is also looking for a co-lead!



SOCIAL ACTION JUSTICE ACTION TEAM BOOK CLUB *You're Invited!*

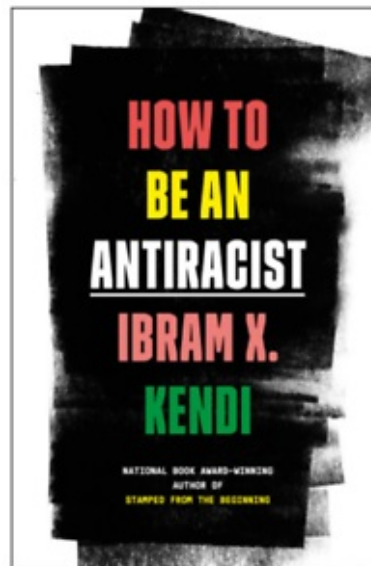
The Social Justice Action Team recently completed its first successful book club reading Robin DiAngelo's ***White Fragility***.

We will be starting up again mid-January to read and discuss Ibram X. Kendi's ***How to be an Anti-Racist***.

If you are interested in joining us for this

book, please [RSVP](#).

Additionally, we are looking for members who may want to facilitate the discussions for this book. If interested in facilitating or if you have any questions, please call **Stacey Kroto** at enhancedvibes@gmail.com or **Linsey Grove** at linsey.grove@gmail.com.



LOOKING FOR A STOCKING STUFFER?



Our new League facemasks are just \$15 and 100% of the proceeds stay with the League.

Facemasks are mailed via USPS or office pick up can be arranged.

[PURCHASE ONLINE](#)

This time in suffrage purple and white (famous colors of the U.S. suffrage movement). Purple would come to stand for loyalty, white for purity and gold for hope.

In the early 1900s, suffragists began to realize the need to come up with a brand, just as their fellow British suffragettes had done. They wanted to convey that they were smart, capable women who would bring civility to politics with the vote. British women were using green, white and violet, which stood for “give women the vote,” while also representing royalty, freedom, purity and hope. American women replaced green with gold to pay homage to the use of the sunflower in the 1867 suffrage referendum campaign, but decided to keep purple and white.



LITTLE FREE LIBRARY NOW AT OUR OFFICE

On top of the incredible election related accomplishments this year, the League became the stewards of our own Little Free Library (Charter #109955). Our office at the Sanderlin Center has proven to be a great location for our new LFL.

In our first week every single book was scooped up by readers of all ages with excitement for the



story inside. We're restocked and ready for more visitors!

If you have any books you'd like to share with us, please feel free to drop them off directly into our LFL or reach out to Julia Sharp at office@lwvspa.org.

If you're looking for a new read while staying home and staying safe, check out a LFL for a good book. [Learn more about LFLs](#) in St. Pete. Or [find a LFL](#) near you.



NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



For a little over a year I have been watching the work being done in the St. Petersburg league. I've taken on some light duties leading up to the election, trying to find a place where my interests might fit in this dynamic and energetic group of highly competent worker bees.

I recently took over the task of editing the monthly "Voter" newsletter with a specific personal goal in mind: I want to know more about the amazing work being done! I figure editing the newsletter will give me a bird's eye view of the hive and, because it is a monthly commitment, I'll have some built-in accountability to make progress toward my goal.

Like many organizations, LWSPA worker bees are so busy doing important and groundbreaking work that there is no time to tell others about the challenges, successes and strategic partnerships that are carrying forward the league's mission each day. I want to bring forward these stories in the hopes that readers will be inspired, especially members who are searching for a place where they might offer their talents and support. And, hopefully, we'll learn together.

So hang in there with me as I ask questions and encourage members to teach me. I hope you will help me by offering your stories, ideas and insights. ***Please send your ideas williams.deborah21@gmail.com***

November Committee Meetings

Social Justice Team Meeting

December 10, 2020 @ 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

[Google Meet](#)

Food Politics Meeting

December 14, 2020 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

[Google Meet](#)

Media & Publicity Committee

December 15, 2020 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

[Google Meet](#)

Immigration Action Group

December 15, 2020 @ 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Video Conference

Contact kcoale@tampabay.rr.com for code to join the meeting or questions.

Committee on Membership Meeting

December 15, 2020 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

[Google Meet](#)

Voter Service Committee

December 22, 2020 @ 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Conference Call 605-472-5621

Access Code. 555498

Fund Development Committee Meeting

January 6, 2021 @ 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

[Google Meet](#)



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 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.

[Renew / Join Now](#)

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 month. We invite you to **renew today!**

December 2020

Jan Bergman
Kate Ciembronowicz
Dianne Clarke
Marci Emerson
Rebecca Falkenberry
Linda Glod

Becky Griffin
Karen Marder
Susan Mayer
Joan Thurmond
Mildred Turley
Iris Yetter



2020-2021 League Leadership

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

[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
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: TBD
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.