

THE VOTER

May 2021

Letter from the President



Dear Leaguers,

A new League year has started as a difficult legislative session has closed. We fought hard against voter suppression, transphobic, preemption, and anti-environmental policies amongst many others this session.

While we witness the passing of anti-democratic policies that attack many of our constitutional rights, our league members worked tirelessly to write letters and emails, make calls, and meet with legislators.

We have a lot of work ahead of us; the passage of SB90 and redistricting, we will have to educate and engage voters and our community to ensure we can overcome these new challenges.

The league has stood the test of difficult structural and political barriers for the past century and we're not deterred now. We believe in the core values and promise of our democracy: we know that the only way to strengthen it is by empowering voter and defending democracy.

In League,
Linsey



2020/21 AWARDS

The following awards were presented at the virtual Annual Meeting held on April 17th. Congratulations to these outstanding individuals!

In addition to presenting awards, members accepted the [slate of officers and directors](#) and approved [programs](#) for the 2021/22 year.

This is a great time to choose a team and [engage!](#)

Making Democracy Work Award



*Presented to Voter Services
Team:*

**Robin Davidov, Marti
Moorefield, Ama Appiah, Amy
Keith, Caitlin Constantine,
and Maryellen Gordon**



**Virginia Burnside
Award**
*Presented to
Karen Coale*

[Click here](#) to learn more about Virginia Burnside and Florida Women's Fight for Suffrage.

EVENTS

ST. PETERSBURG ALUMNAE CHAPTER OF DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.,
THE DR. CARTER G. WOODSON AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MUSEUM &
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE ST. PETERSBURG AREA
PRESENT



Coffee service
provided by:
H°GG BATCH
EXPERIMENTAL COFFEE ROASTERS

Join us for coffee, conversation, and camaraderie

A DISCUSSION OF RACE & POLITICS

This month's topic:
Fighting Voter Suppression: A Call for Unity

Wednesday, May 5, 2021 - 12 noon to 1:30 pm

OUR SPEAKERS



MICHELE K. RAYNER-GOOLSBY
FL House of Representatives
HD-70



RENE' FLOWERS
Pinellas County
Commissioner



DEBORAH FIGGS-SANDERS
St. Petersburg City
Councilwoman



CAPRICE EDMOND
Pinellas County School Board
Member

Register online at www.dststpete.eventbrite.com

REGISTER

LEAGUE LEGACY

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

**100 YEARS-KEEP THE
CELEBRATION GOING**
**MARIE LOUISE BOTTINEAU
BALDWIN (1813-1952)**



Marie Louise embraced the traditions of her Native American heritage and of the Suffrage movement.

Born in North Dakota, Marie Louise whose ancestry was Native American and French, was a member of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa Band. Her father was a lawyer and after relocating to Minnesota, she became a clerk in his law office.

Early on Marie believed that Native Americans needed to assimilate to survive, but later as she became involved in suffrage and the Society for American Indians, her views began to change. She

moved to Washington D.C. to further her causes, working as a clerk for lawyers at the Office of Indian Affairs. At the age of 49, after working for years for other lawyers, she enrolled in law school at Washington College where she became the first Native American woman to earn a degree.

Marie believed that all women encountered the same problems & discrimination and became involved in the suffragist movement. Marie Louise marched down Pennsylvania Avenue with other female lawyers in the 1913 Suffrage parade organized by Alice Paul, walking four by four in a narrow space as the parade was nearly overrun by men harassing them.

She interacted with two presidents, Teddy Roosevelt who appointed her Clerk in the Office of Indian Affairs and Woodrow Wilson, encouraging him to support women's right to vote. She spoke fluent French & offered her services to the war department during World War II.

The picture above is from her personnel file. To make a statement she dressed in her tribal clothing rather than her usual business work clothes.

Note: Native Americans were not legally allowed to vote until the passage of the Indian Citizens Act in 1924.

MAY FOCUS: VOTER SERVICES TEAM



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

(Photo left to right: Heidi Davis, Amy Keith, Caitlan Constantine)

If your email inbox has been looking like the place where Action Alerts flock for spring break, it's not without good reason. The Florida legislative session was rife with attacks on voter turnout and the abilities of citizens to make their voices heard in government.

Caitlin Constantine and Amy Keith, co-chairs of the Voter Services Action Team, emphasize the significance of this moment and place in history to be engaged in voting rights work. "This is a flash point around the country and around the world," says Caitlin, "and we're doing [this work] in a state so consistently contested and a county that is as purple as it gets."

With the legislative session just coming to a close at the end of April, we'll be providing further updates on what passed and what it means in a future edition of The Voter. One major area where we expected and saw changes was vote by mail, a topic very relevant in Pinellas County where 60% of the population votes by mail and where our Supervisor of Elections has a record for the best vote-by-mail process in the state. Though all 67 Supervisors of Elections in Florida were opposed to proposed restrictions on voting by mail, along with other tucked-in provisions that could hurt the election process, legislators pushed hard for these policy changes. One may question the purpose of trying to take down a well-functioning system that improves voting access. As Caitlin says, "When you take away the ability of people to participate, you get policies that are not beneficial to us or wanted by us."

Caitlin and Amy kept a close watch on legislation. With many of the bills moving quickly and changing rapidly, the voter services co-chairs sent out action alerts asking League members to call their legislators each time a bill moved to the next committee. They asked that everyone, while it felt redundant, call and call again. And then ask their friends to call and their sister who never makes calls to call and their neighbors...

Although this legislative session is now over, everyone should feel empowered to contact their representatives and speak to how these issues affect their communities. You can let your legislators know that Pinellas County is pro-voting and we want our entire delegation of legislators to protect our right to vote, regardless of party.

To everyone who took a moment to open those Action Alerts and make the calls or who found other ways to engage in the legislative process, thank you. "The vote is so foundational and central in everything else," says Caitlin. "Someday we can look back and be proud to have waded into this fight."

HOP ON BOARD: NEW ACTION TEAM!

The newly formed Health Care Action Team will be having an organizational meeting on Monday, May 10 at 6 PM. At this meeting the team will discuss the best options for the timing of monthly meetings and the priorities that the members of the group would like to set for its initial goals.

Team Lead Ilene Robeck, MD, says, "As the plan would be to include on our agenda all social determinants of health, we will attempt to address a large number of issues over the course of the upcoming year. We will most likely have to focus on what is felt to be most important to our community."

Following is the link to the meeting on May 10 at 6 PM. The same link will be used for future meetings even though the timing of them may change.

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85830006681?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85830006681?pwd=aGpYdWVIdnZhr3I0bkVmT3o3RHFGUT09)

[pwd=aGpYdWVIdnZhr3I0bkVmT3o3RHFGUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85830006681?pwd=aGpYdWVIdnZhr3I0bkVmT3o3RHFGUT09)

Meeting ID: 858 3000 6681

Passcode: 191256

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,85830006681# US (Washington DC)

Ilene Robeck MD

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

By Voter Team Member Bonnie Hough
bonnie@banyannonprofitstrategy.com

Alison Quinn has been a member of LWVSPA since the fall of 2019 and is currently the League's bookkeeper extraordinaire. In the early months of the pandemic last year, Alison found many of her other volunteer commitments halted, so she was glad to be able to offer her time to assist with the financial reporting and bookkeeping for the League.



Although Alison hasn't had many in-person League events yet, one of her favorite memories from her time with the League has been her time serving as an election monitor during the 2020 election early voting period. Although she wasn't sure what to expect, it was wonderful to see people from all over the political spectrum be friendly and respectful towards one another, and the opportunity to help voters solve their problems was not only enjoyable but meaningful.

When Alison isn't volunteering with the League, she gives much of her time to other local causes, from the **St. Pete Free Clinic Food Pantry** to the **Dali Museum**. Another of her favorite local organizations to support is **Project Prosper**, an organization that provides financial literacy education to Tampa Bay immigrants and refugees.

Some of Alison's favorite things to do around St. Pete include walking the Pier in the morning and spending her evenings enjoying live music downtown - Jannus, Mahaffey Theater, and Ale & the Witch in particular. What she's most looking forward to in the next year, though, is travel! Alison can't wait to visit friends and family again.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION



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!

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

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

Renew / Join Now



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.