



THE VOTER

January 2018

Mark Your Calendars: The Program Planning Meeting Is Next Month

The annual LWVSPA Program Planning meeting is coming up and we need you to participate! This meeting is when we discuss all proposed initiatives for the 2018-2019 year, gauge support for those initiatives and form action groups.



The initiatives developed during this meeting will be presented for final approval at the annual general meeting on April 21.

We need you to participate so we can ensure the local League selects initiatives that are most meaningful to our members.

Do you have an issue you'd like to present for consideration as an initiative? Get in touch with board leadership, who can help you develop your idea so you can present it at the meeting. Send an email to office@lwvspa.org so we can help you get your proposal ready.

Here are some things you should consider when creating a proposal:

- How does the topic align with a League position? (See our state and local Study and Action and Yearbook guides under the **Resources tab** on the website.)
- What you want to accomplish? (the goal(s) of the project)
- Who will lead the initiative, as well as interface with the Board of Directors?
- What is the general plan, including some comments on the structure, timeline, critical activities, and monies needed for the project?

The deadline for submission of program proposals is Wednesday, Feb. 14.

**2/21, 6-8 p.m. @ Friends Meeting House
130 19th Ave SE, St. Petersburg**



Join Us at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade!

The annual MLK Day parade is happening Jan. 15 and we want you to join us! **We need lots of members to help us out at this amazing community event**, including 20-30 marchers, up to 16 voter registration canvassers, two people to run an information table, and more representatives for the Family Fun Day event that follows.

We'll have volunteer opportunities throughout the day, from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., so there are plenty of chances for you to help out. You can get more information about the parade route and the day's activities by visiting mlkdreambig.com (scroll down to "venue").

If you're interested in signing up, contact Voter Services Co-Chairs [Raechel Garafalo](#) and [Lindsay Murdock](#) no later than **Thursday, Jan. 11.**



Get Ready: New Solar Co-Ops Are Coming to Pinellas County

The League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area is teaming up with the City of St. Petersburg, [Solar United Neighbors of Florida](#) and the [Suncoast Sierra Club](#) to launch **the first of three metro area solar co-operatives.**

On Tuesday, Jan. 30 at 10am at St. Pete City Hall, we'll be taking part in a press conference to formally launch the first co-op. Speakers will include Mayor Rick Kriseman, Councilmember Darden Rice, LWVSPA President Dr. Julie Kessel and SUN FL State Director Angela DeMonbreun.



Solar co-ops are a great way to help residents take advantage of one of Florida's most abundant renewable energy resources – the sun! We'll be sending out more information about how you can get involved with solar co-ops in your neighborhood, so stay tuned.



We Want You -- to Get Involved!

Website Redesign Team for Online Voter Guide

Our online Voter Guide will be undergoing a redesign ahead of the 2018 election, and we need you to help us out. We're specifically looking for members with the following skills and talents:

- Web Data Entry: someone who feels comfortable logging into WordPress, maybe some light HTML
- Copywriter: someone who has experience writing SEO/keyword-rich copy for the web
- Graphic Designer: someone who has experience with graphics production, illustration (nice to have), and experience with web design (not print)

If you've got these skills and you want to help get the voter guide ready for the upcoming election, get in touch with Traci at tracip@gmail.com.

Bylaws Committee Member

We have an opening for a general member to join our Bylaws Committee. The Committee meets each year to review the bylaws and ensure they continue to meet

the needs of our organization and are aligned with our state and national bylaws.

The Committee makes recommendations to the LWVSPA Board of Directors and the Board presents its recommendations, after review, to the general assembly at the annual General Meeting on April 21.

The work on this committee begins immediately and must be completed by March 20, 2018. If you're interested in serving on this committee, please contact us at office@lwvspa.org to let us know.

Live Streamer/Recorder

We hold so many great public events throughout the year, but unfortunately not everyone is able to attend them. We'd love to make our events more accessible to people via their computers and smart phones -- and we need you to help us make it happen.

If you have any knowledge or experience in live-streaming, we'd love to have you help us develop our ability to get our message out to as many people as possible. If this sounds like something you're interested in, get in touch with [Raechel Garafalo](#).

Reminder: We're still looking for a photographer and new board members, so get in touch if you're interested in either of these roles!



Education Committee: Buckle Up for the Legislative Session

The Florida Legislature begins its 2018 session this month and it looks like the Education Committee will be in for a fight if we are to preserve our public education system against the privatization forces.

House Speaker Corcoron, the champion of the infamous HB 7069 of 2017, has said **this session will be as "disruptive and transformative"** as the last. HB 7069 challenged the local decision-making and funding control of our schools and privileged privately operated charter schools.

Several bills already moving through subcommittees will further these efforts. HB 1 creates Scholarships of Hope to ostensibly give the victims of "bullying" an escape from their aggressors in the public schools, but it is a thinly-veiled expansion of the Tax-Credit Scholarship program, diverting tens of millions of public tax dollars to largely unaccountable private schools.

Our Committee will meet on Wednesday, Jan. 17 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. to receive updates on these efforts and plan our advocacy agenda. If you would like to join us, please contact either [Robin Jones](#) or [Iris Yetter](#).



Help Pass the DREAM Act!

Despite considerable lobbying by a wide coalition of advocacy groups including, DREAMERS covered by DACA protections, the League of Women Voters, local law enforcement officials, business groups and religious communities – a "clean" DREAM Act was not passed in December.

Each day 122 DREAMERS currently have their DACA status expire, which means they lose both authorization to hold a job and protection from deportation. In March the number losing DACA protection increases to 1,000 per day.

Congress reconvenes on January 3rd, and now is the time to again advocate for passage of the DREAM Act in both the House and the Senate. To do so – follow the instructions under Take Action on the [Immigration Action Guide](#).

[Read more...](#)



Upcoming Events

Jan. 8: International Relations Study Group

Discussion on the South China Sea led by June Bedford.

**1/8, 2 p.m. @ Pinellas Park Library
7770 52nd St N, Pinellas Park, FL 33781**

**1/17, 6 p.m. @ Pia's Trattoria
3054 Beach Blvd S, Gulfport, FL 33707**

Jan. 17: Cocktails and Conversation



Is one of your New Year's resolutions to get more involved with your community? Come join us for Cocktails and Conversations, hang out with like-minded people, and learn more about everything the local League is doing.

This month's Conversations and Cocktails will be held at Hamburger Mary's St. Pete. Bingo for charity starts at 7 p.m., with proceeds going to Celebration Outreach. Bingo cards are \$10 a piece, and there's a \$10 food + drink minimum per person.

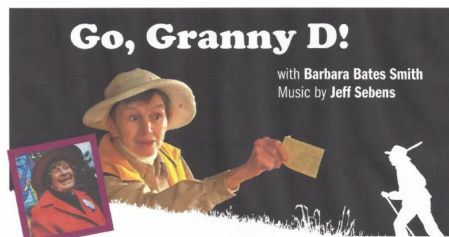
**1/17, 6 p.m. @ Hamburger Mary's
2901 Tyrone Blvd, St. Petersburg**

Jan. 17: Go, Granny D!

Experience the wonderfully unique true story of Doris "Granny D" Haddock, who walked across America at the age of 90 to secure democracy for future generations.

Picture this: "Granny D" dressed as a mermaid registering voters at Weeki Wachee Springs, at Bikers Week in Daytona and from the Little Rock pulpit where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once preached!

You'll laugh and be thoroughly entertained as off-Broadway actress Barbara Bates Smith and musician Jeff Sebens share the story of this warm witty crusader, whose steel determination took the world by surprise and elevated her to national fame.



**1/17, 7-8:30 p.m. @ Allendale UMC
3803 Haines Rd, St. Petersburg**

Jan. 22: Roe v. Wade Anniversary Event

Join the annual sign-waving visibility event to mark the anniversary of the 1973 Roe v Wade decision. Gather with LWVSPA's Reproductive Rights Action Group, Pinellas NOW, and Planned Parenthood in front of the Lucky Dill Deli in downtown St. Petersburg. Bring signs if you can, but don't worry if you can't -- we'll have some for you to borrow!

**1/22, 12 p.m. @ Lucky Dill Deli
277 Central Ave, St. Petersburg**

Jan. 23: New Member Orientation

How do the League's strategies influence change? How do new members plug in?

Our New Member Orientation is designed to inform folks who are curious about the League (*Invite your friends and neighbors!*) as well as those who've been members for less than a year. By the end of the orientation, attendees should be able to match up with an action group whose work is of interest.

**1/23, 6:30-7:30 pm @ St Petersburg Public Library
3745 9th Ave N, St. Petersburg**

Jan. 24: American DREAMers: Meet Them & Learn How to Make THEIR Dreams Come True

Nearly 2 million young adults were brought to the U.S. as children and have known life only in the U.S. 790,000 of them are temporarily protected by DACA. They all face deportation -- unless Congress enacts the DREAM Act.

Come learn more about who the DREAMers are, why their status is in jeopardy, and what you can do to help them.

**1/24, 6:30-8 p.m. @ Empath Partners in Care
3050 1st Ave. S, St. Petersburg**



Save the Date!

Feb 13: The Impact of Gun Violence on our Children, Families and City: A Community Conversation

Gun violence has touched a broad cross section of our city and our country, and remains a persistent public safety issue. The LWVSPA Gun Safety Action Team believes we must "think globally and act locally."

We invite you to hear three local panelists - City Council Vice Chair Lisa Wheeler-Bowman, Rev. Manuel Sykes, and facilitator Ryan Mitchell - share their personal stories and professional insights, then join us in exploring how we can, as a community, be effective advocates.

This event is purposefully scheduled during the 2018 Florida legislative session and will

be outcome- and action-oriented.

**2/13, 7-8:30 p.m. @ Allendale United Methodist Church Sanctuary
3803 Haines Rd N, St. Pete, FL 33703**

Learn more about this issue by reading our [Gun Safety Action Guide](#) and watching our recent [community conversation](#) with St. Petersburg Police Chief Anthony Holloway.



**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.

The following memberships are up for renewal during this 3-month span. We invite you to [renew today!](#)

DECEMBER

David Berman
Karen Berman
Amy Blake
Arlin Briley
Stephanie Cain
Daina Crafa
Edith Daly
Karen Denehy
Victoria Dunn
Ligia Everett
Margaret Joffe
Kate Lamb
Jana Maples
John Mason
Jacqueline Mirkin
Melanie Turner

JANUARY

Cory Adler
Christina Aikman
Susan Alston
Ruth Barrens
April Birdsong
Rosanne Blass
Donna Brewer
Diane Cato
Linda Fife
Maria Fox
Kali Gillespie
Norman Jaeger
Annette Kaplan
Julie Kessel
Judy Lybrand-Kuhn
Sara Mieczkowski

FEBRUARY

James Fox
Judy Gallizzi
Raechel Garafalo
Diane Gardner-Rhoden
Rachel Gelbmann
MaryAnn Goodrich
Linsey Grove
Kathy Gustafson-Hilton
Catherine Hamel
Cathy Hansen
Holly Hartman
Melissa Hopkins
Deborah Howard
Connie Hubbard
Helen Igar
Consuelo Ingledue
Sally Israel
William Israel
Dianne Johnson
Gail Johnson
Theresa Jones
Debra Justus
Karen Knop
Sara Knotts
Stacey Kroto
Sarah Kruse
Kathy Kulaas
Barbara Lagasi
Kay Lahdenpera
Caroline Lanford
Dwight Lawton
JoAnne Lehrfeld
Karen Lieberman

Nancy Millichamp
Lois Milne
Dawn Murray
Mary Olson
Shari Oster
Loretta Owens
Martha Petrovitch
Beverly Sauls
Sharron Scott
Keeley Sheehan
Pamela Sherwin
Barbara Spofford
Christine Stockholm
Elizabeth Wells

FEBRUARY

Tami Elizabeth Acosta-Urban
Jan Allyn
Jennifer Andreani
Lise Beane
June Bedford
Mary Berglund
Peter Betzer
Susan Betzer
Karen Burns
Susan Burr
Denise Chezek
Dave Coale
Karen Coale
Caitlin Constantine
Vicki Cooper-Naughton
Kathleen Cote
Tracy Crabtree
Marilee Cunningham
Martha Curran
Ruth Dady
Linda Darin
Theresa Darlington
Jemea Douglas
Kristie Dowling
Kimberly Drake
Kathleen Duffy
Linda Edington
Jennifer Findley-Fox
Carol Fisher
Karen Flannery
Brigitte Foster
Elizabeth Fountain
Cynthia Fox

Barbara Linder
Diane Lohr
Marilyn Maginley
Mary Mahoney
Karen Marder
Mary Ann Marger
Diane McKinstry
June Mohns
Beth Murphy
Janet Murphy
Patricia Nardozzi
Nina Nicholson
Dorece Norris
Leah Ogren
Floy Lynn Olsen
Stephanie Owens
Lisa Pagnotta
Mary Jane Park
Marcia Piacentino
Alyssa Premru
Lydia Rector
Elizabeth (Betsy) Reynolds
Kathleen Robinson
Sharon Rose
Lucille Ruga
Lucille Ruga
Mary Sanders
Julia Saunders
Katharine Saunders
Sherry Sexton
Melanie Sheehan
Margaret Siembieda
Fracia Smith
Zayne Smith
Carolyn Spears
Nancy Stein
Nancy Tait
Bridget Taylor
Donna Terrence
Ahna Thaxton
Theresa Timmick
Susan Tuite
Charles Vanover
Lisa Vanover
Susan Vincent
Alexander Wagenaar
Yvonne Walden
Scott Willis
Patricia Wood
Susan Yormark
Livia Zien

[Renew / Join Now](#)

We offer five levels of membership:

Carrie Chapman Catt (Gold) for \$250*
Susan B. Anthony (Silver) for \$125*
Household for \$78*
Individual for \$52
Student for \$26

*Includes two members residing at the same address.

A large percentage of what you pay for an individual membership goes to support our state and national Leagues. By selecting the Gold or Silver membership level, most of your dues will help support the work of our local League.



2017-2018 League Leadership

OFFICERS

President: Julie Kessel
First Vice President: Sharon Winters
Secretary: Lisa Vanover
Treasurer: Caroline Bloodworth

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Caitlin Constantine
Raechel Garafalo
Linsey Grove
Susan Mayer
Lindsay Murdock
Marty Shapiro

[Visit our website](#) for more information about our local leaders.

[Click here](#) for more information about our education and advocacy groups.

EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY LEADS

Gun Safety: Sharon Winters
Immigration: Karen Coale, Lydia Castle
Healthcare: Julie Kessel
Reproductive Rights: Amy Weintraub
Campaign Finance Reform/Social Justice: Julie Kessel, Karen Lieberman
Education: Robin Jones, Iris Yetter
Voter Service: Raechel Garafalo
Voter Registration: Lindsay Murdock
Voter Protection: Stephanie Owens
Sustainability: Lisa Vanover
International Relations: Judy McSwine
Social Media/Promotion Lead: Amy Weintraub
Office Administrator: Rachael Becker



League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area

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

Telephone: 727-896-5197



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.