

THE VOTER

January 2021

Letter from the President



Dear Leaguers,

I hope that you all are having a safe, meaningful holiday season. As this year ends, there's a lot to reflect on and be grateful for. In a year unlike any other, we are reminded of how something as small as RNA can completely change our global community. Many of us have experienced significant loss, profound change, and have had to rely on the fundamental skill of human adaptation to get through the pandemic.

One constant, for me, has been the passion and drive of our League members and leadership. Despite the many barriers created by COVID-19, our volunteers, team leads, and board members found ways to reach out to the community and make democracy work.

I am so grateful to be a part of an organization like the League of Women Voters. With a vaccine on the horizon, 2021 has glimmers of hope for our community and beyond. Democracy has survived 2020--let's continue to make it work in 2021 in our upcoming municipal elections.

Don't forget to start the year off on the right foot -- **register for our Century for a Century today! (see below)** If you can't participate, please consider donating to our athletes!

In League,
Linsey



LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF THE ST. PETERSBURG AREA

CENTURY
for a
CENTURY

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!](#)

We're still 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](#)

Jen Underhill says, "Come ride with me!"

For Century for a Century participants who want some help, we've got some good news!

League member (and cycling enthusiast) Jen Underhill has offered to lead bike rides for small groups (no more than 6).

If you'd like to try a 10, 20, or 30 mile ride at a relaxing, casual pace, now's the chance.



Contact Jen directly at jaybirdjerome@gmail.com if you'd like to participate. Exact routes, dates, and times will be determined based on interest. Join a group and cycle to honor the suffragettes!

Meet League Member Raegan Miller.



Meet LWVSPA member Raegan Miller and learn a little about what draws her to the league and why ***Raegan and her daughter, Lane, have taken the Century for a Century Challenge.***

Q. Is there something about the league and its work that you have a particular attachment?

A. I have been a member for approximately 3 years. I joined the LWVSPA because I feel very strongly about public education. I believe that the LWVSPA does a wonderful job keeping voters informed about candidates and issues.

Q. Why did you want to support the Century for a Century effort?

A. During this election season, I was out campaigning for a local female candidate and my daughter texted me that she had gotten an alert on her iPad saying it was the 100 year anniversary of women being allowed to vote. My daughter thought it was so cool that I was out campaigning for a female on that day. I felt an overwhelming sense of pride that she actually recognized the significance of not only the fact that women are able to vote, but that I was actually campaigning and voting for a woman on that day.

Q. How do you and Lane plan to execute your 100 miles -- run, walk, swim, bike?

A. I love running so I will definitely be running my miles. My daughter will get her miles in through short runs, walks and bike rides with the family. Getting to spend extra time with her is an added bonus!

Q. Are there some women in your life that you see as role models and/or mentors?

A. Wow, there are so many but the first one that comes to mind is my grandmother. She was born before women were allowed to vote and lived to be 104. She was a strong woman who never let anything get in her way and she raised her daughters to be the same. I like to believe that her spirit and strong will lives in me and my daughter.

Q. When you complete your 100 miles, do you plan to celebrate?

A. There will definitely be some sort of celebration!



MEMBER FOCUS: Deb Mazzaferro National Popular Vote Action Team

How the League of Women Voter Florida members got League of Women Voter United States on board for National Popular Vote.

By Deb Mazzaferro, edited by Faith Andrews Bedford and members of League of Women Voters St. Petersburg Area



So what's the big deal about National Popular Vote? Let's be clear: A National Popular Vote would eliminate the

"winner-take-all" practice now prevalent in most states. That state-mandated practice often invalidates the votes of millions of Americans—sometimes the majority, in fact. National Popular Vote legislation works within the framework of the Constitution, preserving the electoral system and guaranteeing the presidency to the person who the majority of Americans agree should lead our country. One person, one vote. Sounds great, right? But it's not so easy to try to change a century and half of "we've always done it this way."

In 2016, as a new member of the League of Women Voters St. Petersburg Area (LWVSPA), I was looking for my "issue" within the League. I decided to become a subject matter expert for the state-wide LWV speaker's Bureau. Shortly afterward, I was introduced to Kathleen Crampton of the League of Women Voters Palm Beach County (LWVPBC) whose mother, a League member, had always hoped that Kathleen would work with the League to somehow change the Electoral College. In January 2017, Kathleen attended the League of Women Voters Florida (LWVFL) biennial leadership conference where she was introduced to the National Popular Vote (NPV) concept by two national advocates: Pat Rosenstiel, a Minnesota Republican and Vikram Amar, the law school dean at the University of Illinois, Springfield. I joined a statewide group of NPV advocates who started meeting to develop a plan for advocating in Florida. By the spring of 2017, Kathleen and I met in person at the League's Legislative Days in Tallahassee where we lobbied not only League members from all over the state but also legislators as well.

The enthusiastic people we met in Tallahassee soon became the core of a statewide organization. We started having bi-weekly conference calls to develop strategy and motivate our group. Our members come from 19 of the 29 Florida Leagues. Check out our [local committees here](#).

The LWV National Convention in Chicago a few months later provided us with an opportunity to host a breakfast featuring speakers from states that

had already passed the bill. Gathering momentum, we were able to leap the hurdle of moving NPV from a LWV 2010 position to a resolution. The entire convention voted to approve the National Popular Vote bill to become a part of the LWV's "Making Democracy Work".

Encouraged by that, we formed a national coalition of interested League members that met on Zoom bi-weekly to discuss the progress being made by other states. Our National Coalition helped passed the bill in 4 additional states (CT, CO, OR, NM) bringing us to the attention of John Kosa, the founder of [National Popular Vote](#). We convinced him that a grassroots coalition could engage people at the local level and produce significant results, even though his previous approach was to specifically target state legislators. Inspired by our idea, Kosa hired Eileen Reavey, a grassroots coordinator who now manages the National Coalition that we originally founded.

In 2019, the statewide LWV FL team formed the independent [Floridians for NPV](#) in collaboration with [Common Cause Florida](#) and [Make Every Vote Matter](#). While most of our district chairs originated from the local Leagues, we now attract other volunteers who share our passion.

Virginia Kase, CEO of LWV since 2019, is an enthusiastic supporter of the National Popular Vote. Due to the Floridians consistent lobbying, the LWV US assigned a board member to create a task force to determine how best to align with the movement. A year later, Kase talked about our movement in an interview for [Elle Magazine](#).

We've come a long way, but there's still much work to be done. Myths abound. There is confusion. Legislators don't understand how the bill works within the Electoral College system and some voters, even in states where it's already been passed, don't know anything about the movement.

If you're interested in volunteering to help get the bill passed in more states, contact Deb Mazzaferro at Deb@CoachMaz.com



JANUARY EVENTS

let's chat

*Conversation Centered Around
A Local Leader or Theme*



**Wednesday, January 6, 2021
6-7 p.m.**

Join the LWVSPA for Let's Chat, an online social event to allow members to get to know one another and the League.

The Membership Committee hopes to make *Let's Chat* a monthly event with conversation centered around a local leader or theme.

St. Pete City Council Member (District 4) and former LWVSPA President, **Darden Rice**, will be our first guest.

This Zoom will be hosted by Membership Chair, Amy Weintraub. Come check it out -- Let's Chat!

RSVP



**CLIMATE AND FOOD
Food Politics Action Team
RSVP TODAY!**

Sharon Wright, Sustainability Director for the City of St Petersburg, will join us online on January 27th at 6:30 to talk about climate and food. Food issues, including everything from soil, urban agriculture and farming, nutrition, food access, and the food on your plate, play an important role in tackling climate change.

This is an opportunity to hear the latest about the Integrated Sustainability Action Plan (ISAP), the Bloomberg Climate Challenge award, and how food policies can help the City meet its goals. We will discuss Meatless Mondays and other actions you can take to contribute to sustainability efforts. Join us for this lively and provocative conversation.

[Click here to register.](#)



VOLUNTEER!



Volunteer Corner

Opportunities for You!

Gina Burchenal, Nita Shepherd

The League of Women Voters St. Petersburg Area is a dynamic group of volunteers offering their talents and treasures to accomplish league goals.

Following are opportunities that may be perfect for you.

Columnist – The Membership Committee is seeking a volunteer to write the “Member Spotlight” for each month’s newsletter, The Voter. We have a set of prepared questions – or come up with your own. A great way to get to know your fellow League members and put your writing skills to work.

Contact: amyw304@gmail.com

Event Director – The Membership Committee is seeking an event planner to coordinate our new monthly “Let’s Chat” series. Duties would include working with the Committee to select themes, inviting the featured guests, creating compelling event descriptions for publicity, and managing registrant communications.

Contact: amyw304@gmail.com

Videoconference Producer - The Membership Committee is seeking a seasoned videoconference user to run the production of our new monthly “Let’s Chat” series. Experience with GoToMeeting and/or Google Meets (or have access to paid Zoom account) and all their functions, such as breakout rooms and polls, required. Duties will include setting up the videoconference, communicating the link, being on the event early, managing chat throughout the event, recording the event and communicating the recording link, and saving chat.

Contact: amyw304@gmail.com



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS



Gwendolyn Reese, representative of the Black Health Equity Alliance, Inc. partnered with the League of Women Voters St. Petersburg Area, asking the City of St. Petersburg to join cities, counties, and states across the nation to declare racism a public health crisis.

Gwendolyn Reese and Linsey Grove worked together to write the declaration and secure city buy-in. The two women also reached out to several community organizations and businesses for support.

[Read all about it in The Weekly Challenger](#)

JANUARY TEAM MEETINGS

Fund Development

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

[Google Meet](#)

Media & Publicity

January 7, 2021 @ 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

[Google Meet](#)

Food Politics

January 11, 2021 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

[Google Meet](#)

Social Justice

January 14, 2021 @ 7:00 pm - 8:15 pm

[Google Meet](#)

Immigration

January 25, 2021 @ 1:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Zoom video conference.

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

Voter Services

January 26, 2021 @ 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Conference Call 605-472-5621

Access Code. 555498

Membership

January 27, 2021 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Contact chair, [Amy Weintraub](#), for teleconference link or for more information



Welcome New Members

Our League is proud to welcome these newest members!

Peg Atamian
Annette Baesel
Sherry Bagley
Lisa Bannon
Caitlin Costa
Claire Cummings
Janet Devito
Amanda Green
Tressy Guadagno
Mihaela Alice Madsen
Jessica Mansis

Kathleen McKinlay
April McManus
Jane Mutchler
Ilene Robeck
Maureen Rubini Quinlan
Barbara Schmitt
Martin Sherman
Jody Spencer
Jennifer Stracick
Elizabeth Zuroweste

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

January 2021

Fern Azarian
Sheila Barry-Oliver
Mary-Sue Beeler
Nichole Blaquiére
Sharon Bonnem
Connie Bruce
Carmen Bruner
Yvette Butler
Karen Carmichael
Christine Cicchino
Ann Dieterle
Nicole Douglas
Hunter Drake
Pat Fling
Susan Francesconi
Ann Fuentes
Stephanie Gillock
Linsey Grove
Annette Kaplan
Diane Krajcik

Sheila Montante
Kelly Moore
Christina Paylan
Sheila Penrose
Sheena Qualles-De Freece
Mary Russell
Amy Sauers
James Schultz
Sharron Scott
Margaret Sells
Megan Smolenyak
Kim Stoddard
Kristina Thyrre
Judith Turner
Krista Waitz
Lydia Walter
Terry White
Ruth Whitney
Lisa Zawistowski

December 2020

Dianne Clarke
Rebecca Falkenberry
Linda Glod

Becky Griffin
Mildred Turley
Iris Yetter

November 2020

Laura Angelides
Dorothy Cappadona
Edie Daly
Jane Fanning
Aleta Fisher
Karen Flannery
Bonnie Freeman
Stephan Freeman
Maryellen Gordon
Sally Grumbles
Roy Grumbles
Sara Heerens
Jacqueline Hubbard
Debra Justus

Hilary Lehman
Kalleen Marquise
Raegan Miller
Betty Morgenstein
Kathleen Phelan
Barbara Poore
Erin Rashbaum
Mary Ann Renfrow
Vollie Riskin
Sara Robertson
Jan Salsich
Christine Sprowl
Karen Torrissi
Susan Vincent



2020-2021 League Leadership

OFFICERS

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

EDUCATION, ADVOCACY, COMMITTEE LEADS

Voter Service: Robin Davidov, Maryellen Gordon, Caitlin Constantine, Amy Keith
Gun Safety: On hiatus
Immigration: Karen Coale

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.

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.**