

THE VOTER

July 2020

Letter from the President

Happy Fourth of July, Leaguers!

I hope that you are celebrating this Independence Day safely. It's an interesting time to reflect on freedom, our nation's founding, and what it means to be American. I have been listening to the New York Time's [1619 Podcast](#) and reading one of its articles, "[America Wasn't a Democracy Until Black Americans Made It One.](#)"

For many years, our nation has celebrated its birth without acknowledging the painful history of the enslaved people that helped build it. This may make you uncomfortable; however, in discomfort, we can find growth and progress. Being an American means learning about and acknowledging our complicated, painful past and using it to challenge our ideals to shape a more perfect future for all of us. I believe that is what we do every day at the League; we love our country so much that we demand more of her in the shape of advocacy, education, and justice.

We are at a historic, pivotal moment in our nation's lifespan. It is up to all of us to do the work necessary to keep our communities safe and empowered. Democracy cannot survive without an engaged citizenry. I know that our League is one of many critical organizations that are improving civic health here in St. Petersburg. Thank you for being a part of that.

In League,
Linsey



Get Ready for the Primary Election!

The 2020 primary election is Aug. 18, which is just weeks away. Are you prepared?

We're encouraging everyone to sign up to request a mail ballot for the coming elections, even if you'd prefer to vote in person. Here's why:

- The pandemic means we may see fewer polling places and fewer poll workers, which could mean long lines on Election Day.
- Some people - such as people with disabilities - have no choice but to vote in person, and so you'll be protecting those people from the possibility of additional exposure to COVID-19.
- You'll also be protecting the county's poll workers, many of whom



are over the age of 60.

- Bonus: If you request your ballot early and send it back early, you'll also be taking some pressure off the USPS.

Think of it as your voting back-up plan: You may not end up needing to use it, but if you do, you'll be glad to have it.

What You Need to Vote by Mail

- [Request a mail ballot](#)
- [Track your mail ballot](#)
- [23 mail ballot drop-off locations](#)
- [Frequently asked questions about voting by mail](#)

How to Get Informed About the Candidates

- **Candidate Forums:** We currently have two virtual candidate forums on the schedule: 6th Circuit judicial candidates on July 13 and school board candidates on July 23. (Our sister League in Manatee County is hosting one for District 70 on July 20.) For more information - including how to watch them online - visit our [website](#).
- **Voter Guide:** The Voter Guide for the 2020 primary election is set to go live on July 14. [Sign up here](#) to be notified when it goes live.

How to Empower Other Voters

- **Social Media Toolkit:** The Voter Services team created a social media toolkit for our campaign promoting voting by mail, called [Democracy Starts at Home](#). Use the social media frames, graphics and copy to promote voting by mail on your social networks!
- **Organize a Virtual Training:** The Voter & Election Protection co-chairs are leading online trainings for groups that want to learn more about the basics of voting by mail and how to make sure their mail ballot counts. If you're interested in arranging one of these sessions for your own community group, church, club or organization, send an email to VoterProtection@lwvspa.org.



Check Out Our Vote-By-Mail Mural!

Last month, we were thrilled to announce that we'd commissioned two local artists - [Jabari Reed-Diop](#) and [Derek Donnelly](#) - to paint a mural promoting voting by mail on the outside of the Enoch Davis Community Center in south St. Petersburg.

The mural is part of our multi-prong campaign aimed at encouraging people to sign up to vote by mail. We're particularly targeting people who live in low voter turnout areas in an effort to let them know what they need to do to vote by mail and how to make sure their mail ballot is counted.



You can read more about the mural and the campaign at [Bay News 9](#) and the [Weekly Challenger](#).

Sadly, we had to postpone the unveiling ceremony due to increases in COVID-19 cases in our community, but the mural is visible to anyone who visits the Enoch Davis center.

Many thanks to Jabari Reed-Diop and Derek Donnell for their creativity, and to St. Petersburg's Parks and Rec department and local community leaders for their support. And giant thanks to Voter Services co-chair Maryellen Gordon for her tireless efforts in ushering this project from idea to reality!



LWVUS National Convention Highlights



Last month, the LWVSPA sent seven delegates to the [2020 LWVUS National Convention](#), which was held entirely online for the first time in the League's history.

Despite a few technical hiccups, the convention was largely a success, driven in large part by the passionate delegates from Leagues all around the country who spoke beautifully and intelligently on a variety of issues.

Here are some of the highlights from this year's convention:

- We elected Dr. Barbara Ann Turner, of Omaha, Nebraska, as our next LWVUS president, and she [shared some remarks](#) on what she envisions as her priorities for her term.
- CEO Virginia Kase shared [some powerful and emotional thoughts](#) about the current state of our democracy, including racism and voter suppression.
- We voted to elevate the enforcement of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) policies to the same level of organizational importance as our non-partisan status.
- We also voted in support of resolutions regarding climate change and racial justice.
- We adopted the [following program](#), with the addition of the abolition of the electoral college to the areas of urgent focus.

Thanks to the delegates who dedicated a full weekend to taking part in the national convention! We appreciate you representing our local League on a national stage!



Guess Who's Coming to (Digital) Dinner?

LWVSPA's Food Politics action team will host its second digital dining event. And this time they'll host a very special guest: Wilbur and his friends from the Peacefield Farm Sanctuary.

- **When:** Thursday, July 9 @ 6:30 p.m.
- **Where:** Online video meeting ([RSVP to receive link](#))

Wilbur made a guest appearance on our inaugural digital dining event in June and he was a big hit — so the team decided to invite the whole farm family!

They'll take digital diners on a fun-filled virtual tour of the farm, which includes lots of farm friends, a big vegetable garden, solar energy to run the farm, and a lifestyle of respect and love for our democracy, personal health, the environment, and, of course, our furry and feathery friends.

The team is encouraging everyone who attends to take another step to embrace a plant-centered diet by ordering a terrific meal from one their plant-based partners. Please choose an awesome dinner meal, call it in, pick it up, be safe, and head back home to share this digital dining adventure with us

Please check out the menu and RSVP so a place will be set at the table for you.



Member Spotlight: Deb Mazzaferro



What brought you to the League?

Amy Weintraub is a neighbor and she convinced me to check out the LWV. Its non-partisan position appeals to me as an independent voter.

How are you involved with LWVSPA?

I co-founded [Floridians For National Popular Vote](#) as a result of being trained as a subject matter expert by the LWV FL. I am the issue chair for NPV for the LWVSPA and work on the membership committee and with Gulfport Votes 100.

What's a favorite experience you've had at a League activity or with League friends?

The Suffragist Shuffle — our 100-year anniversary soiree — by far! So well done: awesome music, food and everyone's costumes!

What about the League's mission and principles speaks to you strongly today?

The non-partisan approach to political change, voting rights and education of voters.

What do you like to do outside League activities?

I own a boutique sales and marketing consultancy focused in the food industry, so I love to cook and eat. I'm a Sommelier, yogi and golf to a 24 handicap.



What's Happening Around LWVSPA?

Education

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

Gun Safety

This team is on hiatus through 2020.

Food Politics

- **Next Meeting:** Monday, July 20 at 7 p.m.
- **Location:** Conference call (605-472-5621; code: 555498)
- **Co-chairs:** [Julie Kessel](#), [Jen Underhill](#) and [Wendy Wesley](#)

Immigration

Confused by social media posts, comments in the press and media coverage? Check out our [Immigration FACT sheets](#).

Want to help educate the public, deepen your knowledge and make new friends? You can join our sub teams who are creating additional FACT sheets, design and track a social media educational campaign or email your questions to Karen.

Also, make sure to mark your calendar for the next Immigration Conversation, happening Aug. 24 at 6:30 p.m. Details will be in the next Voter.

- **Next meeting:** Monday, July 27 @ 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:** Thursday, July 22 at 6 p.m.
- **Location:** Virtual conferencing
- **Chair:** [Amy Weintraub](#)

National Popular Vote

The NPV team shared [this interview](#) with New York Times editorial board member Jesse Wegman on his recent book, *Let the People Pick the President*.

- **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, July 9 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, July 28 at 6:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Conference call
- **Co-chairs:** [Robin Davidov](#), [Maryellen Gordon](#), [Caitlin Constantine](#), [Amy Keith](#), [Stephanie Owens](#)



Upcoming Events

July 9: Digital Dining: Wilbur and the Peacefield Farm Sanctuary
6:30-7:30 p.m. @ Online video session
[Facebook](#) | [RSVP](#)

July 13: 6th Circuit Judicial Candidate Forum
7-8:30 p.m. @ Online video session
[Facebook](#)

July 20: Florida State House District 70 Candidate Forum
5-6 p.m. @ Online video session
[Facebook](#) | [Register to Attend](#)
Hosted by LWV of Manatee County

July 23: School Board Candidate Forum
7-9 p.m. @ Online video session
[Facebook](#)



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.

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!](#)

May 2020 (past due)

Fard, Trina
Franckle, Lorraine

Oliver, Rachel

June 2020 (past due)

Azis, Jackie
Becchetti, Rita
Bragg, Andrew
Burr, Susan
Cahill, Judson
Carlin, Gregory
Clement, Laurie
DiPaolo, Bonnie
Ferguson, Pamm
Fife, Linda
Jurewicz, Stacey
Lippert, Cynthia

Lundquist, Madeline
Lundquist, Sherri
Metzkow, Linda
Moore, Sarah
Oster, Shari
Oster, Gerni
Parker, Nancy
Tait Kamradt, Amelia
Wells, Betsy
Wines, Sarah
York, Ashley
Zien, Livia

July 2020

Baran, Evelyn
Bonanni, Elinor
Boyd, Jennifer

Hartwell, Barbara
Hoekenga, Daniel
Keith, Amy

Carroll, Nita
Crabtree, Laura
Darlington, Theresa
Fite, Celia
Flaherty, Lisa
Hanewicz, Lisset

Kroto, Stacey
Moorefield, Marti
Nelson, Molly
Shaw, Lisa
Turley, Laura



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
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.