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

## VOTER July-August 2014

*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.*

### President's Letter

Dear League Members and Supporters,

This summer has proven to be a busy one for the League of Women Voters at both the state level and in our own backyard of St. Petersburg.



Julie Kessel  
President 2014-15

At the state level, the League has demonstrated tremendous leadership and successful results. One very important example is that in mid-July, 2nd Circuit Court Judge Terry Lewis ruled in favor of democracy and the citizens of Florida and set the path for Florida voters to elect their representatives in fair and constitutional districts. The Florida Legislature chose to ignore the voice of the people who voted overwhelmingly to approve amendments 5 and 6 in 2010 when they redrew the district maps behind closed doors, and without regard to the constitutionality of their decision. Judge Lewis's ruling ensures the legislature will adhere to the constitution.

We are thrilled to see justice being served. It is important for the Florida legislators to know that it isn't politicians who choose voters, but voters who choose their representatives. The timeline to redraw the maps is closing, and the secretary of state is working with local supervisors of elections to prepare a plan for a special election, pending further review by the judge. The League has made a difference, and we should all be proud of this accomplishment. It is a win for democracy!

Locally, we are in full swing registering voters, holding candidate forums, and educating citizens about the primary

Join Us  
We Make a Difference



**\*Individual Membership: \$52**  
**\*Each Additional Household Membership: \$26**  
**\*Student Individual Membership: \$26**

Visit our [website](#) to join  
--OR--

mail your dues check to:  
LWVSPA  
PO Box 11775  
St. Petersburg, FL 33733

Dues cover only a portion of local League expenses, so an additional contribution will be gratefully accepted! [Click here](#) to contribute.

[Read more about how your money is used.](#)



election on August 26th. We encourage members to visit [www.thefloridavoter.com](http://www.thefloridavoter.com) to take voter registration training and then to join us at our voter registration events.

Speaking of voting, have you seen our ***Pinellas County Voter Guide?*** Our Voter Service and Communication groups teamed up to produce our first ever totally web-based version of the Guide, easily viewable on all of your mobile devices, and our first local Guide to cover the primary races in our county. That's important because this year a number of races will be decided in the primary. The Guide is chock full of great information from and about the candidates, as well as useful information related to voting and the upcoming elections. Take a look at our website, [www.lvwspa.org](http://www.lvwspa.org), and click the link to our Voter Guide. And of course, get out and vote!

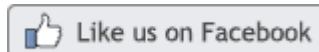
We've got some terrific events coming up the next several months. This month, we head to the 3 Sisters Brewery for some camaraderie and cheer. Later in the month, we head back to City Council to further our efforts to make Universal Curbside Recycling a reality in Saint Petersburg. In September, we'll help ready voters for the general election with a "forum" to explore the pros and cons of Greenlight Pinellas. In October, we focus on members as we conduct our annual membership drive, and in November, we'll be engaging the community in a discussion about the death penalty. After the elections, we'll wrap up the year with our annual holiday party. In January, we'll be focused on getting Medicaid expansion passed in Florida, finally! Our International Relations meetings resume in September.

In addition, the League has some great trips planned for League members. Join us in New York, Washington, D.C., or Cuba for both camaraderie and educational opportunities, or join us in the Florida outback just to share your love of Florida with League friends. Visit our [state website](#) for more information on these trips.

Your volunteer efforts and support make all of this happen. If you've been thinking about getting involved, now is the time. We look forward to seeing you at one of our next events! Thank you for all that you do.

In League,

Julie



**We are very pleased to welcome the following new members to the LWVSPA:**

**Stacey Armstrong  
Mona Jackson  
Ryan Jordan  
Karen Lieberman  
Mary Mahoney  
Alice Smith**

### Join Our Mailing List



**Stay informed about what's going on at the LWVSPA!**

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### LWVSPA Leadership

#### **Officers**

Julie Kessel, President  
Raechel Garafalo, 1st Vice President  
Pat Wood, 2nd Vice President  
Kathy Arsenault, Secretary  
Caroline Bloodworth, Treasurer

#### **Directors**

Wendy Grassi  
Jane Harper  
Ayele Hunt  
Jim Jackson  
Karen Knop  
Jack McCullough  
Kathy Mossing  
Chitra Naidu

#### **Committees and Working Groups**

Karen Coale: Member Services,  
Universal Curbside Recycling,  
Immigration  
Raechel Garafalo: Voter Service

#### **Administrative**

Susan Mayer: Information Manager  
and Voter Editor

## Farewell to Summer Social

Gather with your friends from the League, buy a brew or other beverage, and spend some time getting to know each other and sharing the events of your summer. Take a break and have some fun--just before we gear up for the upcoming fall elections and the League's advocacy work.

**MEET US AT:**

**3 DAUGHTERS BREWING**  
[222 22nd Street South, St. Petersburg](#)  
 Tuesday, August 19th  
 7:00 - 8:30 PM

[Read the great reviews about 3 Daughters.](#)



Parking is available beside or behind the building.

## The Latest from Committees and Working Groups



### Universal Curbside Recycling

By [Karen Coale](#), LWVSPA Member of the People's Trash Coalition

City staff defined their requirements for the implementation of universal curbside recycling, but no vendors responded. This is a very embarrassing moment for St. Petersburg considering that all other major cities in Florida, as well as numerous smaller communities in our area, have curbside recycling.

Having observed this process for 15 months, our first question is: WHY? We would like to hear from the vendors, but we also suggest that objective outside expertise is needed to review the process to date and make recommendations on how to proceed.

This is an opportune time to look at the whole project, and we would like to point out aspects of basic project management that have been missing from this process, including the need to:

1. Establish, track, and report (quarterly for the first year and semi-annually in subsequent years) specific tonnage targets to address the primary goal of this project, which is to significantly increase St. Petersburg's recyclable waste.
2. Develop and manage action plans to ensure the over-arching goal and tonnage targets are met, and then share those plans with the public. The People's Trash Coalition has offered to assist with the associated marketing and education that will be required to meet these targets, as well as educating the public about proper recycling methods to reduce contamination.
3. Conduct an overall economic analysis that delineates start-up capital costs, ongoing operational costs, and anticipated revenue from selling recyclable waste based upon above projected tonnage targets. Include in the analysis a projected timeframe for reducing garbage collection to weekly and its resulting cost reduction.

We have not seen documentation of any of the above and are concerned that in their absence this project will continue to drag on and not reach its full potential.

Yes, the non-response from vendors is a major setback, but let's use this time to work together and develop a strong realistic plan that we can all agree to.

We expect universal curbside recycling will be on an upcoming City Council agenda in August, at which the League and other members of The People's Trash Coalition will testify. We will notify you

by email when we know the date and time. Please attend and bring a friend with you. Meanwhile--using the contents of this report--voice your concerns to the mayor and city council whose email addresses are: [mayor@stpete.org](mailto:mayor@stpete.org) and [council@stpete.org](mailto:council@stpete.org).

We need your help. We got this far together. We need to remain involved to ensure that universal curbside recycling gets implemented effectively in St Petersburg.

## Immigration

By [Karen Coale](#), Immigration Working Group Co-Chair

On August 6th, Sue Price and I, representing the LWVSPA Immigration Working Group, met with U.S. Congressman David Jolly and Stephani Lavelly of his St. Petersburg office. The focus of our discussion was the LWV [position on immigration](#), and we sought his support for:



Karen Coale, Rep. David Jolly, and Sue Price

- federal legislation that would significantly reduce the immigration backlog while meeting the economic, business, and employment needs of the US
- funds to treat the unaccompanied children at our southern borders as refugees

The League's position also supports federal policies to improve the economies, education, job opportunities, and living conditions in nations with large emigrating populations. The majority of the 57,000 unaccompanied children that have arrived at our southern border emigrated from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. The homicide rates in these countries are 54 per 100,000 people. However, in neighboring Belize, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Panama, the rate is 13 per 100,000. Nicaragua is the second poorest country in the region behind Haiti.

Our next working group meeting will be on October 15th at 10:00 am.



## Voter Service

by [Raechel Garafalo](#), Voter Service Committee Chair

In addition to party primaries, the August 26th election offers all voters, regardless of party affiliation, the opportunity to weigh in on several at-large and non-partisan races, such as School Board and Sixth Circuit Court Judicial. Voters will also determine the outcome on a county referendum (Economic Development Property Tax Exemptions for New Businesses and Expansions of Existing Businesses).

To help voters with their ballot choices, the North Pinellas County and the St. Petersburg Area LWV chapters have created the non-partisan *League of Women Voters 2014 Pinellas County Voter Guide*, your one-stop online election reference tool. In it you'll find:

- Candidate information including their responses (verbatim) to issue-based questions (races included: state legislative, 6th Circuit judicial, County Commission and School Board)
- Pros and cons on the primary ballot referendum
- Voter resource links

Check it out at [vote.lwvspa.org](http://vote.lwvspa.org) and please share this link with those who might benefit from this handy resource, accessible for the first time on mobile devices.

Your Voter Service team is now planning activities for September and October in preparation for the November 4th general election to include:

- Distribution of LWVF State Voter Guides arriving in mid-September (including a Spanish-language edition) covering the following:
  - U.S. congressional races
  - Florida's state executive races
  - Florida's state legislative races
  - Florida's state ballot amendments 1, 2 & 3
- Candidate forums
- A voter registration drive encompassing National Voter Registration Day on September 23rd. The deadline to register to vote in the general election is October 6th.



**Volunteers Needed:** If you are interested in becoming involved in our efforts, please contact me at [rgarafalo@lwvspa.org](mailto:rgarafalo@lwvspa.org). We are in particular need of a Spanish-speaking member to join the Voter Service team to help register voters and distribute state voter guides to Spanish-speaking residents.

## Did You Know?



One of the League's public policy positions is to promote the election of the President and Vice-President by direct-popular-vote. [Click here](#) to read more about the League's public policy issues.

## In the Community

In celebration of Women's Equality Day, join the Business and Professional Women of St. Petersburg for a "Not-So-High Tea" including a hat fashion show, exchange of ideas, light fare, and a cash bar. Dress hats encouraged!

The League of Women Voters will be present with a voter registration table.

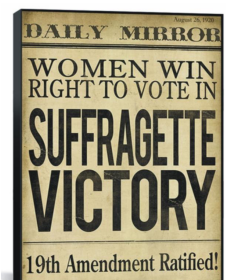
### Diversi-Tea: Writing Women Back Into History

#### [Historic Manhattan Casino](#)

642 22nd Street South  
Saturday, August 23rd

1:00 PM Registration and Networking

2:00 - 4:00 PM Program and Conversation at The Historic Manhattan Casino



For more information, visit the [BPW website](#).

[Click here](#) to download the event flyer.



**Tuesday, August 19th, 6:30-8:00 PM**

Late Summer Social

**3 Daughters Brewing**

222 22nd Street South, St. Petersburg

For more information, email [Karen Coale](#)

**Monday, September 8th, 2:00-3:00 PM**

International Relations Group Meeting

**Pinellas Park Library**

7770 52nd Street North, Pinellas Park

Topic: Turkey's Challenges

Facilitator: Judy McSwine

For more information, email [Judy McSwine](#)

**Tuesday, September 23rd**

National Voter Registration Day



**In Memoriam  
Evelyn Wright**

Long-time LWVSPA member Evelyn Wright passed away peacefully on July 5, 2014. Evelyn was a League leader and an inspiration to all who worked with her over her many years of service to our League. We will greatly miss her indomitable spirit and "the significant contributions of an empowered, courageous, bright, focused, and informed woman."

It is impossible to capture all that she contributed to the LWVSPA, but some highlights of her League work--most in the words of her League cohorts--illustrate her importance to the growth and development of the LWVSPA:

- Served as League co-president, 2005-2007
- Served as nominating committee chair 2011-2012
- Served on charter school study committee in 2013
- Actively participated in the International Relations Working Group both as a facilitator and participant for many years
- "Evelyn opened her comfortable home to us over the years, and for several years hosted our program planning meeting and dinner at her home. A lot happened in her rooms!"
- "At the League 2005 convention, delegates decided to study the issue of alternative voting systems to determine if any alternatives to Florida's present system of plurality voting should be recommended. On behalf of the state League, the LWVSPA undertook a study of the many methods for tabulating votes and shared this accumulated background information with other local Leagues. Following statewide local League consensus meetings, the LWVSPA announced a new Election Law Voting Process position, making the method of instant runoff voting (IRV) a recommended alternative to plurality voting. Evelyn headed the LWVSPA study of IRV. As she always did when in charge of anything, she put heart and soul into the project."
- "When the path of least resistance was to delay getting a computer and associated new organizational and communication methods, she led the charge. If she hadn't, I think LWVSPA

would have been too out-of-date to appeal to prospective younger members. I am grateful for her vision and courage."

- "When the second primary was being eliminated, she grasped the mathematical implications and possibilities. The event she organized to explain the complexities was engaging and memorable."
- "When there was a leadership crisis, she stepped into the breach. She was willing to try a new model as one of three people dividing the president's duties. When she embraced the plan, others agreed to give it a try. Where would LWVSPA be if she had been unwilling to innovate?"

Evelyn's memorial service was held on July 22nd at the Cathedral Church of Saint Peter. She had requested that donations be made to the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the Cathedral Church of Saint Peter music program, and the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area.

We extend our deepest sympathy to Evelyn's sister, Gladys Stifel, her daughter, Cheryl Shepard, and grandchildren, Aaron and Sarah Shepard.



## Caught on Camera... at our Member Orientation on August 9th



**LWVSPA Contact Information**

For further information, questions, or concerns, please contact us at 727.896.5197.

League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area

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[www.lwvspa.org](http://www.lwvspa.org)



10/9/2020

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