

THE VOTER

March 2020

Letter from the President

Happy March! The Presidential Preference Primary is right around the corner so our Voter Services team is working hard to get folks out to the polls.

I'd like to take this opportunity to give a heartfelt thank you to Raechel Garafalo for her many years of hard work, dedication, and skill in building a robust Voter Service team. As she steps down from her roles with the Voter Service team, we want to acknowledge her and are grateful for all that she's given to the League. I, as with many others in League, can only hope to achieve her level of fierce commitment to the core values of the League.

"Raechel inspired me with her dedication and her heart. Her commitment to the voters in our community was outstanding," said Lisa Vanover, Media and Publicity Team Lead and former board member who served alongside Raechel.

We wish her the best in her future endeavors.

In League,
Linsey



March 17 Elections: Are You Prepared?

We're counting down the days until the first election of 2020, and we want to make sure you're ready to vote!

Our highly anticipated nonpartisan Voter Guide is now officially live at [PinellasVoterGuide.com](https://www.PinellasVoterGuide.com)! Check it out to see what's on your ballot, learn candidates' positions on critical issues, get analyses of the municipal ballot issues, and much more.

You can also help us spread the word to your friends and family! We consistently hear that our Voter Guide is a great source of information on the local races and issues that tend to fly under the radar, so remember that you're doing your loved ones a service by letting them know about the Voter Guide.

These social media posts make it easy to let your friends and family know about the Voter Guide:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Pinterest](#)



Important Election Information You Should Know

The League strongly recommends the following methods for voting, in order of preference:

1. Voting early
2. Voting on Election Day

3. Voting by mail (and if you do vote by mail, the League recommends you deliver your ballot by hand to a staff member at a Supervisor of Elections office and call a few days later to ensure it was received).

Early Voting

Here's what you should know if you plan to vote early:

- Dates are March 7-15 (M-F 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., Sat.-Sun. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.)
- Early voting locations can be found [here](#).

Voting on Election Day

Here's what you should know if you plan to vote on Election Day:

- You can find your polling place [by looking here](#). Do not assume your polling place is the same from year to year.
- Make sure you have [acceptable, valid signature and photo ID](#) when you go to vote.
- Give yourself plenty of time in case you run into problems.

Vote By Mail

Here's what you should know if you plan to vote by mail:

- Your ballot must be at the Supervisor of Elections' office by 7 p.m. on March 17 (Election Day).
- **YOU MUST SIGN THE BACK OF YOUR ENVELOPE.** The Supervisor of Elections' office has told us this is one of the most common reasons for issues with VBM ballots. Please ensure your ballot is signed before you turn it in!
- You can check the status of your vote-by-mail ballot [here](#).

The Election and Voter Protection team will be operating poll monitors outside of priority polling places on Election Day. If you or someone you know runs into any issues with voting, you can either seek out a volunteer or you can call 866-OUR-VOTE to get legal assistance with your issue.



Wanted: Poll Monitors for the Upcoming Election

Are you looking for a way to help ensure every eligible voter who wants to vote is able to do so? You can do this by becoming a poll monitor!



We're getting ready to train our next cohort of poll monitors as part of the national Election Protection coalition, and we want you to join us!

When: Saturday, March 7 from 1-3 p.m.

Where: The Sanctuary @ Allendale United Methodist Church

Come learn the ins and outs of voting rights in Florida, as well as what's involved with becoming a poll monitor, how to help voters advocate for themselves when they encounter issues, and how to help the national coalition track the issues that do arise so we can draw a more complete picture of the state of voting in our community and our country.

If you'd like to sign up to become a nonpartisan poll monitor with us, please fill out this form: <https://protectthevote.net/?source=lwvspa>

Please note that if you'd like to be a poll monitor but can't attend the March 7 training, we'll be holding an online training as well. Please register at the link above so you can be informed about the training once it is scheduled.



Hopped Up On Democracy: Food Politics Edition

Did you know the USDA is very close to declaring a hash brown as one serving of fruit for our nation's school children?



The Big Food lobby spent nearly \$150 million last year and funded more than 1,000 lobbyists to get that result, all this while insurance and pharma profits soar. The interests of Big Food should not be of more importance to our government than the overall health and well-being of its citizens. Read more about [why food is a big democracy issue](#).

You can learn more about why food is so political by joining us for Hopped Up On Democracy: Food Politics Edition. We'll have plant-based snacks, beer and wine for a \$5 donation, and of course - games!

When: Saturday, March 7 at 7-9 p.m.

Where: Studio@620, 620 1st Ave. S., St. Petersburg

Bring a friend (as long as they're over 21). Just make sure to [RSVP at the link!](#)

Volunteers Needed

The team needs four people to help set up and clean up after this event. If you're at all interested, please contact [Julie Kessel](#) or [Jen Underhill](#).



International Women's Day Potluck & Drum Circle

It's time for our annual potluck in celebration of International Women's Day! Let's join together for fun, music, and great conversation.



International Women's Day

Coordinated by the LWVSPA Reproductive Rights Action Team, this party is a members-only event.

When: Sunday, March 8 at 6 p.m.

Where: Member's home

Please bring a generous dish to share and BYOB (though non-alcoholic beverages will be on hand).

Entertainment for the evening will be a female-led favorite band (with feminist male musicians), the Palm Trio. Get ready to sing a long to some favorite feminist standards and more.

Please [RSVP now](#) so we can prepare accordingly.

Volunteers Needed!

If you're willing to come a little early (around 5:30 p.m.) and/or stay a little late to help with setting up and cleaning, the organizers would appreciate the help.

Please contact [Stacey Kroto](#) or [Amy Weintraub](#) with any questions. Thank you in advance!



Girls Rock Down the House!

We're excited to partner with [Girls Rock St. Pete](#), [Black Crow Coffee](#), [Tombolo Books](#) and [Squeeze Juice Works](#) to host Rock Down the House, the Burgside premiere of the Girls Rock St. Pete

documentary, with performances by former and current Girls Rock camp bands and a special screening of the 2019 documentary "Knock Down the House."

When: Saturday, April 4 at 6-10 p.m.

Where: Calusa Commons, 2161 1st Ave. S, St. Petersburg



Girls Rock St. Pete is a grassroots organization that aims to empower girls and women to create social change through music! The event will feature music by A Toast to the Groom and Anvil Crawlers and a host of femme-powered vendors, local crafty witches, voter registration and more!

This event is free, and seating will be first come, first served. Some blanks and chairs will be available, but you can also bring your own. Just know that space is limited, so you may end up sharing your space with some new friends.

About the Documentaries

Making HERstory: First-time director Maggie Perrotta follows the inspiring journey of 40 local girls and their volunteer organizers in a week of empowerment, friendship, tears and rock 'n' roll.

Knock Down the House: Four working class women run for Congress, overcoming adversity to battle powerful political machines in this inspiring, award-winning film by Rachel Lears. (86min)



Celebrate Earth Day With Us!



"The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it."

Join us for the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day! The LWVSPA's Sustainability and Plant Power committees will be in attendance.

The event starts with a opening ceremony and rally at 9 a.m. in front of the stage, and the festival runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. More information is available [here](#).

When: Saturday, April 4 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Where: Williams Park, St. Petersburg

The first Earth Day in 1970 launched a wave of action, including the passage of landmark environmental laws in the United States. The Clean Air, Clean Water and Endangered Species Acts were created in response to the first Earth Day in 1970, as well as the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency. Many countries soon adopted similar laws.

Earth Day continues to hold major international significance. In 2016, the United Nations chose Earth Day as the day when the historic Paris Agreement on climate change was signed into force.



Bowl-a-Thon for the Tampa Bay Abortion Fund

The LWVSPA is joining forces with the Tampa Bay Abortion Fund to make abortion access a reality for Tampa Bay women in need.

The Tampa Bay Abortion Fund, which is in its second year of operation as a nonprofit, is a

group of volunteers who help those struggling to access abortions and other forms of reproductive healthcare due to low finances.

As part of a wave of push-back against a nationwide wave of anti-abortion legislation, the LWVSPA's Reproductive Rights Action Team is helping Tampa Bay Abortion Fund (TBAF) by co-sponsoring the Bowl-A-Thon for TBAF.



When: Sunday, April 26 at 12-3 p.m.

This fundraiser is in direct response to the forced parental consent bill passed recently by the Florida legislature -- a Trojan Horse of a bill designed to undermine Floridians' right to privacy and to bring an end to abortion access in our state.

LWVSPA and the Tampa Bay Abortion Fund are also conscious of the potential impact of the current administration on federal and state abortion laws. There is an anti-abortion majority on the Supreme Court, nefarious legislation everywhere we turn (nearly 300 laws restricting abortion have been passed since 2010), and anti-abortion legislators emboldened to pass bills.

We're responding by celebrating access to show the world that abortion is a necessary part of health care, people should have full insurance coverage, and community care means making sure people can access the abortions they want and need.

Join in this fundraising effort by forming a foursome for your own bowling team, join a team already in the making, or donate to one of the teams that have been formed.

[Here's how to help.](#)



Save the Dates!

Make sure to mark your calendar for the following events, which will be coming up soon:

Annual Meeting and Brunch: Saturday, April 18

This will be held April 18. During this meeting, members will vote on the board of directors, the budget, the program/action issues and bylaws. We'll follow the meeting with a delicious meal and a great speaker, so make sure to save the date!



What's Happening Around LWVSPA?

Education

- **Next meeting:** Thursday, March 19 at 10:30 a.m.
- **Location:** 2642 Sabal Springs Dr, Clearwater
- **Co-chairs:** [Nikki Fleming](#) and [Barbara Meloche](#)

Gun Safety

Want to learn more about gun safety? Visit our [Gun Safety Action Guide](#), which includes link to current status of 2020 FL proposed firearm-related legislation.

- **Next meeting:** Monday, March 23 at 7-8:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Wesley Room, Allendale United Methodist Church, 3803 Haines Rd, St. Pete
- **Chair:** [Sharon Winters](#)

Food Politics

The Food Politics team has changed its name and sharpened its focus. Formerly known as Plant Power, the team wanted to make it crystal clear that food is very political! This

team's leads include educator Jen Underhill, dietitian and nutritionist Wendy Wesley and physician Julie Kessel, and plans to work collaboratively with Laura Crabtree and the Sustainability team.

The team will host a Food Politics-themed [Hopped Up On Democracy](#) on March 7 at the Studio@620. See above for more details.

- **Next Meeting:** Monday, March 16 at 7 p.m.
- **Location:** Rollin' Oats Market, 2842 Dr M.L.K. Jr St N, St. Petersburg
- **Co-chairs:** [Julie Kessel](#), [Jen Underhill](#) and Wendy Wesley

Immigration

The action team continues to support migrants seeking asylum in this country but are being forced to remain in Mexico to await their immigration court date — by bringing attention to their plight via education and then advocate for their relief.



Last month, the team hosted an Immigration Conversation led by a witness who traveled to the Brownsville, TX/Matamoros, MX border and recently talked with migrants trapped in Matamoros. The team also continues to advocate for passage of the The Refugee Protection Act (H.R. 5210 and S. 2936).

You can help. Call, write or post a message on the websites of Rep. Charlie Crist and Sens. Marco Rubio and Rick Scott — asking them to step up to their responsibilities to ensure fair, humane and legal treatment of all who approach our borders by supporting this legislation in their respective chambers. Thanks!

- **Next meeting:** Monday, March 23 at 1:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Member's home
- **Chair:** [Karen Coale](#)

Media/Publicity

This team is always looking for people who are interested in media relationship, social media, publicity and more.

- **Next meeting:** Thursday, March 5 at 5:30 p.m.
- **Location:** LWVSPA Office, Sanderlin Center, 2335 22nd Ave. S, St. Pete
- **Chair:** [Lisa Yacso](#)

Membership Services

- **Next meeting:** Thursday, March 12 at 6 p.m.
- **Location:** LWVSPA Office, Sanderlin Center, 2335 22nd Ave. S, St. Pete
- **Chair:** [Stacey Jurewicz](#)

National Popular Vote

The National Popular Vote has been signed into law in 15 states and DC for a total of 196 Electoral Votes. The president is elected by 270+ electoral votes. The NPV passed the House in VA but was tabled until 2021 by the VA Senate, so the team didn't add any states to the compact during 2020 legislative sessions.

Consequently, the team won't be implementing the National Popular Vote option in the 2020 election. The team feels strongly that they can secure the needed 74 electoral votes (probably 5-6 additional states) by 2024.

In Florida, the bills were filed in 2020, which gave advocates the opportunity to talk about it in one committee during discussions about a House Resolution. Our lobbyist and the chair of Floridians for NPV flew into Tallahassee and were able to talk for 10 minutes. Several legislators approached them afterwards to thank them for clarifying how the Compact works.

If you have a local group who would like a speaker, or you're interested in learning more or joining the local committee, contact the team leads.

- **Co-chairs:** [Deb Mazzaferro](#) or [Marty Shapiro](#)

Nominating

Membership on this committee is set by conditions in LWVSPA bylaws (election or Board appointment).

- **Chair:** [Amy Weintraub](#)

Reproductive Rights

The team is involved with hosting the International Women's Day potluck on March 8, the Abortion Bowl-a-Thon on April 26, and is doing work around self-managed abortions.

- **Next Meeting:** Thursday, March 12 at 7 p.m.
- **Location:** LWVSPA Office, Sanderlin Center, 2335 22nd Ave. S, St. Pete
- **Chair:** [Stacey Kroto](#)

Sustainability

The Sustainability team will be at the Earth Day celebration in April, and is teaming up with Food Politics on some upcoming events and projects.

- **Chair:** [Laura Crabtree](#)

Voter Service

This team is busy with all aspects of its work, from registering voters to training poll monitors to educating voters about their rights, the candidates and ballot initiatives.

- **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, March 24 at 6:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Allendale United Methodist Church, 3808 Haines Rd. St. Petersburg
- **Co-chairs:** [Robin Davidov](#), [Maryellen Gordon](#), [Caitlin Constantine](#), [Amy Keith](#), [Stephanie Owens](#)



Upcoming Events

March 2: International Relations: Decoding U.S. - China Trade

2 p.m. @ Barbara S. Ponce Public Library, 7770 52nd St N, Pinellas Park

March 7: Coffee in Common: Living While Black, Living While White

10 a.m. @ Dr. Carter G. Woodson African-American Museum, 2240 9th Ave. S, St. Petersburg

[Facebook](#)

March 7: Nonpartisan Poll Monitor Training

1-3 p.m. @ Allendale United Methodist Church, 3803 Haines Rd. N, St. Petersburg

[Facebook](#)

March 7: Hopped Up On Democracy: Food Politics Edition

7-9 p.m. @ The Studio @ 620, 620 1st Ave. S, St. Petersburg

[Facebook](#)

March 10: St. Pete 2020 Solar Co-op Info Session

6-7:30 p.m. @ Allendale United Methodist Church, 3803 Haines Rd. N, St. Petersburg

[Facebook](#)

Apr. 4: St. Pete Earth Day

10 a.m. - 4 p.m. @ Williams Park, 350 2nd Ave. S, St. Petersburg

[Facebook](#)

Apr. 4: Rock Down the House! A Girls Rockumentary Premiere

6-10 p.m. @ Calusa Commons, 2161 1st Avenue S, St. Petersburg

[Facebook](#) | [RSVP](#)

Apr. 16: St. Pete 2020 Solar Co-op Info Session

6-7:30 p.m. @ West St. Petersburg Community Library, 6700 8th Ave N, St. Petersburg
[Facebook](#)

Apr. 26: Bowl Over Barriers to Abortion
12-3 p.m. @ Ten Pin Lanes, 1453 Pasadena Ave S, South Pasadena
[Facebook](#)

May 12: St. Pete 2020 Solar Co-op Info Session
6-7:30 p.m. @ Childs Park YMCA, 691 43rd St. South, St. Petersburg
[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!](#)

January 2020

Andresen, Theodor
Barbera, Katherine
Blackledge, Eric & Judy
Bultmann, Lisa
Cargo, Christine
Cicchino, Christine
Donovan, Jack
Drake, Hunter
Fixsen, Roxanne
Fling, Pat
Gillock, Stephanie

Millichamp, Nancy
Montante, Sheila
Peltier, Donna
Perkins, Terry
Pringle, Eddie
Riedel, Jess
Robb, Claire
Somerville, Margaret
Tuite, Susan
Walter, Lydia
Ward, Betty

February 2020

Acostandei, Diana
Bauer, Michael
Bedford, June
Bumgarner, Mary
Calderone, Kurt
Cato, Diane
Constantine, Caitlin
Corrieri, Loren
Cote, Kathleen
Cromwell, Kim
Davidov, Robin
Edmond, Jabaar
Gallo, Gina
Goodwin, JuliaAnne
Green, Laura
Gustafson-Hilton, Kathy
Holderness, Susan

Israel, Sally
Johnson, Caprice
Karas, Claire
Knop, Karen
Lerbs, Christopher
Mason, John
McGeehan, Linda
Milne, Lois
Mossing, Kathleen
Murphy, Beth
Murphy, Janet
Puntillo, Susan
Sinclair, Mary
Solis, Yvonne
Vanover, Charles
Williams, Deborah
Yacso, Lisa



2019-2020 League Leadership

OFFICERS

President: Linsey Grove
First Vice President: Robin Davidov
Second Vice President: Maryellen Gordon
Secretary: Ken Wrede
Treasurer: Caroline Bloodworth

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ama Appiah
Caitlin Constantine
Amanda Dodge
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: Sharon Winters
Immigration: Karen Coale
Reproductive Rights: Stacey Kroto
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

Media/Publicity: Lisa Yacso
Membership: Stacey Jurewicz
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.**