

THE VOTER

March 2021

Letter from the President



Happy March, Leaguers!

It is Women's History Month! It's also the official start of the Florida Legislative Session. I want to thank those of you who interviewed our local Pinellas Legislative Delegation on behalf of the State League. I also want to encourage you to keep an eye out for action alerts from the State League as they need our voices to advocate for a variety of legislative priorities. We've got a lot of legislative challenges ahead of us so it is all hands on deck! You may also want to check out the **Capitol Reports** the LWVFL is producing to keep up to date on what's happening in Tallahassee.

I am proud to announce the launch of our **new website!** This would not have been possible without the support of the Pinellas Community Foundation and Elevation Web. We're still working out some bugs and updating content as things change, so please be patient with us. Our hope is that the site will be more easily navigable, have a more robust, engaging blog, and house operational capacity for our team leads. Check it out!

Finally, we completed our Annual Program Planning with great success: **all teams were approved!** Thank you to all of the established and new teams that will be moving on to the Annual Meeting for **a final vote by our membership.** If you want to recap what teams pitched at our Program Planning Meeting, please check them out **here.**

Don't forget to mark your calendars for our Annual Meeting on **April 17th, 2021 at 10 am.** We have lots of exciting things planned this year -- we're continuing to advocate, educate, and partner with our community in safe and innovative ways. We hope that you connect with us to get engaged and involved with our vibrant League!

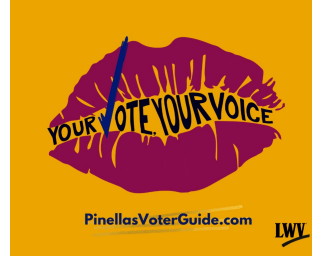
In League,
Linsey



VOTER SERVICES

Are You Ready?
March 9 Municipal Elections
just days away!

Make sure you're ready to cast an informed ballot by checking out our voter education resources, including:



- **Voter Guide:** Our online [Voter Guide](#) will let you look up what's on your ballot and see exactly what the candidates have to say on the issues that matter most to you. Remember: We'll be transitioning away from this site to [Vote411.org](#) in the coming months. We'll keep you informed
- **Candidate Forums:** The pandemic caused us to move our candidate forums online, and that means you no longer have to be there in person to watch them. In fact, you don't even have to watch them when they're actually happening - in fact, most people who watch our candidate forums watch the recorded version. If you haven't seen them yet, you can find them on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

And if you're not in one of the **10 communities** voting on March 9, you can still help out by sharing our voter education resources with your local friends and family; and ask them to do the same!



Legislative Update

Be on the lookout
for Action Alerts from LWVFL

LWVFL Opposes HB 1 & SB 484: Anti-Protest Legislation

The right to peacefully protest is part of who we are as a nation and is an important way for citizens to enact change.

Governor Ron DeSantis has threatened that right by introducing dangerous anti-protest legislation. As League members, we know that protests are an indispensable part of our democracy.



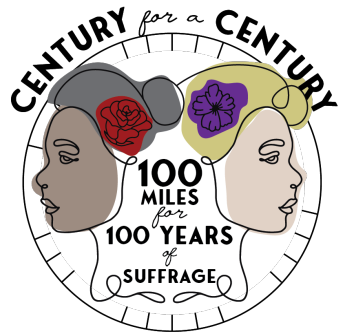
The League is continuing to do everything in our power to stop this legislation. It is undemocratic and threatens the shared values of Americans.

LWVFL Opposes SB 90: Vote-by-Mail Ballots

As written, SB 90 will make voters work harder to get mail-in ballots. Parts of this bill complicate voting by mail in Florida for voters, Supervisors of Elections, our own Secretary of State and numerous civic organizations like the League.

Parts of this bill we in fact do like--canvassing vote-by-mail ballots as soon as a county finishes Logic and Accuracy testing makes sense. That good change is overshadowed by a drastic change to the mail-in ballot process. Under current law, a mail ballot request is valid through two election cycles, or up to four years. This bill, as written, would require voters to ask for a mail ballot over and over, every calendar year, year after year. ***LWVFL will continue to monitor it closely and issue Action Alerts accordingly.***

For more, see [Capitol Reports](#)



LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE ST. PETERSBURG AREA

YOU DID IT!

- You honored the courageous women who won women's right to vote 100 years ago.
- You created, planned and organized a safe and healthy fundraiser during a pandemic.
- You hiked, biked, cross trained, ran, walked and chalked up a **total of 3655.42 miles.**
- You raised **\$3452** towards helping LWVSPA support their efforts.

The idea for Century for a Century was the brain child of LWVSPA President Linsey Grove who writes:

*"The idea for this event came from us learning about the suffragists and the use of bicycles as a means to gain independence as part of our 100 year anniversary. My spouse is an avid cyclist and had been talking about doing a "century" or 100 mile bike race. I put the two meanings together and came up with a Century for a Century as a virtual challenge. Doing fundraising events has been hard this year but this seemed like a great compromise. It highlighted the tenacious spirit of the suffragists, protecting folks against COVID, and promoting health! I'm so proud of the participants of the race and happy with the results of our first race! I'd like to thank **Rachel Gallo** for being our Volunteer Race Director and our Fundraising Team for their support."*

Forty-five participants signed up for the Century for a Century event. Some joined as individuals, and some as groups with such interesting names as "Spicy Pepper Sauce", and "Pass-a-grille Pelican Power." Everyone who joined together to make this event a success is a **WINNER.**

Badges bearing the names of historically important women, clubs and documents significant to the suffragist movement were presented (virtually) for selected accomplishments:

- The Alpha Suffrage Club for the Longest Bike Ride-**Jen Underhill 147.67 miles**
- The Declaration of Sentiments for the Longest Run/Walk-**Denise Connelly 241.05 miles**
- The Ida B. Wells for the Longest Distance Overall-**Maryellen Gordon 254.17 miles**
- The Frances Ellen Watkins Harper for the Longest Distance at One Time-**James Schultz 100 miles**
- The Mary McLeod Bethune for Most Fund Raising-**Linsey Grove**
- The Mary Church Terrell for Best Social Media-**Rachel Gallo**
- The Adelina Otero-Warren for Most "Likes" on social media-**Deborah Williams**
- The Marie Louise Bottineau Baldwin for Best Decorated Bib-**Maria Gallo**
- Raising funds was an important part of the event and we were fortunate to have wonderful sponsors and contributors. THANK YOU to all who provided funds and prizes.

OUR SPONSORS::

[A.Appiah Designs](#), [Tombolo Books](#), [Katie's Fine Cookies](#), [Pineapple Espresso](#), [Cat's Meow](#)

For a look at some fun photos & comments follow the link to [Century](#)

[Facebook Group](#)

If you were not able to participate this year, no worries; there are plans to make this an annual event.



We Need More Shelving Space for Our Stuff!

We're growing! The 2020 election has made us realize we need more storage to maximize organization for our busy and dynamic League. An easy [online registry](#) has been set up, listing shelving items needed. You can buy an item, or donate toward the item of your choice. If you prefer, you can also donate on the [LWVSPA Website](#).

Please help by giving generously.

SUSTAINABILITY EVENT

Recycling In Pinellas County



Do you ever wonder what happens to your recycling in Pinellas County?

Are you curious about what can and can't be recycled in the Tampa Bay area?

Are you wondering how you can make a difference?

Join us via Zoom on March 9, 2021 @ 6 PM EST to answer these questions, and more!



Join Meeting

**March 9, 2021
6 p.m.**



FOOD POLITICS EVENT

Hunger in our Midst: Fighting the Rising Tide of Food Insecurity in Pinellas County.

March 9 from 6:30 - 7:30



We are proud to present our second Pinellas County Community Conversation to further our commitment to building community:

- to educate ourselves and one another about issues we face;
- explore possible ways to bring about improvement, and
- to come together to take action towards a better life for all of us.

Our discussion will focus on food insecurity, one of the nation's leading health concerns.

With our panel of experts, we will examine the health consequences of food insecurity in our community, the challenges of nutrition literacy and health equity and the exacerbation of food disparities during Covid-19.

Register in advance for this webinar, by clicking here

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Our Panel:

Moderator Jen Underhill

Jen Underhill, founder of The Literacy Lift, is a reading and writing specialist who works with students of all ages to improve academic performance. She is also the founder and co-chair of the Food Politics Action Team for the League of Women Voters of the St Pete Area and represents the League on the St Pete Food Policy Council. Her advocacy work is focused on helping people understand the impact of food choices on our health and our environment, while also shining a spotlight on the corrupting influence of big food money on our democracy. Jen, a vegan and exercise enthusiast, is passionate about promoting a plant-based diet and helping people connect the dots between the food on their plate and some of the biggest issues of our day.

Panelist Erica Hall

Erica Hall, M.S. CED, MBA, ARM is Chair of the Florida Food Policy Council and sits on the Executive Committee as Vice Chair of the Sierra Club Florida, Suncoast Group and is Vice Chair. She has an extensive background as a community organizer, advocate, non-profit executive and Board member, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) consultant and Senior Legal Professional. She has worked on the development of the Food Policy Council for the City of St. Petersburg and on the Ad Hoc Committee for the Enoch Davis/St. Pete Youth Farm project.

Panelist Wendy Wesley

Wendy Wesley is a registered and licensed dietitian and nutritionist who works to improve the health of her community. She is a food policy activist who writes, speaks and podcasts about food deserts, nutrition literacy and health equity to local and statewide audiences. Wendy works in private practice where she helps her clients eat more nutrient-dense foods to manage chronic disease and reduce their reliance on medications.

Sponsors:

Allendale United Methodist Church, Fired Up Pinellas, Indivisible FL-13, Indivisible Safety Harbor and North Pinellas, League of Women Voters St. Petersburg Area, Foundation for Healthy St. Petersburg, Sierra Club Florida, Suncoast Group, USFSP Health Sciences, Women Talk Black

YOU MUST REGISTER IN ADVANCE FOR THIS WEBINAR

Register For Zoom Webinar

Click here for link to PDF event flyer



SOCIAL JUSTICE EVENT



presents

A Taste of Things to Come

featuring

Pulitzer Prize winning Political Cartoonist: Mark Fiore

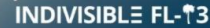
THURSDAY, MARCH 4, 2021 AT 7PM

By adapting to the times, we are offering a "taste of things to come." Fiore will present a brief Zoom program followed by a Q&A. When we are able to gather again in person, we will provide a full experience with Mark Fiore at Temple Beth-El.

REGISTER BY
MARCH 2



Mark Fiore is an American political cartoonist specializing in Flash-animated editorial cartoons. The Wall Street Journal called him "the undisputed guru of the form."



WWW.TEMPLEBETH-EL.COM/LEIFNISSSEN

Register!



FOCUS: SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTION TEAM

Each month, the Voter shines a light on the work being done by one of our Action and Education Teams. This month the focus is on the Social Justice Action Team.

While Manatee and Hillsborough counties have passed resolutions declaring racism a public health crisis, no city in Florida has yet done so. The Social Justice Action Team wants St. Pete to be the first. Working with the Black Health Equity

Alliance, Foundation for a Healthy St. Pete, and Council Member Amy Foster, the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area is putting forward a resolution declaring racism a public health crisis that includes concrete action items for change. When the resolution makes it to City Council for a vote, everyone will have the opportunity to call to voice support.



The Social Justice Action Team is relatively new, but brings together interests and priorities that have been long standing values for many members. Linsey Grove, president of LWV St. Pete and co-lead of the team highlighted her own realization that if the League was truly committed to embedding diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout, there should be a group to house and expand on that work. This wasn't a hard sell, with many League members interested in social justice and looking for ways to do more.

If the League of Women Voters wants to be a diverse, community-driven league, relevant to many communities, "we can't do that sitting at our own table," says Linsey. Instead of asking people to "come sit at our table," the social justice team is finding ways to sit at other tables and support community initiatives. In addition to co-hosting Coffee in Common and holding a social justice discussion club, members of the team attend community meetings and find ways to bridge the League with other community-led efforts. Does that sound like you?

Consider reaching out to the Social Justice Action Team to join or learn more! Contact **Stacey Kroto**



A DISCUSSION OF RACE & POLITICS

Join us for coffee, conversation, and camaraderie

Join Us!

**March 27 at 10 a.m.
Coffee in Common**

Thank you for your interest in Coffee in Common! Please **REGISTER** in advance.

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Coffee in Common Survey for Membership:

Ask Me Anything!

In March, our Coffee in Common partners, the sorors of Delta Sigma Theta, will graciously co-host an Ask Me Anything (AMA) session. The topic will be entitled: An Uncomfortable Conversation. An AMA is an open forum for audience members to ask any questions to panelists, which are often of a more personal nature. We will be accepting questions in advance through this [anonymous form](#) and will try to get through as many as time permits.





Karen Lieberman is the Action Team Lead for Campaign Finance Reform for LWVSPA. She is a retired college professor and "sometime" manuscript editor. She spends a lot of time with her grandkids and does a lot of cooking. She enjoys gardening and recently won a water-wise award from the County for her use of rain barrels and native plants in her gardens. You may remember the garden if you attended the

International Women's Day event in years past, which, coincidentally, is one of Karen's favorite League memories!

Pictured above: Neighbor David Steiner, Husband Bruce, Son Jared, Karen and Grandchildren: Liana, Francesca and Caleb)

Karen first got involved with the League in 2014 when she was working with Move to Amend to get a resolution passed by St. Pete City Council: "Money is Not Speech; Corporations are Not People." It passed, and the next year the group decided to work for a city-wide ordinance, which would be more meaningful. The Defend Our Democracy ordinance for campaign finance reform in St. Pete was started. The League joined the effort in 2016. The ordinance passed in 2017 and hasn't been contested or appealed since its passage. You can find more about the ordinance and the League's work to pass it [here](#).

Karen's other main focus is the Leif Nissen Social Justice Lecture Series at Temple Beth-El, which she started in 2013 to honor her son, who died in a car accident in 2008. The next lecture, co-sponsored by the League, will feature Pulitzer Prize-winning political cartoonist Mark Fiore on March 4th at 7 pm via Zoom (featured above). You can register [here](#) (required to attend!)

"Do you have more than a decade of involvement with LWVSPA or know a friend who does? We'd love to profile you in a future issue of the Voter. If you are willing to be spotlighted in a future issue, please email me, at bonnie@banyannonprofitstrategy.com Thank you!" *Bonnie Hough*



Mark Your Calendars!

March 2- April 30 - Legislative Session (See [Capitol Reports](#))

March 9 - [Pinellas Municipal Elections](#)

April 17 at 10 a.m.- Annual Meeting

June - General Meeting

July 26 - Deadline to register for [St. Petersburg Primary Elections](#)

August - General Meeting

August 24 – St. Petersburg Primary Election and St. Pete Beach

Special Election

October - General Meeting

October 4 – Deadline to register for Municipal General Elections

November 2 – Municipal General Elections

December - Holiday Party (Covid permitting)



MARCH TEAM MEETINGS

Social Justice

March 11, 2021 @ 7:00 pm - 8:15 pm

Google Meet

Food Politics

March 15, 2021 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Google Meet

Immigration

March 22, 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

March 23, 2021 @ 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Conference Call 605-472-5621

Access Code. 555498

Membership

March 24, 2021 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

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

Fund Development

March 26, 2021 @ 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Google Meet



Welcome New Members

Our League is proud to welcome these newest members!

Kareen Belnavis
Anne Core
Erica Hall
Laura Hensley
Bonnie Hough

Ana Claudia Kapoor
Joanne McCarthy
Kendra McGarry
Tasha Samreny
Lucy Sedgwick

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!](#)

March 2021

Jessica Arriola
Sheila and Stuart Bernhard
Janet Blair
Susan Castleman
Denise Chezek
Dave Coale
Karen Coale
Karla Correa
Carol Fisher
Raechel Garafalo
Randi Hilleso
Julie Kessel
Genevieve Kiernan

Cora Kostka
Barbara Lagasi
Geanne Marks
Cara McCown
Karen Raihill
Anne Rawley
Elizabeth Reynolds
Rebecca Shaffer
Julia Sharp
Bonnie Sklaren
Peggy Tucker
Linda Whitley

February 2021

Diana Acostandei
Megan Albertson
Mary Bumgarner
Kurt Calderone
Jeanne Coleman
Brenna Dukes
Tim Dutton
Megan Firestone
Beth Fountain

Darby Hall
Jane Holloway
Ekta Mangat
Linda McGeehan
Lois Milne
Kathy Parker
Nick Pavonetti
Susan Puntillo
Lupe Torre

Lisa Foushee
Vilma Fry

Lizzy Wells

January 2020

Mary-Sue Beeler
Nichole Blaquiere
Sharon Bonnem
Carmen Bruner
Yvette Butler
Christine Cicchino
Ann Fuentes
Diane Krajcik

Sheila Montante
Christina Paylan
Amy Sauers
Margaret Sells
Judith Turner
Terry White
Lisa Zawistowski



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

[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
Gun Safety: On hiatus
Immigration: Karen Coale
Reproductive Rights: On hiatus
Census: Gina Gallo
Food Politics: Julie Kessel, Jen Underhill
Sustainability: Laura Crabtree
National Popular Vote: Deb Mazzaferro, Marty Shapiro
International Relations: Judy McSwine
Social Justice: Linsey Grove, Stacey Kroto
Media/Publicity: Natasha Samreny & Patti Myers
Membership: Amy Weintraub
Nominating: Amy Weintraub
Operations Director: 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.