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

VOTER

May 2014

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We Make a Difference



*Individual Membership: \$52
*Each Additional Household Membership: \$26
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Visit our [website](#) to join

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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.](#)



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

Karen Flannery
Amy Foster
Annie Johnson
Betty Morgenstein
Ellis Robinson
Alice Smith
Pamela Smith
Teresa Sullivan
Patricia Waite



Raechel Garafalo
2014-2015 1st VP

Dear League Members and Supporters,

May marks the start of the League business year and, like spring, new beginnings. It's time to welcome new officers and directors to our board, begin work on potential new program projects, and advance toward new phases of existing projects.

All this renewal is the byproduct of months of member outreach, committee input, and board coordination culminating in the LWVSPA's Annual Business Meeting held last month at which members elected new officers and directors, approved the budget, voted on targeted bylaw changes, and agreed to adopt the board-recommended program for 2014-2015. We had a robust and highly engaged member turnout at the meeting, which took place at the St. Petersburg Yacht Club, directly followed by our *Making Democracy Work* awards luncheon honoring former 12-term U.S. Congresswoman and current League of Women Voters Florida Board member Pat Schroeder. (Look for more on Pat and the luncheon in Julie Kessel's president's letter in next month's *Voter*). What a fantastic way to begin the year!

The year-end transition provided an opportunity for longstanding board members, Karen Coale (president), Sydni Shollenberger (second vice president), and Nancy Tait (director and membership chair) to pass their respective batons and move on. Karen will now chair the Membership and Universal Curbside Recycling Committees as well as the Immigration Working Group. Sydni and Nancy will continue as active League members.

In addition, I was elected first vice president and our treasurer, Caroline Bloodworth, was elected to another two-year term. Secretary Kathy Arsenault as well as directors Ayele Hunt and Chitra Naidu are continuing in the second year of their two-year terms. Director Susan Mayer will transition to the position of LWVSPA Information Manager, while maintaining her position as Voter Editor.

To complete our leadership team, we have added seven new members to the LWVSPA Board of Directors.

- Elected to the board by the membership: Pat Wood (second vice president, one-year term), Wendy Grassi (director, two-year term) and Karen Knop (director, two-year term)
- Appointed to the board by the LWVSPA 2014-2015 board: directors (one-year terms) Jane Harper, Jim Jackson, Jack McCullough, and Kathy Mossing.

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 Mossier
Chitra Naidu

Committees and Working Groups

-Karen Coale, Member Services,
 Universal Curbside Recycling,
 Immigration
 -Raechel Garafalo, Voter Service
 -Ayele Hunt, Library Services Study
 -Jim Jackson, Charter Schools Study

Administrative

**Susan Mayer, Information Manager
 and Voter Editor**

Highly accomplished in their fields of expertise, these individuals collectively bring to the board a wealth of knowledge and experience ranging from high level organizational management (profit and non-profit), healthcare administration, legal expertise, financial management, university education, and youth and social services. On behalf of our newly elected president Julie Kessel and myself, it's an honor to welcome our new board members. We look forward to serving with them!

Also approved by membership at the Annual Business Meeting was our 2014-2015 Program, consisting of four issues on which to focus our study, education, and/or advocacy efforts:

- Continuing our campaign to bring Universal Curbside Recycling to St. Petersburg
- Working with the League of Women Voters North Pinellas County to educate voters on the countywide Greenlight Pinellas initiative
- Working with the League of Women Voters Florida to expand healthcare to 1.2 million uninsured Floridians
- Monitoring and addressing Florida voter rights issues/legislation

Please [contact me](#) if you are interested in participating in any of these projects.

Julie Kessel will be back next month to share her thoughts in the June **Voter**.

On a final note, our thoughts are with all those serving or who have served our country and their families as we approach Memorial Day. Thank you for your service and sacrifice!

In League,
 Raechel Garafalo, First Vice President 2014-2015



Join Our Mailing List

Stay informed about what's going on at the LWVSPA.



Member Orientation May 28th

Calling All Members: Let's Get Together to Learn About the League

Program, advocacy, non-partisanship, candidate forums, study and action, committees, working groups, mysterious acronyms..."League-a-lease" often seems confusing and esoteric, to say the least.

Do you want your membership to be more enjoyable, meaningful, and productive? As an active volunteer or as a supporting member, being knowledgeable about the League will help you communicate the League's mission to others. We invite you to join us for the following special event:

What: Member Orientation (for new and established members)

When: Wednesday, May 28th, 6:30-8:30 PM

Where: [League Office Board Room](#)

233 3rd Street North, 1st Floor

Parking is available on street or behind the building.



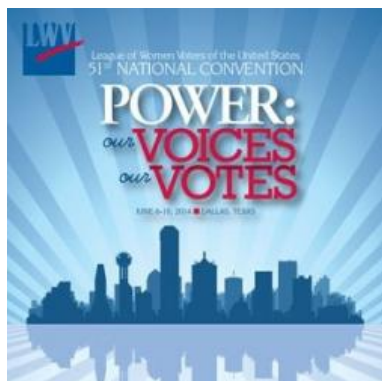
The group at a recent member orientation.

Every orientation is different, with unique interpersonal connections and new content. Even if you've attended a previous orientation, plan on attending this one.

Light refreshments and camaraderie will be on the menu. Learning is guaranteed!

Please [email](#) to let us know if you can make it, or leave a message at 727.896.5197. We can't wait to see you!

National Convention June 6th - 10th



How About a Trip to Dallas?

Think you have to be appointed or anointed to attend the League's National Convention in Dallas? Think again! Any League member with active standing can attend this biennial event.

The State of Florida needs a rockin' group to represent us, and you can be part of that group. In addition to helping set the League's course for the next two years, hearing accomplished and interesting speakers, and developing relationships with League members from around the country, delegates will be electing our national leadership team.

At the recent Legislative Summit and Council of Leaders in Tallahassee, local League leaders voted to support [Florida League President Deirdre Macnab's candidacy for LWVUS president](#). Her nomination will come from the floor at the convention.

It's not too late to make your plans to attend what is sure to be an informative and exciting few days. Florida has 79 voting delegate positions, and we want to make sure that our voice is heard. Call our office at 727.896.5197 or [email us](#) to let us know that you are interested or to get more information about the convention.

When: June 6th through 10th

Where: Omni Dallas Downtown Hotel

[Click here](#) for detailed information and to register for the National Convention.

Voter Service

On Our Summer Menu: Voter Education for Fall Elections

by Raechel Garafalo, Voter Service Chair

Greetings fellow Leaguers!

This month your Voter Service team, in conjunction with the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County (LWVNPC) began working on the production of the *League of Women Voters 2014 Primary Election Voter Guide*. The guide will cover all contested races for Pinellas County School Board and Commission as well as Circuit Court Judicial, Special District, and State seats for the House of Representatives and Senate. Be on the look out for the Guide to appear on both the LWVSPA and LWVNPC websites in late July to coincide with distribution of the Vote by Mail ballots.

In addition, the Florida Bar publishes a *Voter's Guide to Merit Retention* (an oft misunderstood process) which the LWVSPA will be distributing prior to the primary election. If you are interested in receiving one, please contact our office at office@lwvspa.org or call 727.896.5197.

If you would like to volunteer your time and talent and work with us as we put together the *Voter Guide* or on any of our other projects (voter registration, candidate forums) please [email me](#).



Important dates:

June 20th - qualification deadline for most county and state races

August 26th - primary election

For more election and voting information, visit the [Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections website](#).

Immigration

Reform Update: We are Making a Difference



by Karen Coale, Immigration Committee Co-Chair

I had the pleasure and excitement of watching the final debate and vote within the Florida Senate on in-state tuition. It passed by a significant margin: 26 - 13. Thanks for your phone calls and emails. They do make a difference; they DID make a difference.

This bill proposed that students who meet the following criteria are eligible to pay in-state tuition--regardless of their and their parents' immigration status:

- * Attend a Florida high school for at least four years
- * Graduate from a Florida high school
- * Begin their college education within 24 months of graduation

They currently pay out-of-state rates, which are four times as expensive.

Because Comprehensive Immigration Reform continues to be stalled in the U.S. House of Representatives, we are in the process of scheduling a meeting with Rep. David Jolly via his representative, who attended our fundraising luncheon. We will share the LWVUS position on immigration and urge his support.

The Immigration Working Group is taking the summer off. Our next meeting will be on September 17th at 10:00 AM.

Universal Curbside Recycling

2014: Universal Curbside Recycling Comes to St. Pete

by Karen Coale, LWVSPA Member of the People's Trash Coalition

We are still awaiting an announcement from the city regarding the outsourcing of the collection and the processing of recyclable waste for the 74,000 single-family households in St. Petersburg.

Following that and the release of their implementation schedule, the People's Trash will develop a citizen education and awareness campaign.

Meanwhile, we participated with Suncoast Sierra at St. Petersburg's first city-sponsored Earth Day celebration in South Straub Park. We also plan to march in the PRIDE Parade on June 28th. ***We need volunteers to carry the People's Trash banner and to wheel large bins collecting recyclable bottles and cans.*** We did it last year in the pouring rain and gained a lot of positive publicity for the campaign. This year the parade will be in the evening--a nice break from the hot sun. Please let me know if you can help out.

Become informed and help make recycling a success in St Petersburg! Email me at kcoale@lwwspa.org.



PRIDE Parade 2013

Did You Know?

Who Was the Founder of the League of Women Voters?



[Carrie Chapman Catt](#) founded the League of Women Voters in 1920. She was a leader in the Women's Suffrage Movement and was instrumental in the successful passage of the 19th Amendment, giving women the right the vote.

She was an "only daughter" who worked her way through college. After a brief career as an educator, school principal, and district superintendent, she acted on her commitment to women's rights by joining the suffrage movement. After passage of the 19th Amendment, Catt continued her work for women's voting rights in other countries and later became an activist for world peace.

"Everybody counts in applying democracy. And there will never be a true democracy until every responsible and law-abiding adult in it, without regard to race, sex, color or creed has his or her own inalienable and unpurchasable voice in government." Carrie Chapman Catt



Wednesday, May 28th, 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM

Member Orientation

233 3rd Avenue North, 1st Floor Boardroom

For more information or to RSVP, [email](#) or leave a message at 727.896,5197.

Monday, June 2nd, 6:00 PM

Voter Guide Planning Group Meeting

[Largo Library](#), Jenkins Room

120 Central Park Drive, Largo

Contact VS Chair [Raechel Garafalo](#) if you would like to attend and help with the planning.

Friday, June 6th through Tuesday, June 10th

LWV National Convention

Dallas, TX

[Click here](#) for more information.

For information about League trips, visit the [LWVF website](#). There's lots planned!



Caught on Camera at Our Annual Meeting & Luncheon



LWVSPA, P.O. Box 11775, St. Petersburg, FL 33733

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