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# VOTER

## November 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



Julie Kessel  
President 2014-2015

Hello to our League Community,

Our hard work this election season has paid off. This election season, there were 500,000 more voters than in the last gubernatorial election. Our advocacy work on the amendments was a resounding success. Amendment 1 was passed with an astounding margin of 75% for and 25% against, and Amendment 3 did not pass. Thank

you to all who worked so hard in this election to educate our citizens and turn out the vote.

Now, we turn our sights to the post-election season. This month we identified the three legislative priorities that our local League believes should be a focus for our State League lobby efforts. They included:

- **Immigration:** Undocumented immigrants should be permitted to get drivers licenses. This would result in improved road safety, increased state revenues, and reduced exporation due to undocumented drivers without a license.
- **Voter Equity:** There should be a focus on restoration of felon voting rights. This has been shown to result in reduced recidivism in offenders, and will increase participation in democracy and the engagement of disenfranchised citizens.
- **Medicaid Expansion:** Medicaid expansion is critical to establishing health equity and reducing health disparities and has strong economic value for our community.

**Membership:  
We Want YOU**

**JOIN OR RENEW:  
WE MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE**



Fall means the beginning of a new League membership year. We need your support as a member to continue our work.

We now offer five levels of membership:

- [Carrie Chapman Catt \(Gold\) for \\$250](#)
- [Susan B. Anthony \(Silver\) for \\$125](#)
- [Household for \\$78](#)
- [Individual for \\$52](#)
- [Student for \\$26](#)

It's easy to join or renew. To pay online using PayPal, just click on the link above for your membership level. Or, if you prefer, you may mail a check made out to LWVSPA to:

LWVSPA  
POB 11775

Thank you to all of you who offered your input to the board to assist us in making those recommendations. The State League will decide, based on all of the Florida local League inputs, what priorities it will add to its legislative efforts. As part of those legislative efforts, we are seeking members who are interested in meeting with our local representatives and possibly coming with us to Tallahassee for the legislative session to make our voices heard. **Please let us know if that is of interest to you, so we may include you in those efforts.**

The election also marked the end of our typical member renewal cycle. The League membership year runs from October 1st through September 30th. Thanks to all of you for renewing within that time interval. For those who have not renewed, it's not too late. This year we are offering several levels of memberships: student, individual, family, and enhanced membership levels providing additional giving opportunities. \$46 of every \$52 for our regular membership goes to support our state and national League activities. A donation above that amount goes directly to support our local activities, and every donation helps us in our mission to make democracy work.

It is time for us to consider nominations for our next League year for the board of directors and officer positions. **Please offer your suggestions as we begin to develop our slate of nominees, which will be presented at our April annual meeting. And feel free to nominate yourself.** We are a working board providing mentorship to those seeking new opportunities.

The same process is happening at the state level. Those elections will occur at the annual state meeting in May in Delray Beach. **If you have an interest in joining us there, please let us know.**

It is also time to consider any member-recommended changes to bylaws. Those changes will be vetted by the board and then presented to the general membership at our annual meeting in April as well. Please review our bylaws and **send your recommendations in for our consideration.**

Finally, be on the lookout for upcoming events after the holidays. We will be working with the North County League to have a legislative update in January. We will also have a seminar on the death penalty and racism in January. In February, we will have our annual program planning meeting, and we will likely have a seminar on Medicaid expansion that same month. Please look for additional opportunities as we continue our immigration meetings, international relations meetings, and work on the Universal Curbside Recycling initiative.

St. Petersburg, FL 33733-11775

A large percentage of what you pay for an individual membership goes to support our state and national Leagues. **By selecting the new Gold or Silver membership level, most of your dues will help support the work of our local League.**

**Save the Date:  
December 7th**



It's that time of year--time for our annual holiday party presented by your officers and board of directors.

This year, we'll be celebrating at the lovely home of Ruth and Jack McCullough on Snell Isle.

Here's what you need to know:

**Date:** Sunday, December 7th  
**Time:** 2:00 - 4:00 PM  
**Where:** 115 Rafael Boulevard, Snell Isle

Come kick off the upcoming holidays with food, beverages, and camaraderie with League members and guests.

## LWVSPA Leadership

### Officers:

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

### Directors:

Wendy Grassi

Thank you for all that you do.

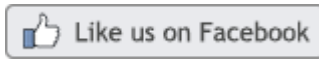
In League,

Julie

Jane Harper  
Ayele Hunt  
Jim Jackson  
Karen Knop  
Jack McCullough  
Kathy Mousing

**Happy Thanksgiving from your officers and board of directors!**

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



Join Our Mailing List



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

## Universal Curbside Recycling

### Show Your Support Now

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

The ordinance to provide universal curbside recycling service to single family residences is up for a vote by City Council at their meeting on **Monday, November 24th.**



LWVSPA President Julie Kessel will testify, voicing the League's support for bringing this service to St Petersburg as well as to encourage City Council to approve the loan to purchase the associated trucks and recycling bins. Your presence matters! **We need a supportive group who will stand when she begins her testimony.**

Our coalition partners, Suncoast Sierra and the Sustainability Council, will also be speaking and rallying their members to attend.

Please arrive by 6:00 PM so you can get a seat inside Council Chambers! Wear red, white, and blue and your League button. We will be handing out UCR stickers as well. City Council Chair has agreed to move UCR up in the agenda and begin its public hearing no later than 6:15PM.

If you have any questions or would like to be involved in the public education phase of this project, I would be delighted to hear from you at [recycling@lwgspa.org](mailto:recycling@lwgspa.org).

## Voter Service

### Counting Ballots: Did Your Vote Count?

by Raechel Garafalo, Voter Service Chair



A CB in action.

In anticipation of very thin margins of victory for some of the state and local races in this past month's general election, the League felt that local canvassing boards' decisions were critically important and that there was a heightened need for outside observation.

So, for our final act of the election season, Voter Service team volunteers from both the St. Petersburg Area and North Pinellas County Leagues worked together in shifts to observe and report on the Pinellas County Election Canvassing Board (CB) meetings at which the three-member board examined ballots that, for various reasons, could not be counted without undergoing a process of further research, review and/or validation.

Many of the ballots in question were counted after processing by the Supervisor of Election's staff and auditing by the CB. Some were not. Here are some of the final numbers that our observer core compiled:

- Of the 292 provisional ballots cast in Pinellas County, 149 (51%) of them were accepted and counted.
- Of the 840 mail/absentee ballots presented to the Canvassing Board, 576 were counted. 264 were rejected and not counted (97 no signature, 102 signature variation, 49 signed by other than voter, 14 moved out of county)

Click on the links below to read articles by local League leaders that explain the canvassing process, the role of the CB, and some of the session outcomes.

### [\*\*Why Your Vote May Not Have Counted\*\*](#)

by Tony Dutton, Voter Service Chair, LWV Brevard County

### [\*\*Counting Provisional Ballots\*\*](#)

by Donna Sharpless, President, LWV North Pinellas County

The campaign signs, mailers, and negative ads are gone, signaling the end of another election season and providing our cue to take a deep breath (and a short break) before gearing up for our Voter Service activities (voter registration, candidate forums, etc.) which will resume in January and February before the spring municipal elections.

Please [\*\*contact me\*\*](#) if you'd like to get involved in Voter Service. There's something for everyone! Together we can make a difference.

## Privatization of Public Schools Join the Dialogue

92 League members from 32 states attended an education caucus session at last summer's national convention in Dallas to gauge interest in sharing information about school choice and accountability. After spirited participation, the group agreed to form national committees to track legislation and advocacy efforts regarding privatization of public schools.

As a next step, the League has established a League Education Issues blog. You can contribute to a better understanding of what is occurring in each state by subscribing to the blog and by sharing information about the blog in the community.

SUBSCRIBE AT:

<http://lwveducation.com>



## Save the Dates

### Time to Help Make a Difference (and have a little fun)

The state League has important events coming up in the next few months. **Any member is welcome to attend, so mark your calendar and join us.**

#### Legislative Summit March March 10-12, 2015



Last year's Legislative Summit group.

Essentially our "lobby days," the League of Women Voters of Florida's annual Legislative Summit brings members from all over the state to Tallahassee to advocate on our issues before state leaders, ensuring that a strong and united League voice is heard. Previously dubbed Legislative Seminar, this three-day conference during legislative session has in the past included seminars and trainings on understanding League positions and advocating with civility, briefings with legislative leaders in the Cabinet room of the Florida Capitol, lobbying legislators in person, members-only formal luncheons and dinners, and fundraising galas with Florida leaders.

Please SAVE THE DATE in your calendar, March 10-12, 2015, for the League's Legislative Summit in Tallahassee! Support Kathe Thompson, our intrepid climate warrior who spent seven months walking across America for action on Climate Change and learn how we can move forward on this issue, fight for better public schools, protection of our waterways, and much more. Additional information will be available soon.

#### State Convention, May 15-17, 2015

Remember to SAVE \$25 and [REGISTER NOW](#) for the 2015 LWVF Convention....our best ever!!! Convention will take place May 15-17 in beautiful, oceanside Delray Beach. There will be national speakers and workshops to help you improve your public speaking skills and you will be part of the team that helps direct the League's future by deciding on priorities and issues.

So plan now for two packed days of fun, a chance to make new friends and stunning evening activities. Don't miss it!



[Check our calendar](#) for the latest schedule of League events.

**Wednesday, November 19th , 10:00 AM Immigration Group Meeting**

Home of Mary Berglund

[email for address and directions](#)

**Monday, December 1st , 2:00 PM**

International Relations Group Meeting

[Pinellas Park Library](#)

7770 52nd Street North

**Tuesday, December 2nd, 6:30 - 8:00 PM**

Board of Directors Meeting

Office Boardroom

233 3rd Street North, St. Petersburg

**Sunday, December 7th, 2:00 - 4:00 PM**

Annual Holiday Party

[Home of Ruth and Jack McCullough](#)

215 Rafael Boulevard, St. Petersburg



## Caught on Camera... November League Events



**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  
PO Box 11775, St. Petersburg, FL 33733  
[office@lwwspa.org](mailto:office@lwwspa.org)  
[www.lwwspa.org](http://www.lwwspa.org)

10/9/2020

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

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