



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE ST. PETERSBURG AREA

THE VOTER

News for Defenders of Democracy

September 2017



Sunrise Over the Bay: A Sustainability Summit Taking Care of Our Peninsula on a Peninsula

**Sunrise Over the Bay:
Sustainability Summit**
Saturday, Sept. 16th, 9 am to 12:30 pm
Doors Open at 8 am for Networking!
**Florida Fish and Wildlife Research
Institute**
100 8th Ave SE, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

FREE! But space is limited. Registration required for everyone attending, including those who are tabling.

The event will highlight clean energy and clean water as critical needs for the success of our peninsula on a peninsula.

The first panel on solar energy will discuss FL SUN solar co-ops, Solar and Energy Loan Fund (SELF), and community solar opportunities. The second panel will present water quality facts and strategies, focusing on the present and future, to be ready for climate change.

[Click here to register.](#)

Other panelists include:
Alan Brand, the Solar Shepherd
Mary Dipboye, FL SUN Advisory Board
Doug Coward, Executive Director, Solar and Energy Loan Fund (SELF)
Susan Glickman, Florida Director, Southern Alliance Clean Energy
Claude Tankersley, Public Works Administrator, City of St. Pete
Gary Mitchum, Professor & Associate Dean, USF College of Marine Science
Andy Squires, Coastal Resources Section Manager, Pinellas County Public Works
Holly Greening, Executive Director, Tampa Bay Estuary

Democracy 101: A Civic Action Primer

There's something happening here...

Even if you're not old enough to remember the lyrics to that iconic protest song, you can feel it. Yes, there's something happening in our country. A spirit of activism not seen in many years is sweeping across America. Motivated by the 2016 election campaign and its



outcome, people on both sides of the political aisle are energized to become active in the political process-- either to support the policies of the current administration at the national, state, or local level, or to oppose them.

But how does that work? What can citizens do to make a difference in the political world?

This fall, the [Institute for Strategic Policy Solutions at St. Petersburg College](#) and the [League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area](#) have scheduled

three free public workshops where participants discuss the basics of local government structure, policy-making, and civic engagement.

The first workshop is a done deal, but you still have time to join one or both of the upcoming workshops on Wednesday, September 13th and on Wednesday, December 6th. Mark your calendar and [click here](#) for more information and to register.

Dr. Julie Kessel, LWVSPA President, and Dr. Tara Newsom, St. Petersburg College Professor of American Government and Director of the Center for Civic Learning & Community Engagement, moderated the first of three panel discussions on August 28th



at the American Stage Theater. The conversation with former US Representative David Jolly and Pinellas County Commission Chair Janet Long (speaking) helped participants understand the different approaches to contemporary political issues from the local and federal levels; and shed light on how citizens can advocate with the most effectiveness.

Mission Possible: Engaging Millennial Voters

Read this. Watch video. Take action.

The past two decades of politics in Washington have seen increased partisanship, prolonged stalemates, and numerous scandals. For today's teenagers and young adults, years of ineffective and inefficient political leadership have completely eroded any sense that politicians or government have the ability to do good or effect positive change. Worse, the mean-spirited, dysfunctional political system that has come to characterize American politics has turned young people off to the idea of running for office. With more than 500,000 elected positions in the United States, what will happen when this generation is expected to take the reins of political power?

In the attached video, Jennifer Lawless, co-author of ***Running from Office: Why Young Americans are Turned Off to Politics***, talks about engaging millennial voters in the political process.

We learn that the League and like organizations can make a difference, reporting that ...there are practical suggestions for how new technologies, national service programs, and well-strategized public service campaigns could generate political ambition in young people. Today's high school and college students care deeply about improving the future, and it's not too late to ensure that they view running for office as an effective way to do so.

This video comes at the perfect time as we build more sustainable relationships with SPC and USFSP to be their go-to community organization for education about the issues important to them, and advocacy training and capacity building to start making

an impact within the community.

If you're excited to help us expand our reach, please help us recruit members, volunteer with us at upcoming events, and get the word out about everything we're doing for all generations throughout the community.



Call to Action

We Need Your Help Now: Florida Voting Rights Restoration for Felons Initiative

Together, let's say yes to second chances and redemption so all Floridians can be full members of their communities.

The proposed ballot summary is as follows:
This amendment restores the voting rights of Floridians with felony convictions after they complete all terms of their sentence including parole or probation.

The amendment would not apply to those convicted of murder or sexual offenses, who would continue to be permanently barred from voting unless the Governor and Cabinet vote to restore their voting rights on a case by case basis.

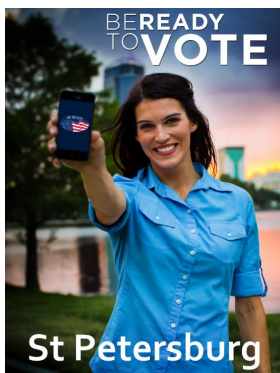
They've paid their debt to society. It is time to restore these people's right to vote.

In order to get this Voting Restoration Amendment onto the 2018 ballot, 700,000 petitions from Florida voters need to be collected by December, 2017.

We are asking each LWVSPA member to collect 10 signed petitions by December 2017. Contact [Stephanie Owens](#) or the [League office](#) to arrange to submit your petition.

[Click here to download a copy of the petition for printing.](#)

Advocacy and Education Group Reports



Voter Service

We're so not bored. It's election season!

by Lindsay Murdock, Voter Service Lead

In the last three months Voter Service has sent in 50 new or updated voter registrations! We've moderated three candidate forums--two hosted by the City of St. Petersburg and one by the Downtown Neighborhood Association--each one bigger than the last.

In the next two months, we'll be on registering voters at USFSP's Civic Engagement

Fair, and at USFSP and SPC for National Voter Registration Day on September 26th. If you'd like to get involved and help register voters, please email linds.murdock@gmail.com for more information!

We'll be moderating candidate forums for the General Election September 25th and 26th at City Hall. Both forums are hosted by the City of St. Petersburg, and will start at 6:30, with City Council candidates participating on the 25th, and Mayoral candidates participating on the 26th. **If you are planning to work as a volunteer at one of our forums, you must attend the forum preparation workshop. Originally scheduled for September 9th, the workshop has been rescheduled due to the threat from Hurricane Irma. It is now scheduled for Tuesday, September 19th, from 6 - 7:30 pm.** If you'd like more information about the forums and how you can help out, email raesg@msn.com.

The Voter Guide is also live on the internet! Please take time to read up on the candidates, and share it with your friends, family, and neighbors! As you're reading up on the candidates, join the discussion on Facebook and Twitter using the hashtags #SPVote, #StPeteVotes, and #LWVSPA. And of course, don't forget to vote in the primary on August 29th!

Finally, this August we're also launching our inaugural partnership student organization with SPC Gibbs and Downtown Campuses. Working with Tara Newsom, JD, who is the founder of the Center for Civic Learning and Community Engagement on SPC's campus, we're developing opportunities for students, as members of the League, to register and educate voters on campus and in their communities.

As always, we appreciate your help and support in getting the word out about our forums, sharing the Voter Guide, and helping us to register voters! If you've got any questions at all, please email [Raechel](#) or [Lindsay](#)!

Immigration

What's happening here in Pinellas County?

by Karen Coale, LWVSPA Immigration Action Group Co-Chair & LWVF Immigration Committee Co-Chair



Homeland Security has shifted away from a strategy of deporting only serious criminals to one of expanded deportation priorities. This has resulted in a rise in the number of undocumented immigrants facing removal proceedings. To accomplish this increase, the Administration has begun to engage local law enforcement in the enforcement of federal immigration laws.

Pinellas County Sheriff Gualtieri has been working with federal officials on a process called "civil arrest warrants," which allows for the rebooking of undocumented immigrants based on a request from ICE (immigration & Customs Enforcement). In a case covered in the *Tampa Bay Times*, an undocumented immigrant was charged by a Largo police officer with allowing an unlicensed driver to operate a vehicle. Per state law he was booked and posted bail of \$500. Then the "civil arrest warrant" from ICE kicked in and he was immediately re-booked and detained for five days until federal law enforcement officials picked him up. Under what pretext did the Largo officer pull over the individual? Profiling? Though this process may meet the letter of the law, I seriously question whether it is in the spirit of the U.S. Constitution's Fourth Amendment concerning unlawful seizure.

Now DACA (Deferred Action Childhood Arrival), the Executive Order that protected those children who came to the U.S. with their undocumented parents and grew up here, has been rescinded. Close to 800,000 have been temporarily protected from deportation and eligible for work permits. Now is the time to pressure Congress for a permanent solution. The bi-partisan Dream Act of 2017 has been filed in both the House and Senate. The bills needed to be heard and voted on this fall.

Reproductive Rights

This is why it looked like 'The Handmaid's Tale' in St. Petersburg [on August 30]

by Sara DiNatale, **Tampa Bay Times** Staff Writer
Reprinted from the Tampa Bay Times, Aug 31, 2017



ST. PETERSBURG — The streets of the Sunshine City were made to look like a scene out of novel-turned-popular-Hulu-series ***The Handmaid's Tale*** when women clad in red cloaks and white bonnets took over Central Avenue on Wednesday.

They marched with their heads down and their hands clasped, solemn and steady. One woman held a sign that made the protesters' message clear: "LET WOMEN DETERMINE THEIR OWN LIVES."

The crew of Handmaids—led by the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area and women's rights group UltraViolet—said they're fearful the narrative of the popular dystopian novel by Margaret Atwood could become real life. In the book and TV show, women are stripped of basic civil freedoms and cannot make their own decisions about their reproductive rights.

Organizer Amy Weintraub said the group was protesting sexist and anti-woman rhetoric they feel has surfaced in the country's capital and is "beginning to feel eerily familiar."

"Abuse and harassment are becoming normalized, and we won't stand for it," the group posted to its Facebook page after the protest.

The protest is part of a large movement called "The Handmaid's Resistance." [The website for that resistance movement](#) says that women across the country are donning the signature red cloaks in protest. The site even provides tips on how to secure costumes, organize, and where such protests are planned with pin points on a digital map.

In addition to St. Petersburg, the map shows similar marches scheduled in Daytona Beach on Sept. 8 and one that just happened in Key Largo on Aug. 26.
Times Staff photographer Cherie Diez contributed to this report.

Special thanks to LWVSPA members Caitlin Constantine, Judy Gallizzi, Janet Murphy, and Erin Rashbaum for serving as line leaders for the procession!

Stay Connected to State and National

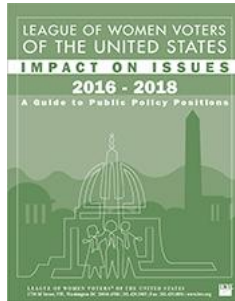
As a member of the LWVSPA, you are automatically a member of the League of Women Voters of Florida and the League of Women Voters of the United States.

It's easy to stay connected with the big picture of what the League is doing by visiting the state and national websites and reading their blogs.

Click the image on the left to visit the LWVFL website, subscribe to the blog, and see lots of other interesting information.



Click the image on the right to visit the national website, where you can visit the Blog page to read about current League issues and actions. Poke around a bit on the website and find all kinds of interesting information (we are not kidding).

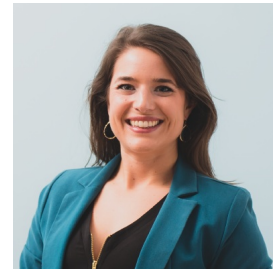


Click the image on the left to access an electronic or downloadable copy of the League's [Impact on Issues](#) document.

Welcome New LWVSPA Board Members

Lindsay Murdock

A lifelong activist, I got my start as a kid growing up in Glacier National Park and telling visitors not to litter in the park because it harmed the animals and landscape. Since then, I've dedicated myself to disrupting the status quo and creating sustainable change. When we moved to Maryland, I got involved with the Special Olympics, helping to bring interscholastic athletic opportunities to students with disabilities, who otherwise wouldn't have had the opportunity to wear our school colors in their athletic pursuits.



In college, I was active with our SGA where I helped to expand our statewide Non-Discrimination Ordinance to cover gender identity and sexual orientation, which laid the groundwork for gender inclusive bathrooms on campuses statewide. Dissatisfied with training opportunities for the women on campus, I helped fundraise for and execute trainings hosted by the White House Project, The WAGE Project and AAUW, in addition to hosting speakers like Lilly Ledbetter. After college, I spent a year and a half working for a National Science Foundation grant at MSU that increased the number of women in STEM and Social and Behavioral Science fields nearly 15% through more effective recruitment and retention strategies campus-wide.

Ready for a new challenge, I packed up my car and moved to St. Petersburg two years ago to join an Education Technology start-up. Since moving here, I've joined the Special Olympics Pinellas County Management team, LWVSPA Voter Services and Promotions teams, and now the Board of Directors. The growth of the LWVSPA in the last 8 months is evidence of the many successes we've had, and is a testament to the current leadership, which I'm humbled now to be a part of.

In my spare time, I love doing anything outdoors (especially hiking and kayaking) and working out! I'm a NASM Certified Personal Trainer and love nothing more than helping people realize their own strength, and watching that spill into all aspects of their lives.

Lisa Vanover

I grew up in Columbus, Ohio, and followed education and job opportunities around the country before settling in Pinellas County in 2004. I hold a B.A. in English and a M.Ed. in Counseling and Guidance, specializing in Higher Ed Administration, from Texas State University, and am currently pursuing an MBA at University of South Florida-St. Petersburg.



My career in higher education began at Texas State and continued at Delgado Community College. When I moved to Florida, I switched to my other passion, clean energy. I worked in energy management in leadership roles for nine years. In 2013, I returned to higher education, joining St. Petersburg College as a federal grant manager in workforce education. I am passionate about the college's initiatives to help people develop successful career paths.

Since 2014, I have served as a Director on the board of Community Leveraged Learning, a non-profit working to promote project-based learning. Over the years, I have volunteered extensively for United Way, Pinellas Hope, and the Edible Peace Patch Project. In my free time, I love to kayak and hike.

Joining the LWVPSA in 2016, I am currently Co-Chair of the Sustainability Action Team, working to advance solar energy for people of all incomes to create environmental equity and reduce our footprint. I also work on the Membership Committee and help to plan Cocktails and Conversations events. Recently, I was appointed to the League's Board of Directors, where I serve as secretary.

I consider myself an innovator, relationship builder, and advocate who works strategically to accomplish social and environmental equity through systemic changes in our government and educational systems. I'm excited to be a part of the League and its grassroots energy!



Upcoming Events September 2017

[Click here to visit our website for the latest updates on meetings and events.](#)

Please note that some September events may be subject to change due to the threat of Hurricane Irma. Check our website for updates.

Tuesday, 9/5, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

LWVSPA Board of Directors Meeting
League Office Boardroom, 233 3rd St N
St. Pete 33701

Thursday, 9/7, 1:30 pm

City Council Hearing: Defend Our Democracy Ordinance
St. Petersburg City Hall
175 5th St N, St. Pete 33701
For more information, [click here](#).

Monday, 9/11, 12 - 1 pm

LWVF Reproductive Rights Conference Call
[Click here](#) for call-in instructions.

Wednesday, 9/13, 6 - 8 pm

Democracy 101: A Civic Action Primer, #2
SPC - Midtown Campus, 1300 22nd St S
St. Pete, FL 33712
For more information and to register, [click here](#).

Thursday, September 14th, 7 - 8:30 pm
Reproductive Rights Action Group Meeting

Tuesday, 9/19, 6 - 7:30 pm

Election Forum Training
Location TBA

Tuesday, 9/19, 7 - 8 pm

Gun Safety Action Group Meeting
League Office Boardroom, 233 3rd St N
St. Pete 33701

Wednesday, 9/20, 6 pm

Cocktails and Conversation
St. Pete Shuffleboard Club
559 Mirror Lake Dr N, St. Pete 33701

Thursday, 9/21, 6 - 8 pm

City Council Hearing: Defend our Democracy Ordinance
St. Petersburg City Hall
175 5th St N, St. Pete 33701
For more information, [click here](#).

Monday, 9/25, 6:30 - 8:30 pm

General Election Candidate Forum
City Council Districts 2, 4, 6
St. Petersburg City Hall

League Office Boardroom, 233 3rd St N
St. Pete 33701

Saturday, 9/16, 9 am - 12:30 pm

Sustainability Summit
Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute
100 8th Ave SE, St. Pete 33701
For more information and to register, [click here.](#)

175 5th St N, St. Pete 33701

Monday, 9/25, 6:30 - 7:30 pm

Sustainability Action Group Meeting
Allendale United Methodist Church
3803 Haines Rd N, St. Pete 33703

Tuesday, 9/26 6:30 - 8:30 pm

General Election Mayoral Candidate Forum
St. Petersburg City Hall
175 5th St N, St. Pete 33701

2017-2018 League Leadership

OFFICERS

President: Julie Kessel
First Vice President: Sharon Winters
Second Vice President: Stephanie Owens
Secretary: Lisa Vanover
Treasurer: Caroline Bloodworth

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lydia Castle
Raechel Garafalo
Susan Mayer
Lindsay Murdock
Marty Shapiro

[Visit our website](#) for more information about our local leaders.

[Click here](#) for more information about our education and advocacy groups.

EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY LEADS

Gun Safety: Sharon Winters
Immigration: Karen Coale or Lydia Castle
Healthcare: Julie Kessel
Reproductive Rights: Amy Weintraub
Campaign Finance Reform: Julie Kessel
Education: Robin Jones or Iris Yetter
Voter Service: Raechel Garafalo or Lindsay Murdock
Voter Protection: Stephanie Owens
Sustainability: Lisa Vanover
International Relations: Judy McSwine
Voter Editor: Susan Mayer
Social Media/Promotion Lead: Amy Weintraub
Office Administrator: Rachael Becker

Membership



Join us. 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.

Don't let our name fool you! We count many men as members and leaders. We are a group for ALL voters!

We 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

*Includes two members residing at the same address.

It's easy to join or renew. [Pay online using PayPal](#) (you do **NOT** need a PayPal account to pay us by credit card), or if you prefer, mail a check payable to LWVSPA at POB 11775, 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 Gold or Silver membership level, most of your dues will help support the work of our local League.

**"We in America do not have government by the majority.
We have government by the majority who participate." Thomas Jefferson**



League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area

| [Email](#) | [Website](#)

Telephone: 727-896-5197



**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.**