

## THE VOTER

September 2020

### *Letter from the President*

Happy September Leaguers!

We made it through the Primaries successfully and are ramping up for the General Election.

As many of you know, our Vote-By-Mail Campaign is focused on low voter turnout precincts in south St. Petersburg. I'm so happy to say that turnout percentage numbers in all but one of those precincts saw double-digit increases compared to 2016.

In total, there was a **10% increase in vote-by-mail across these same precincts compared to 2016**. There are a lot of factors that can be attributed to these numbers and I believe our efforts have been a significant one.



We have a lot of great programming leading up to the election: candidate forums, Coffee in Common, a Wellness series for members, our Drag Out the Vote "Hocus Pocus" Performance, the many Voter Services events, and so many other team-specific events. Please check out our LWVSPA calendar and [our Facebook page](#) for more information.

Let's keep the energy and momentum going! We've got a lot to do ahead of this historic election and we need our incredible members, community partners, and friends!

In League,  
Linsey

P.S. Linsey was interviewed as part of Bay News 9's three-part series on the passage of the 19th Amendment! You can see them all here: [1](#) | [2](#) | [3](#)



### *Know Your Candidates: Candidate Forums & Voter Guide*

The general election is two months away, but you don't have to wait to research the candidates on your ballot. Check out our candidate forums and our Voter Guide to help you make an informed decision when casting your ballot!

And don't wait! Do your research now so

you can fill out your mail ballot and get it back to the Supervisor of Elections as soon as possible. #flattentheballotcurve

(Haven't requested your mail ballot yet? [Go do it now.](#))

## Candidate Forums

Spend Thursday nights in September with the LWVSPA and the candidates who are vying for your vote in the General Election!

The online [candidate forums](#) are an excellent way to hear directly from the candidates themselves, so make sure to mark your calendar so you don't miss them.

**THURSDAY NIGHTS WITH THE LEAGUE!**

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ST. PETERSBURG

GENERAL ELECTION CANDIDATE FORUMS ON LWVSPA FACEBOOK LIVE & YOUTUBE AT 7PM

**SAVE THE DATES**

- **SEPTEMBER 3, 2020**  
Pinellas County School Board Candidates Forum
- **SEPTEMBER 10, 2020**  
Pinellas County Sheriff Candidates Forum
- **SEPTEMBER 17, 2020**  
Pinellas County Commissioner Candidates Forum
- **SEPTEMBER 24, 2020**  
Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections Candidates Forum
- **OCTOBER 1, 2020**  
Pinellas County Tax Collector Candidates Forum

Many thanks to our digital media partner [St. Pete Catalyst](#) for helping us put these forums on!

## County Sheriff

- **When:** Thursday, Sept. 10 @ 7 p.m.
- **Watch:** [Facebook Live](#) | [YouTube](#)

## County Commissioners

- **When:** Thursday, Sept. 17 @ 7 p.m.
- **Watch:** [Facebook Live](#) | [YouTube](#)

## Supervisor of Elections

- **When:** Thursday, Sept. 24 @ 7 p.m.
- **Watch:** [Facebook Live](#) | [YouTube](#)

## Tax Collector

- **When:** Thursday, Oct. 1 @ 7 p.m.
- **Watch:** [Facebook Live](#) | [YouTube](#)

And if you missed the School Board Candidate Forum, you can still watch it on our [YouTube channel](#), just as you'll be able to do with all of our online candidate forums.

All forums are co-sponsored by the [League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County](#), [ACLU of Florida](#), [Florida NOW](#), and [Pinellas County NOW](#). The County Commission candidate forum is also sponsored by the [Clearwater/Upper Pinellas chapter of the NAACP](#).

## Voter Guide

The [Voter Guide](#) for the 2020 general election is scheduled to go live on Sept. 29! Check it out before you vote, and make sure to share it on social media so others can use it too!

(Pssst... you can find the answers to [common questions about voting by mail](#) on the Voter Guide too.)



*Volunteers Needed: Speakers Bureau,*

# *Writers/Editors & Content Creators*

The LWVSPA is already cranking in high gear ahead of the 2020 general election, and we need you to step up to help us achieve our mission of making sure all eligible voters are informed about everything from how to protect their vote to what's on their ballot.

Interest in our work is incredibly high right now, and we need all hands on deck to ensure that we're able to serve the community in the most effective way possible.

**If you've been considering getting more involved with the League, now is the time to do it!**

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## **Speakers Bureau**

We are looking for people who can serve one of two roles with the Speakers Bureau:

- **Speakers:** People who are comfortable speaking and presenting, both in public and over video conference calls
- **Support:** People who are willing to support speakers\* by operating their PowerPoints and watching the chat for questions

We will train you to perform either one of these roles, so don't feel as though you have to be an expert at any of this to take this on. All that matters is that you have the desire to learn and to help!

If you're interested in speaking, please contact [Robin Davidov](#). If you're interested in providing support for speakers, please contact [Caitlin Constantine](#).

## **Content Creation/Writing/Editing**

The Media and Publicity team is looking for content creators, writers and editors who can support their efforts going into the general election.

We are looking for people who can do the following:

- write/edit blogs for new website
- create infographics for blogs/social
- research/engage media buys
- social media schedulers

The Media and Publicity team already has a core group of strong content creators, but the issue is that only a handful of people are engaged in this work but the demand for the work is only increasing.

If you're interested, please contact [Lisa Yacso](#).

## **Poll Monitoring and Social Media Listening**

We'll be involved in these activities again for the general election. If you'd like to be notified when training starts, please email the [Voter Protection team](#).

\*Editor's note: Your correspondent has spoken about voting by mail and local elections at several events and can report that the events where your correspondent had to run her own PowerPoint were not nearly as seamless or effective as ones where assistance was available. This is a key role that supports our mission of empowering voters through education. Your help is invaluable here! (Seriously, please help!)



## *Amendment 3: LWVFL Adopts "No" Position*

LWVFL President Patti Brigham released this statement on the League's change in position on Amendment 3:

"Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to our organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policymakers in creating a more perfect democracy.

**We now believe supporting Amendment 3 would go against our resolute commitment to being diverse, equitable, and inclusive.** Several of our Black and Brown members as well as organizational partners from across the state expressed concern over our position and implored us to revisit it.

The current political climate has shed a light on the prevalence of systemic racism and the continued silencing of minority voices. The League is committed to ensuring that these deep-rooted racial issues in our nation and state are dealt with and we want to use our position to lift those voices that are routinely silenced.

After taking a look at the current drawing of Florida Senate and State House districts, it has become clear we cannot support a change to our state constitution that would likely further silence the minority communities or candidates within these districts. [Here is data](#) that shows the potential impacts.

The League cannot ignore that the Top Two system has the potential to severely impact the minority voting strength in many Florida districts and could have severe Voting Rights Act implications going forward.

In the U.S., where implicit racial bias is still a powerful force, the race of Top Two Open Primary winners is largely determined by which demographic – White or non-White – predominates. Study of the demographic results of Top Two primaries in which Blacks were elected to office show that, in each case, the population of the electorate's region was majority non-White.

California is often used as a model for proponents of the Top Two Open Primary. We all know that Florida and California have vastly different makeups of population and electorates. Additionally, [research on California's top two primaries](#) has shown no increase in moderate candidates and no increase in turnout [among nonpartisan voters](#).

**It is absolutely worth acknowledging that this suppression or silencing was not the likely intent of the amendment sponsor, but it is a reality that has been brought to the forefront.**

Please note that the Study & Action language we voted in at our 2017 State Convention has not been disregarded. That language reads as follows: "The local Leagues also achieved consensus recommending statewide use of a form of Open Primary election systems that would allow for **the broadest possible voter participation**, including NPA and minor party affiliated voters. Open Primaries also provide access to a **broader slate of candidates that would increase voter participation.**"

**The League of Women Voters of Florida is very much in support of Open Primaries and would wholeheartedly support this measure if it were not tied to Top Two. We are hopeful and will continue to advocate for a future Open Primary opportunity that will enfranchise Florida's NPA voters and those who belong to**



## *LWVSPA Wellness Series: Coping During the Time of COVID-19*

The LWVSPA Membership Committee is pleased to offer its members a three-part centering podcast series focused on how to cope and expand one's resources during this most challenging time.



The series will be hosted by LWVSPA member Nancy Tait and will be offered three consecutive weeks for 1 1/2 hours. You do not have to attend one session to attend another.

At the beginning of each session, we will listen to the podcasts, which feature notable speakers and interviewers like Terry Gross, Brene Brown, and Krista Tippett. After we listen to the podcasts, we'll have some time for comments and questions.

The series is free but each session will be limited in size, so please sign up as soon as possible if you're interested. Come join us!

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### **Part I: Ambiguous Loss**

Family therapist Pauline Boss joins Krista Tippett on "On Being" to ponder what it means to live through a collective experience of "ambiguous loss" right now. We'll listen to the podcast, then we'll have a discussion on coping and expanding our resources, which will be facilitated by Nancy Tait.

- **When:** Monday, Sept. 14 @ 6-7:30 p.m.
- **Where:** Online ([RSVP here](#))

### **Part II: Loneliness and Connection**

Have you ever struggled with feeling lonely – even when you're surrounded by people you love? It can be painful and confusing.

In this episode of "Unlocking Us," Brené Brown talks to Dr. Vivek Murthy, who served as the 19th U.S. Surgeon General, about loneliness and the physical and emotional toll that social disconnection takes on us. They talk about his new book, "Together," and what it takes for each of us to tilt the world toward love and connection.

- **When:** Monday, Sept. 21 @ 6-7:30 p.m.
- **Where:** Online ([RSVP here](#))

### **Part III: Anxious? Meditation Can Help You 'Relax Into the Uncertainty' Of The Pandemic**

The value of meditation during the global pandemic is the topic of this interview between Terry Gross, of NPR's *Fresh Air*, and Dan Harris, ABC News correspondent, author of "10% Happier: How I Tamed the Voice in My Head, Reduced Stress Without Losing My Edge, and Found Self-Help That Actually Works," and host of the meditation and mindfulness podcast "10% Happier."



- **When:** Monday, Sept. 28 @ 6-7:30 p.m.
- **Where:** Online ([RSVP here](#))

## NEW MEMBERS



## New Member Orientation

Tues Sept 8 @ 6:00 PM  
via videoconference

This quarterly event offers an introduction to our organization — including the League's history, non-partisan policy, and dedication to and activities around voter education and advocacy.

[Register here](#)



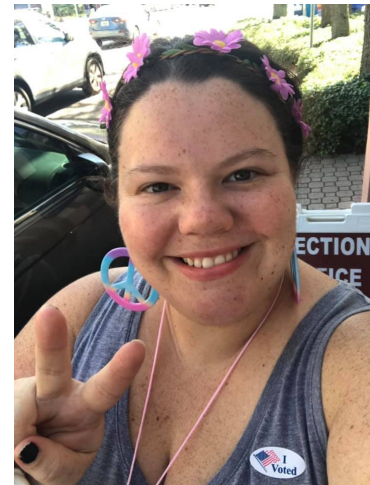
## Member Spotlight: Julia Sharp

*What brought you to the League?*

The League hosts an annual International Women's Day event and my sister bought my mother and I memberships in celebration. I remember thinking "*What am I going to do with this?*" but little did I know that the League would become a huge part of my life.

*How are you involved with LWVSPA?*

I'm involved with the League in every way possible. In addition to being a member and active volunteer I'm also the Operations Director. My job is to keep projects moving along, support community outreach, and manage grant progress.



*What is a favorite experience you've had at a League activity or with League friends?*

Right before the pandemic hit, the League celebrated our 100 year anniversary with a Suffragist Shuffle at the St. Pete Shuffleboard Club. Everyone showed up dressed in roaring 20s attire, the food and drinks were amazing, and the band kept the atmosphere jazzy. Knowing how much work went into planning it was awesome to see it as a success. Plus it was a blast!

*Take a look at the [League's mission and principles](#). What speaks to you strongly today?*

The League's Principles include "that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education that provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic or administrative discrimination." As an advocate for equitable public education and LGBTQ inclusive policies each idea in the Principle statement resonate with me. It's up to us to create the world we want to live in.

*What do you like to do outside League activities?*

Things I love: My family, coffee, champagne, the beach



## *Help Us Help You!* *Fill Out This Membership Survey*

The LWVSPA Membership Committee is working to make the membership experience what you need.

Your feedback helps guide planning and improvements.

Please take a few minutes to complete the [Membership Survey](#).



## *What's Happening Around LWVSPA?*

### **Education**

- **Co-chairs:** [Nikki Fleming](#) and [Barbara Meloche](#)

### **Gun Safety**

This team is on hiatus through 2020.

### **Food Politics**

- **Next Meeting:** Monday, Sept. 21 at 7 p.m.
- **Location:** [Online meeting](#)
- **Co-chairs:** [Julie Kessel](#), [Jen Underhill](#) and [Wendy Wesley](#)

### **Immigration**

- **Next meeting:** Monday, Sept. 28 @ 1:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Conference call, contact [Karen Coale](#) for information
- **Chair:** [Karen Coale](#)

### **Media/Publicity**

- **Next meeting:** Wednesday, Oct. 1 @ 5:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Virtual conferencing
- **Chair:** [Lisa Yacso](#)

### **Membership Services**

- **Next meeting:** Wednesday, Sept. 23 at 6 p.m.
- **Location:** Virtual conferencing
- **Chair:** [Amy Weintraub](#)

### **National Popular Vote**

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

### **Nominating**

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

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

## Reproductive Rights

This team is on hiatus through the 2020 election season.

## Social Justice

- **Next Meeting:** Thursday, Sept. 10 at 7 p.m.
- **Location:** [Online meeting](#)
- **Co-chairs:** [Linsey Grove](#) and [Stacey Kroto](#)

## Sustainability

This team is currently on hiatus.

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

## Voter Service

- **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, Sept. 22 at 6:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Conference call
- **Co-chairs:** [Robin Davidov](#), [Maryellen Gordon](#), [Caitlin Constantine](#), [Amy Keith](#), [Stephanie Owens](#)



## *Upcoming Events*

### **Sept. 8: New Member Orientation**

6-7 p.m. @ Online  
[Facebook](#) | [RSVP](#)

### **Sept. 10: Candidate Forum: Sheriff**

7-8 p.m. @ [Facebook Live](#) & [YouTube](#)  
[Facebook](#)

### **Sept. 11: Gulfport Votes 100% Porch Party**

6:30-10 p.m. @ Gulfport Historical Society, 5301 28th Ave S, Gulfport

### **Sept. 14: Wellness Series: Ambiguous Loss**

6-7:30 p.m. @ Online  
[Facebook](#) | [RSVP](#)

### **Sept. 17: Candidate Forum: County Commissioners**

7-8 p.m. @ [Facebook Live](#) & [YouTube](#)  
[Facebook](#)

### **Sept. 18: Interracial Friendships & Love Follow-Up**

6 p.m. @ Online  
[Facebook](#) | [RSVP](#)

### **Sept. 21: Wellness Series: Loneliness**

6-7:30 p.m. @ Online  
[Facebook](#) | [RSVP](#)

### **Sept. 28: Wellness Series: Meditation and Anxiety**

6-7:30 p.m. @ Online  
[Facebook](#) | [RSVP](#)

### **Oct. 1: Candidate Forum: Tax Collector**

7-8 p.m. @ [Facebook Live](#) & [YouTube](#)  
[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!](#)

### September 2020

Sylvia Babus  
Meryl Blackman  
Justine Blake  
Derya Dolan  
Michael Finnerty  
Rene Flowers  
Jan Hager  
Jessica Hagewood  
Diana Hammer  
Jordan Johnson  
Karen Lieberman

Anysia McDowall  
Gerald McPherson  
Rebecca Nero  
Bruce Nissen  
Stephanie Owens  
Alison Quinn  
Baron Reichenbach  
Sara Smith  
Maria Celia Villac  
Sarah Willford  
Sheree Wysocki

Dina May

Laurel Zimmer

## August 2020

Marsha Baker  
Suzanne Dudley  
Amy Durand  
Sydney Frasca  
Laura Myerson  
Leigh Parks  
Naya Payne  
Bailey Peterson

Ann Rascoe  
Lena Rogachevsky  
Rachel Stanger  
Patricia Talmadge Brewer  
Carol Ulmer  
Kimberly Walker  
Lola Ward  
Cassandra Williams

## July 2020

Evelyn Baran  
Elinor Bonanni  
Jennifer Boyd  
Theresa Darlington  
Celia Fite

Lisset Hanewicz  
Daniel Hoekenga  
Stacey Kroto  
Molly Nelson



# 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, Stephanie Owens  
Gun Safety: On hiatus  
Immigration: Karen Coale  
Reproductive Rights: On hiatus  
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  
Social Justice: Linsey Grove, Stacey Kroto

Media/Publicity: Lisa Yacso  
Membership: Amy Weintraub  
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.