



Calendar

July 3rd
Independence Day Holiday

July 4th
Independence Day

July 8th
Zoom forum #14: Howard L. "Rex" Dimmig II, 10th Judicial Circuit Public Defender, on incarcerations in Polk County, noon

July 10th
Deadline to submit agenda items for the board of directors meeting to vgl.art@tampabay.rr.com or sandra.sheets@gray-robinson.com

July 15th
Zoom forum #15: Rick Maxey, Florida Polytechnic U assistant vice president and diversity & inclusion committee chair, on racial, social, cultural, and economic conditions today, noon

July 17th
Board of Directors meeting via Zoom, noon

July 20th
Deadline to register to vote in August primary

July 22nd
Zoom forum #16: Ashley Troutman and Kia Campbell Troutman on raising their son in these difficult times, noon

July 27th
Deadline to submit into for The LWV Polk "Voter" to byrdkp@gmail.com
continued >>>>>

Unique Annual Meeting a Big Success

LWV Polk's annual meeting went off without a hitch on Wednesday, June 24th. **Andy Crossfield, Trudy Rankin, and Jerry Weeks** combined their talents and skills to run through meeting in the Zoom format. More than 35 LWV Polk members were present, constituting well over the required quorum for conducting business. After a presentation by LWV Florida president Patti Brigham describing main state League priorities for this summer--campaigning for voting by mail and voting early, and assisting returning citizens to register to vote—she encouraged all League members to get involved with these efforts. LWV FL has formed several strategic partnerships and a training program for reaching and registering Florida's returning citizens.

Business matters were conducted expeditiously, with approval of the treasurer's report and the FY 2020-2021 budget, and the nomination and election of new officers and directors (see list of these on page 2). Incoming co-president **Sandy Sheets** presented ideas for moving ahead with a focus on getting out the vote and developing and strengthening our local chapter's leadership bench. **Vicki Lowe** congratulated everyone who helped pull our annual meeting together in the face of our changed circumstances in the pandemic (it did indeed take a village), as well as **everyone** in the local chapter for persevering to continue to solve problems and get things done during this challenging year, with many Zoom meetings keeping members engaged and informed. Vicki's further ideas for the future of LWV Polk are summarized in the "Co-President's Message" on page 2. Expressions of gratitude were made to **Sharon Masters** and **Jessie Gomez** for all their service to our chapter in the last several years.

Two pieces of good news were expressed at the conclusion of the annual meeting. Longtime dedicated League members, the Rankins, were the source. Speakers Bureau chair **Trudy Rankin** released the schedule of presenters for the weekly Zoom sessions she will begin hosting again on Wednesday, July 8th (no Zoom meeting will take place on July 1st). See the calendar at left for the dates and topics. Volunteer registration committee chair **Larry Rankin** reported that League-trained voter registrars now number 21, and joint registration events have been held with the NAACP. In addition, 12 of our registrars stand ready to register returning citizens in partnership with NAACP, LULAC, and the Polk County Voter's League.

Calendar, continued

July 28th LWV Polk Candidate Forum, noon (see page 5)

July 29th Zoom forum #17: Haines City Commissioner and LWV Polk member Anne Huffman on advocacy and education with the League's help, noon

2020-2021

LWV Polk Board of Directors

Co-Presidents, Vicki Lowe,
vgl.art@tampabay.rr.com &
Sandy Sheets,
sandra.sheets@gray-
robinson.com

Vice president, Andy
Crossfield,
usandy@aol.com

Secretary, Barbara Wallace,
barbaraw6@gmail.com

Treasurer, Terry Lauretta,
terry.lauretta@bayliscp
as.com

Natalie Alexich,
nalexich@aol.com

Charlene Bennett,
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.net

Katy Pace Byrd*,
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emily.crain@gray-
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Jiwa Farrell,
jwfarrell2011@gmail.co
m

Karen Freedman*,
kefreedman@hotmail.c
om

Eileen Swiler,
seswiler@msn.com

**Terms end in 2022; all others
end in 2021.*

SPOTLIGHT ON 2020

August 18th

Primary Election for some offices
Deadline to register July 20

November 3rd

General Election
Deadline to register October 5

Sources:

<https://dos.myflorida.com/elections/for-voters/election-dates/>

Polk SOE FAQs for mail-in
ballots

<https://www.polkelections.com/m/Voter-Services/Vote-by-Mail-FAQ>

Co-President's Message from Vicki Lowe

Congratulations and thanks to our action teams and committee chairs and Speakers Bureau, and all involved with these, for carrying out your amazing education and advocacy work in spite of this year's hurdles. Our chapter showed that even a global pandemic can't stop us! We've adapted, learned new skills, and marched on. I appreciate your cohesiveness and perseverance over this past year. This is a remarkable organization!

We haven't been able to celebrate our double centennial exactly as planned, but maybe we've taken advantage of this period to take stock of what is most important to us. Knowing that, we have an opportunity to make a real impact. We can channel the bravery and determination of those who paved the way for lasting change a century ago. Our mission calls us to study issues carefully, but further, to share our knowledge with others and advocate for our positions.

I want to let you know that I have tested a new questionnaire with a small group of members within our larger organization. When the kinks are worked out, we hope to send the questionnaire to all of you, and look forward to hearing your ideas and opinions about our future. We've already gotten so many great ideas from the small number of test questionnaires!

Finally, I want say that **all LWV Polk members are welcome to attend monthly board meetings which beginning this month will be the third Friday of every month at noon via Zoom.** Also, please review our list of committees (shown on page 3). If you are interested in getting involved with one of our committees or action teams, please contact the chair. Committee chairs are strongly encouraged to attend all board meetings. If you have an interest in chairing or co-chairing a committee whose leadership is open, please contact Sandy or me! Part of going forward includes making sure our committees and action teams are healthy and active in 2020!

Thank you again, and stay well! We have a lot to do!

Vote by Mail Information & Deadlines

Question: **When** may a voter request a vote by mail ballot?

Answer: Deadline for request that a ballot be mailed to you must be made **no later than 5:00 p.m. on the 10th day before the election.**

Question: **How** may a person request a vote-by-mail ballot?

Answer: [There are three different ways.]

- **Call** Election Headquarters at (863) 534-5888
- **Fill Out Request** [online] [click here](#)
- **Stop by** Election Headquarters at 250 South Broadway Ave., Bartow, Florida 33830, or our Operations Center at 70 Florida Citrus Blvd., Winter Haven, Florida 33880

For the August primary election, the deadline to request a mail-in ballot to be mailed to you is by 5 pm on Saturday, August 8th, 2020. For the November general election, the deadline to request a mail-in ballot to be mailed to you is by 5 pm on Saturday, October 24th, 2020.

Committees & Action Teams

Census, Mary Lee Duncan,
MLDMJKHPNS@aol.com

Education, chair open

Gun violence prevention,
Leander Auliso,
oyaji_lee@msn.com

Healthcare, chair open

Immigration, Ivelisse De la
Fe, idf@lillybrownlaw.com

Juvenile justice, Andy
Crossfield, see page 2

Libraries, chair open

Media, Jerry Weeks,
geraldibus1@gmail.com

Membership, Linda
Donaldson,
lindajdonaldson@yahoo.com

Natural resources:

Climate action, Bill Foege,
wfoege@tampabay.rr.com

**Banning plastic bags &
straws in Polk County**,
Sharon Masters,
smasters4549@icloud.com

Nominating (2021), Natalie
Alexich, see page 2

Speakers Bureau, Trudy
Rankin,
trudycorryrankin@gmail.com

Voter outreach, Linda
Donaldson, see above

Voter registration, Larry
Rankin, lallenr@gmail.com

**Women's reproductive
health**, Eileen Swiler, page 2

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**LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!**

**The League of Women Voters  
of Polk County**  
**League of Women Voters of  
Florida**  
**League of Women Voters of the  
U.S.**

## Polk County SOE's Office Preparing for Our Elections

According to a press release from Polk County Supervisor of Elections Lori Edwards' office, new voter information cards are being mailed to all Polk County Voters now. The cards include the location of your polling place. LWV Polk encourages everyone to **check your card** to see if the correct political affiliation is showing, and especially to see that you are designated to receive your ballot in the mail! The new card will have below it either **"You are scheduled to Vote by Mail"** in big letters, OR it will have **"Vote By Mail"** in big letters with a simple, short application for your VBM ballot that you can fill in and send to the SOE's office at PO Box 1460, Bartow, FL 33831-1460.

There are three ways to vote (by mail, early, or at your precinct on the day of the election) and if you prefer to vote in person, the LWV Polk encourages you to **vote early**, so you can avoid the crowds and be safe! Please note the August primary deadlines in the lower left corner of page 2, as well as these wonderful graphics developed by Edwards' office to promote voting by mail.



## LWV Polk Sign Project to Encourage Vote-By-Mail is Announced!

The new LWV Polk voter outreach committee, working in tandem with our voter services committee, has planned an action that will easily allow for social distancing to promote use of mail-in ballots before the upcoming August primary. It is designed to raise public awareness of Vote-by-Mail and we need your help!

This project is a Vote-by-Mail Roadside Sign Campaign reminiscent of the highly successful “Burma-Shave” roadside ad campaign used from 1926 through 1963 all over the United States (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burma-Shave>). Our committee has developed a series of eight sequential lawn signs to encourage voters to request mail-in ballots before the primary deadline of August 8 and to raise public awareness of the League. These signs will be displayed for two-hour periods along selected county roads between July 20th and August 7th.

Know of a location you think would work well? Please send it to us ASAP. A shady spot somewhere along the route is a must. We also need volunteers to place and monitor the signs. A Mail Chimp e-mail message will be sent out with detailed information in the near future. To volunteer now or suggest a location, please contact **Linda Donaldson** at [lindajdonaldson@yahoo.com](mailto:lindajdonaldson@yahoo.com). We look forward to hearing from you! Thank you!



## Civics for \$500, Please Alex!

by Natalie Alexich and Katy Pace Byrd

We in America have come to enjoy so many freedoms that we often take them for granted. Sometimes, we forget how much it means just to be a U.S. citizen, especially in the eyes of the rest of the world. We have economic wealth, education, and abundant natural resources, though not evenly distributed. Immigrants study civics—American history and government—to prepare to take their citizenship tests (a popular thing to do in July). But how much do **we** know about our own history and system of government? Take the “LWV Jeopardy Challenge” below!

*A: Printing money, regulating commerce, declaring war, maintaining armed forces, establishing a postal system, making treaties, levying taxes, borrowing money, making immigration law, granting patents and copyrights, prosecuting piracy on the high seas, and providing for home rule and oversight of the federal district known as the District of Columbia*

**Q: What are some powers of the various branches of our federal government that are enumerated in the U.S. Constitution?**

*A: James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay, writing under the pseudonym Publius, advocated for the ratification of the U.S. Constitution, and for a strong federal government with checks and balances.*

**Q: Who wrote the Federalist Papers, and what did they propose?**

*A: Civil liberties are freedoms secured to us in the U.S. Constitution by placing restraints on government (e.g., the First Amendment). Civil rights are secured by positive government action in the form of legislation and case law (e.g., prohibitions against discrimination).*

**Q: What’s the difference between a civil liberty and a civil right?**

How did you do? What would you like to learn more about? Take out that public library card or fire up that computer! A world of information is at your fingertips!

*Save the Date: July 28<sup>th</sup> at Noon!  
Candidate Forum for the Position of Polk County  
Supervisor of Elections*

*A Must See Event!*

*Hosted by the League of Women Voters of Polk County*



Debbie Hannafin



Lori Edwards

*This hugely important contest will be decided on August 18<sup>th</sup>, with the winner taking office in January 2021. LWV has the closeup coverage you need! **LWV members can meet the candidates live on Tuesday, July 28<sup>th</sup> at Noon via Zoom or watch later on our FB page.***

**“Link Up” to the League’s National Convention!**

League of Women Voters US held its 54th National Convention this past weekend, with delegates from all 50 states and the Virgin Islands, observers, board members, and staff coming together virtually for the first time in the League’s 100-year history.

The convention chose **Dr. Deborah Ann Turner**—a medical doctor and attorney and longtime League member—as the 20<sup>th</sup> president for the term of 2020-2022. Here is a link to her biography:

<https://www.lwv.org/about-us/staff-leadership/deborah-turner>, and the link to those of the entire board: <https://www.lwv.org/about-us/board-directors-trustees>

A link to a panel discussion on Facebook Live by DC Mayor **Muriel Bowser**, When We All Vote’s **Valerie Jarrett**, the Southern Coalition for Social Justice’s **Allison Riggs**, and the YWCA USA’s **Alejandra Castillo** is here:

<https://www.facebook.com/leagueofwomenvoters/videos/203050890905619/>

Keynote speaker CBS Evening News anchor **Norah O’Donnell**’s keynote address to the convention can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5Ua1M5RWq0>

A press released about **Dr. Turner**’s election can be reached by clicking here

[https://www.lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/league-elects-deborah-ann-turner-president-board-directors?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=062920](https://www.lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/league-elects-deborah-ann-turner-president-board-directors?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=062920), and **her full remarks** can be found here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L\\_X3bmBTwE&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_X3bmBTwE&feature=youtu.be)

Finally, here is a link to very thoughtful remarks on being nonpartisan in our hyper-partisan times by LWV US CEO Virginia Kase: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5epVnbqUpY&feature=youtu.be>

**For more particular news about one of the League’s top priorities (climate change), please see “The Classifieds” on the next page. Thank you!**

## The Classifieds

Thanks to these merchants for using CDC guidelines to keep us all safe!



1420 1<sup>st</sup> Street North  
Winter Haven, Florida  
Monday-Saturday 8 am-8 pm  
Sunday 9 am-5 pm

*Se Habla Español*



**PetSupermarket**

# Michaels

Know another store or a restaurant that you can vouch for as employing social distancing among customers, employee mask wearing, and strict cleanliness and hygiene measures to keep employees and customers safe? Send their names to [byrdkp@gmail.com](mailto:byrdkp@gmail.com)



## Urgent Call for Volunteers!

Addressing climate change remains a League priority at the national, state, and local levels! One of three resolutions proposed at the LWV US Convention in June 2020 was regarding climate change: <https://www.lwv.org/2020ResolutionsReport>

In Florida, the state LWV presented the "Climate Emergency Resolution" to Governor DeSantis on August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019, and a call to action was sent to all local LWV chapters. Read about it here:

<https://www.lwvfl.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/DeSantis.Climate8.27.19.pdf>

LWV of Polk County's climate action committee (CAC) continues to "Think Globally & Act Locally" by raising climate awareness through guest editorials and outreach, and by promoting local solutions to governmental entities, individuals, and organizations.

**Want to learn more about GCC, clean energy, electric vehicles and how YOU can help?**

Join our monthly CAC meetings via Zoom! Contact: Charlene Bennett [charleneben@earthlink.net](mailto:charleneben@earthlink.net) or Karen Freedman [kefreedman@hotmail.com](mailto:kefreedman@hotmail.com).