

Calendar

July 1st

*LWV Polk County
Membership General
Meeting, 6 pm via Zoom
See right*

July 3rd

*Independence Day
Observed
Red, White & KABOOM! 6-
9:15 pm at Lake Mirror,
Lakeland*

July 4th

Independence Day

July 9th

*Candidate Forum:
Republican Candidates for
Florida Congressional
District 16, 4 pm via Zoom.
Register at lwvpolk.org.*

July 11th & 12th

*LWV Florida Biennial
Council of Leaders, Rollins
College—registration now
closed*

July 16th

*School Board Candidate
Forum, 5:30 pm, The Well,
114 East Parker Street,
Lakeland (see page two for
details)*

July 25th

*Coffee & Conversation, 10
am, Panera Bread, 137
Landings Boulevard,
Winter Haven*

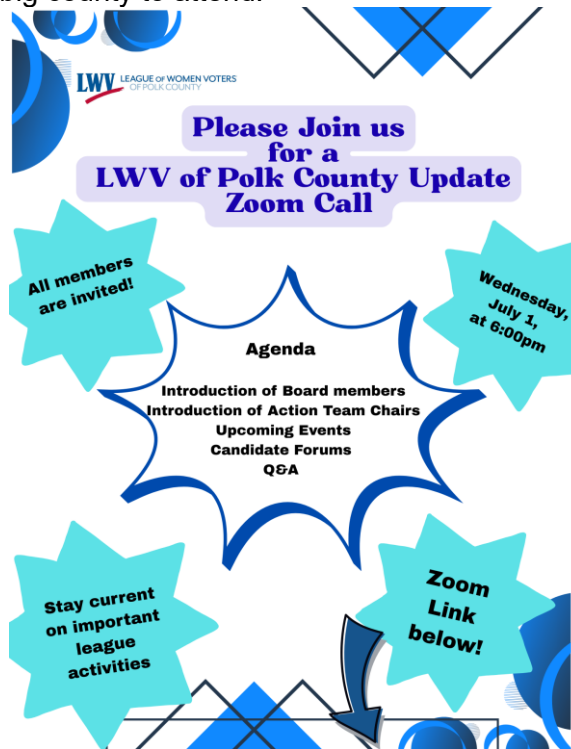
July 27th

*Board Meeting, 5 pm, The
Well*

Presidents' Message

Come one, come all!

We're following up on last week's successful orientation for our new board of directors by holding a general membership meeting on Wednesday, July 1st. We will be introducing our new officers and directors and action team chairs, and providing updates about upcoming events. It's a busy time, but we hope holding this particular gathering by Zoom will make it possible for members all across our big county to attend!



Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89519547253?pwd=ZfQQUpOzKKd8FYSKzjWbbUt8axLd4O.1>

Meeting ID: 895 1954 7253

Passcode: 208597

In addition, please mark your calendars for our school board candidate forum on July 16th (see page two).

In League,
Pat Denham & Jo Shim

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**2026-2027
LWV Polk Officers &
Directors**

Co-Presidents: Jo Shim,
president@lwvpolk.org; Pat
Denham, president@
lwvpolk.org

Co-Vice Presidents: Kristen
Carlson, Ashley Haynie

Secretary: Donna Daniels,
secretary@lwvpolk.org

Treasurer: Katy Pace Byrd,
treasurer@lwvpolk.org

Directors:
Litrece Coppit
Jen Cordova
Micah Jarrett
Jacquelynn Maxey*
Michael Murray*

**Terms end in 2028; all others
end in 2027.*

*All officers and board
members may be contacted
at their personal email
addresses, available in the
members only area of our
website, lwvpolk.org.*

**Follow Us
on Social Media!**

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The League of Women Voters
of Polk County

League of Women Voters of
Florida

League of Women Voters of the
US

Instagram
lwvpolk



Upcoming Polk County School Board Candidate Forum

LWV Polk County is very pleased to join the NAACP-Lakeland Branch, LkldNow, the Polk County Voters League, and Alpha Kappa Alpha and other sororities to sponsor a forum for school board candidates in the upcoming election.

Incumbent school board member Lisa Miller, who represents District 7, is unopposed for another four-year term, but three of the seven county school board seats are being contested in nonpartisan races. Candidates for District 3 are Kate Wallace (appointed incumbent following the death of Rick Nolte), Sarah Corona, and Victor Sims. District 5 candidates are Kay Fields (incumbent) and Sam Neelam; and District 6 candidates are Justin Sharpless (incumbent) and Kasen Hampton.

Attendees should plan to arrive between 5:30 and 6 pm at The Well, 114 East Parker Street, Lakeland, with the program beginning at 6 pm (to include a few audience questions), and a meet and greet with the candidates from 7 to 7:30 pm.

Join Our Speakers Bureau!

LWV Polk County's Speakers Bureau is a longtime staple of our community outreach, providing LWV Florida-authored presentations to civic and community organizations. This is your chance to educate and advocate on an issue about which you are passionate! Prior knowledge not required! Guidance and mentorship will be provided! Contact Kristen at speakerrequest@lwvpolk.org. **(See last page for a photo from our most recent presentation.)**

Book Corner

Marjane Satrapi's acclaimed graphic memoir of an Iranian girl's struggles to survive under the repression of the shah, and after the 1979 revolution, the Islamic regime, *Persepolis* became the second most banned book in the US in 2014. A decade later, the book was swept up in Florida's book banning frenzy. Named after the ancient ceremonial capital of Persia, *Persepolis* is now banned in Hillsborough, Indian River, Union and Volusia Counties. To learn more about the book and how it became the subject of banning, visit <https://forbiddenfloridareads.com/persepolis/>, by Isabella J. "Izzy" Miletic of the League of Women Voters of Tallahassee. Izzy is an undergraduate student at Florida State University who hopes to obtain both law and library science graduate degrees.

Primaries and Elections Ahead!

Primary Elections

Deadline to register: July 20, 2026

Deadline to request VBM: August 6, 2026

Election Day: Tuesday, August 18, 2026

General Election

Deadline to register: October 5, 2026

Deadline to request VBM: October 22, 2026

Election Day: Tuesday, November 3, 2026

Source: polkelections.gov

Issue Action Teams

Clean Energy & Climate,
Karen Freedman,
naturalsolar@lwvpolk.org

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion,
open, DEI@lwvpolk.org

Education, Linda Donaldson,
education@lwvpolk.org

Gun Violence Prevention,
Mike Murray,
gunsafety@lwvpolk.org

Healthcare, Paula Mims,
healthcare@lwvpolk.org
**Reproductive Health &
Justice,** Jen Cordova,
reproductivehealth@lwvpolk.org

Immigration, open,
immigration@lwvpolk.org

Natural Resources, open,
naturalresources@lwvpolk.org

**Voter Education & Voter
Services,** Heather Bradman &
Litreace Coppit,
voterservices@lwvpolk.org

Organizational Teams

Communications, Ben
Graffam,
communications@lwvpolk.org
Speakers Bureau,
speakerrequest@lwvpolk.org
Voter Newsletter,
newsletter@lwvpolk.org
Webmaster,
webmaster@lwvpolk.org

Membership, Linda Donaldson,
membership@lwvpolk.org

Nominating (2027), Vicki
Wuertz,
nominatingcommittee@lwvpolk.org

**For general information,
contact info@lwvpolk.org.
Thank you!**

Action Alley

The **League of Women Voters of the United States** has called upon all League members to oppose a new rule issued by the leadership of the US Postal Service (USPS) that would “establish elements of national standards for absentee and mail-in ballots in federal elections.”

This rule is problematic in several ways, not least of which is that it would give USPS a new role in carrying out elections--a role constitutionally reserved to states and localities. One consequence would be to disenfranchise eligible voters by actually allowing USPS to refuse to deliver certain mail-in ballots.

To learn more about this issue and to make your own comment on this alarming proposal by 5 pm, July 2nd, go to <https://www.lwv.org/take-action/oppose-proposed-mail-and-absentee-ballot-regulations>

In other news, our own **Voter Services Team** celebrates a successful Equal Ground Legislative Debrief on June 4th (**see photos on last page**), and looks ahead to continuing work on Vote411 as well as following the complex and ever-changing state rules and restrictions on gathering petitions and voting. The team’s next meeting will take place on July 29th at 6 pm via Zoom.

The **Education Team** is continuing its push to find League members interested in observing Polk County School Board meetings and reporting back to fellow action team members.

The **LWV Polk County Board of Directors** would like to expand on this idea, and revive our tradition of representing the League at public meetings of county and municipal boards to observe and report back on our governing bodies’ actions and issues of interest. Training and a report form will be provided.

Many such meetings may be observed online, but showing up in person is even better, especially if observers wear their LWV Polk County name tags! Those interested in joining the education action team in monitoring school board meetings should contact team coordinator **Linda Donaldson**, and those interested in following other governmental bodies and reporting back should contact co-president **Pat Denham**. **See “Help Wanted” on next page.**

Coffee & Conversation is Back!

After a break for the busy month of May, Coffee & Conversation on the last Saturday morning of every month (except November and December) has returned. We meet at Panera Bread, 137 Landing Boulevard, Winter Haven at 10 am. There is no formal agenda, but this gathering provides an opportunity for our valued LWV Polk County members and friends in all parts of our county to discuss events of the day and ideas for the future from a League perspective! Questions? Contact board member Jen Cordova. **We meet next on July 25th. Hope to see you there!**

Q & A with Jackye Maxey

This month's spotlight is on Jacquelynne Maxey, a League member for about three years, and a new member of our board. Welcome, Jackye!

Q: Can you share with us a little about your background?

A: I hail originally from Tallahassee, where Rick [Jackye's spouse] and I lived for more than 30 years and raised our children. In July 2013, I moved from Tallahassee to Lakeland to help open Florida Polytechnic University as part of the founding team. I've lived in Lakeland ever since and continue to call Polk County home.

Q: With Polk County as your home now, do you have other involvements in the community?

A: I am deeply committed to service and remain actively engaged in several community organizations. I currently serve on the boards of the Florida State Parks Foundation, where I am treasurer; Lakeland Volunteers in Medicine; and the Citrus Center Kiwanis Foundation. I am a Life Member of the Florida A&M University National Alumni Association and a member of the Polk County Chapter. I also proudly serve as a member of the Lakeland Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. In addition to my civic and professional service, I am active in my church, where I serve on the Senior Women's Ministry and volunteer in our community outreach efforts.

Q: What attracted you to the League?

A: What I appreciate most about the League of Women Voters is its unwavering commitment to empowering citizens through education, access, and informed participation. The League has a long and proud history of women who stepped forward to strengthen our democracy, and that legacy resonates deeply with me. I have always believed that strong communities are built when people have the knowledge and tools to engage thoughtfully. The League embodies those values. Its nonpartisan approach, its dedication to fairness and transparency, and its focus on elevating every voice reflect the principles that have guided my own service.



The Classifieds

**Welcome & Thank You,
New & Returning Members!**

Sue Schultz	Gerald Weeks
Alma Corrales	Suzanne Harris
Mary Acevedo	Philip Allen
Sue Maloy	Gloria Brooke

So They Say . . .

"When you get to know a lot of people, you make a great discovery . . . It takes all the people—black and white, Catholic, Jewish and Protestant, recent immigrants and Mayflower descendants—to make up America."
—Judy Garland

HELP WANTED!

Restart a great LWV tradition! All you have to do is attend the public meetings of a local policy-making body like the county commission, a municipal council or a planning board, and render a brief description of the group's discussions and actions! Contact Pat Denham to volunteer for our rejuvenated Observers Corps!

It Takes a Village!

Thanks to all contributors to this month's **Voter: Kristen Carlson, Heather Bradman, Litreace Coppit, Pat Denham, Jo Shim, Jackye Maxey and Jim Byrd.**
The Editor

Equal Ground Legislative Debrief



Above left, Dr. Sallie Stone welcomes Shawn Kinsey of Kappa Alpha Psi Lakeland Alumni Chapter (one of the co-sponsors of the event along with LWV Polk County) to The Well. Below right, Litreace Coppit, co-chair of LWV Polk County voter services action team, greets the audience. Photos courtesy of Heather Bradman.



On left, Speakers Bureau chair Kristen Carlson (pictured with Kathy Helmer, president) delivered LWV of Florida's PowerPoint on redistricting to about 30 members of the Women's Democratic Club of Highlands County on June 27th. On right, Coffee & Conversation on that same day drew a small but impressive crowd! Pictured are Karen Freedman, Nancy M. Simmons, Jo Shim, and Charlene Bennett.