

Calendar

November 1st

Daylight Savings Time Ends

November 3rd

Election Day

November 8th

Divali Begins

November 11th

Veterans Day

Brown Bag Lunch, 11 am at The Well, 114 East Parker Street, Lakeland

November 16th

Board Meeting, 5 pm at The Well

Note Early Date Due to Thanksgiving!

November 18th

Voter Services Action Team Meeting, 6 pm via Zoom

November 19th

*Hot Topic: Artificial Intelligence
5:30-7:30 pm at The Well
See page 2*

November 23rd

Beginning of PCPS Fall Break

November 26th

Thanksgiving

December 1st

World AIDS Day

See page 3

December 2nd

*Popcorn Fundraiser Begins
See page 3*

December 4th

Hanukkah Begins

December 10th

LWV of Polk County Holiday Party & Celebration of Our Successful Fundraiser

No Coffee & Conversation in November & December; No Brown Bag Lunch Gathering and No Board Meeting in December

Presidents' Message

Dear Members and Friends of LWV of Polk County,

Thank you for making October an amazingly successful month as we focused on preparing for the election. League members educated voters, wrote postcards, tabled at events, distributed voters guides, provided speakers to explain the amendment proposals, worked the polls and served as poll monitors. See "Action Alley" on page 3 of this newsletter for some of the highlights of our work to Get Out the Vote (GOTV), as well as the photos on pages 5-7 for some images of our Leaguers in action! ***We owe a debt of gratitude to each and every one of you for your contributions.***

As we enter a busy holiday season, we hope you will save the dates for these upcoming events: Our November 19th Hot Topic will focus on gaining a better understanding of AI. And be prepared to celebrate the season at our annual holiday party on December 10th.

And now for something completely different! In December we will be introducing our first **popcorn fundraiser!** We will be using the app for DoubleGood Popcorn from December 2nd-9th. We are providing more information about the fund-raiser on page 3 for you to learn how easy it will be to raise funds.

Just like you, the League has seen the cost of all our supplies rise and we have been relying on members to donate additional funds to supplement our budget. We're running this during the holidays as this delicious popcorn can make a great gift for your neighbors, family, co-workers, nail technician, hairdresser, mail carrier and others. You can also share it with your family as you gather over the holidays. Let's all pull together and make this our most successful fundraiser yet!

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, vice-
president@lwvpolk.org

Secretary: Donna Daniels,
secretary@lwvpolk.org

Treasurer: Katy Pace Byrd,
treasurer@lwvpolk.org

Directors:
Litreace Coppit
Jen Cordova
Jacquelynne 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!**

Facebook

**The League of Women Voters
of Polk County**

**League of Women Voters of
Florida**

**League of Women Voters of the
US**

Instagram

Lwvpolk



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF POLK COUNTY

MAKING
DEMOCRACY WORK.

**Wanna Get Smart about Artificial Intelligence?
November 19th, 2026, 5:30-7:30 pm
The Well, 114 East Parker Street, Lakeland**

Suddenly, artificial intelligence (AI) seems to be on everyone's mind. Is it transformative, or just dangerous? How will it affect our environment and our children's future? If you would like to learn more about these and other questions, we have a timely, free event for you!

Dr. Matthew Eicholtz, Florida Southern College associate professor of computer science, will be our guest on November 19th. His resume includes BS, MS and PhD degrees in mechanical engineering from Georgia Tech and Carnegie Mellon University. He also did postdoctoral research at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and throughout his academic career has pursued his interest in the intersection of computer science and engineering, exploring what happens when computers have the ability to "accomplish impressive computational feats without being explicitly programmed to do so." (source: www.flsouthern.edu)

Join us for this informative presentation, as we learn together about the collision and collaboration of our machines and our humanity!

(Banned) Book Corner

"Forbidden Florida Reads," a monthly column by Isabella Miletic of the LWV of Tallahassee, celebrates its two-year anniversary this month! Izzy is observing the anniversary by taking a break from producing her column in order to prepare her law school applications. Kudos to Izzy for her great work fighting book banning in Florida!

In other book banning news, "PEN America welcomed a ruling Monday [October 19th, 2026] by the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals on its lawsuit against Florida's Escambia County School District that will require school board members to testify about book bans. Legal Director Mara Gassmann said: 'The Eleventh Circuit correctly held today that the Escambia County School Board cannot hide behind legislative privilege to avoid answering questions about its removal of hundreds of books taken from school library shelves in the district. PEN America looks forward to moving into the next phase of this lawsuit, together with Penguin Random House and its other co-plaintiffs, to vindicate the right of Escambia students to access literature and information.' William Johnson, director of PEN America's Florida office, said: 'Today's ruling affirms that decisions about removing books from school libraries and classrooms must be subject to scrutiny and that the public deserves answers about what motivated them.'"

Source: <https://pen.org/press-release/pen-america-welcomes-judges-ruling-in-book-ban-case-in-escambia-county-florida/>

Issue Action Teams

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

Organizational Teams

Communications, open,
communications@lwvpolk.org
Voter Newsletter, Katy
Pace Byrd,
newsletter@lwvpolk.org
Webmaster, Jim Byrd,
webmaster@lwvpolk.org

Membership, Linda Donaldson,
membership@lwvpolk.org

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

Speakers Bureau, Kristen
Carlson,
speakerrequest@lwvpolk.org

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

Action Alley

GOTV Highlights

Here is what we accomplished in October, by the numbers!

- 5000 English language and 600 Spanish LWV Florida Voter Guides distributed in Polk County
- 1,000 postcards sent to voters in low turnout districts
- 10 Burma Shave Signs events scheduled
- 9 Polk County Canvassing Board meetings observed by League members
- 6 tabling events staffed
- 3 Election Protection volunteers and 1 Legal Observer provided to monitor early voting
- 3 Speakers Bureau presentations made in October as part of a fall campaign of some half dozen talks made on redistricting and the proposed state constitutional amendments
- 2 SOE Polk County offices visited on Election Hero Day
- 1 very successful candidate meet & greet held in collaboration with 6 nonpartisan organizations; 13 candidates and 3 candidate surrogates attended

Exhausted? For more, see photos on pages 5-7

Coming Soon: Everybody Loves Popcorn!

Help LWV Polk County continue its mission of empowering people in order to protect the right to vote! Drum Roll, please!!!

Introducing the DoubleGood Popcorn Fundraiser--Here's what you need to know:

- The fundraiser is scheduled for a short and sweet (or salty?) seven days, December 2nd-December 9th, just in time for holiday gift giving.
- The popcorn is delicious and available in an unbelievable array of gourmet flavors and seasonings.
- Beginning November 19th at our AI Hot Topic event, our very own "geek squad" of tech-savvy League members will be available to assist in navigating the app.
- You can learn more by watching this video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RLFznS8btg>
- It looks like a lot of steps, but each one is actually very simple, similar to the steps you take to bank online or order merchandise or groceries online.
- You can set your own goal and we will provide the code referred to in the video to make sure that our share of the funds you generate go directly to LWV Polk County.
- If you would rather just contribute directly than participate in this fundraiser, we will happily accept your donation!
- Watch your LWV Polk County email as the Popcorn Fundraiser draws near!

Polk County World AIDS Day Observance

The LWV of Polk County Healthcare Action Team along with the NAACP Healthcare Committee, Pineapple Healthcare and the Rose Dynasty Foundation will commemorate World AIDS Day on December 1st at 7 pm at the Rose Dynasty Center, 1253 W. Memorial Boulevard, Lakeland. The program will include speakers and entertainment. In addition, two panels of the AIDS quilt will be on display.

Although the terrifying days of the HIV/AIDS epidemic are behind us, there is still no vaccine or cure. More than one million people are now living with HIV/AIDS in the US, and approximately 38,000 new HIV cases are diagnosed each year. World AIDS Day is a time to stand with people living with HIV/AIDS and remember those who have died, and to support access to prevention, treatment and care. We encourage you to attend this very special event.

IM John Wing

Longtime former League of Women Voters of Polk County member John Wing died on August 19, 2026 at the age of 88 in Lakeland, Florida.

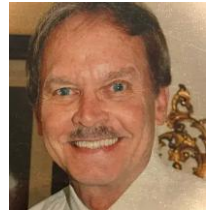
John was born in Tampa, graduated from Lake Wales High School in 1956, and later graduated from the University of Florida with a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering. John was active in the local chapter of the American Institute of Chemical Engineering (AIChE) for several decades. He used his chemical engineering skills in the phosphate industry to improve the productivity of farmers around the world.

John was also passionate about utility-scale solar energy, in his later years serving on our clean energy action team and monitoring closely the situation with Lakeland Electric's aging, coal-fired power generators. He was a fierce and informed advocate for replacing the units with solar farms. He and his lovely wife Saranya also greatly enjoyed LWV Polk County social events and were always in attendance as long as John's health allowed.

John was a proud Porsche owner, a Gators football fan, and a resident of Lakeland for 62 years.

John is survived by his wife Saranya, children Nancy (David), John Jr., Jennifer (Doug), Juliet (Russ) and stepson Michael (Jaime), eight grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, numerous nieces and nephews, brother George, and ex-wife Sandra.

In lieu of flowers, the family hopes that you donate to the World Central Kitchen, <https://donate.wck.org>, and that you will hold Saranya and the family close in your hearts. Saranya remains an esteemed member of our League family.



Source: www.lakelandfuneralhome.com/obituaries

The Classifieds

Welcome & Thank You,
New & Renewing Members!
Lois Dimmig
Howard "Rex" Dimmig
Jacquelynne Maxey
Sue Thrower



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF POLK COUNTY

MAKING
DEMOCRACY WORK

HELP WANTED!

Please share your photos from LWV Polk County events, via email or text to newsletter@lwvpolk.org or 863-640-5098. Email preferred. Thank you!

Quotable Quotes

"Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics will not take an interest in you." – Pericles, Greek Statesman

Did You Know?

On November 5, 1872, Susan B. Anthony was arrested in Rochester, New York for "illegally voting" in the presidential election.

It Takes a Village . . .

Thanks to all contributors to this month's Voter: Pat Denham, Jo Shim, Linda Donaldson & Jim Byrd.—The Editor

A Look Back at October



The Burma Shave Signs tradition, begun in Summer 2020 by Linda Donaldson, has continued (top L and R). Left, Pat Denham and Karen Freedman met with Girl Scout Troop # 74711 to help develop their environmental and civic understanding. Above, Jo Shim and Pat Denham visited both offices of the Polk County Supervisor of Elections on October 20th, Election Hero Day, expressing our appreciation of their work with baskets of goodies.*

**Iconic American roadside advertising campaign for a men's shaving cream that ran from 1926-1963.*



Democracy in Action

Candidate Meet & Greet

October 15, 2026

The Well, Lakeland



October Events Continued Through Halloween!



Above, LWV Polk County board members Mike Murray and Jennifer Cordova (R) supported the new member orientation held at Pat Denham's house on October 25th.

Left, former and current LWV Polk County board members gathered on October 17th for a social at Zest in Bartow. L to R: Mike Murray, Pat Denham, Donna Daniels, Karen Freedman, Charlene Bennett, Jo Shim, Kristen Carlson and Linda Donaldson.



Representing LWV Polk County, suffragist Jo Shim and butterfly Chandra Frederick gave out candy and information to Spiderman and other spooky characters at the Greater Junior Women's Club of Lakeland Halloween Party.

