



Calendar

October 3rd

SOE "Closing the Books Parade"
(see "SOE's Office" on page 5)

October 7th

Closing the Gap #31: Let's
Connect in Break-Out Groups,
noon via Zoom

October 9th

Deadline for agenda items,
committee reports, motions,
action items to be sent to co-
presidents

October 12th

Indigenous Peoples Day
DEI Book Discussion, noon via
Zoom

October 14th

Closing the Gap #32: Barbara
Wallace & Sue Schultz on
Understanding the Proposed
Amendments, noon via Zoom

October 16th

BOD meeting, noon via Zoom

October 17th

Northside "Drive Thru Parade,"
noon (see "Board Meeting" on
page 3)

October 21st

Closing the Gap #33: Panel on
Community Resources in the
Pandemic, noon via Zoom

October 26th

DEI Black History Seminar
Series begins, noon via Zoom

October 28th

Closing the Gap #34: Doris
Moore Bailey on The Great
Divide: the Southern Strategy,
noon via Zoom

November 1st

Daylight Savings Time Ends
One-page **Voter** newsletter out;
Nov/Dec Holiday **Voter** out later

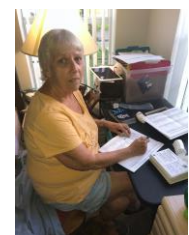
Action Alley

Polk Participates in Postcards to Returning Citizens

Fourteen LWV Polk members, including some of our newest members and some friends of the League, are busy hand addressing, stamping, and mailing 1,700 postcards, part of LWV Florida's second round of reaching out to returning citizens. The new postcard features a baseball theme and provides information on how to register, make a voting plan, consider the options of voting-by-mail or early voting, drop off your ballot at a secure box, thus crossing the "home plate" of casting a vote! Most volunteers are adding a brief personal message to each postcard. A third round of texting and telephoning returning citizen is to follow this month. Contact Regina Sheridan at rsheridan@lwvfl.org if you want to volunteer for this important campaign. Thanks to the fantastic postcard volunteers:

Natalie Alexich, Claudia Slate, Karen Freedman, Shelley Swenson, Colleen Vann, Nancy E. Simmons, Nancy M. Simmons, Carole Essy, Robin Williams Adams, Angela Waddell, Ann Weeks, Jean Baker, Barbara Stampfl, and Katy Pace Byrd.

Thanks to **Sharon Masters** for sending us her 96-year-old friend **Martha Edwards** of Winter Haven! **Continued, p. 3**



Top L to R: Claudia and Virginia Slate, and Teddy; Natalie Alexich; Nancy E. Simmons

Bottom: Robin Williams Adams



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2020-2021

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

SPOTLIGHT ON 2020

**Deadline to register:
October 5th**

**Deadline to request mail-
in ballot: October 24th**

**Early voting: October
19th through November
1st**

**General election:
November 3rd**

*For early voting locations, go
to www.polkelections.com.*

Co-President's Message

Dear LWV Polk Members,

It's October, and many of us will be voting very soon. We are a busy organization in a busy season, indeed! Though we may feel a bit overwhelmed, we remain committed to our mission of REAO* and doing such useful work. We are grateful for the many active members of the Voter Services and Voter Outreach committees during this election season. And we're assisting with voter education by distributing the LWV Florida's balanced Voter Guides to the proposed amendments to public libraries across the county. We're helping too, by addressing 1,700 LWV FL postcards to returning citizens in Round 2 of the campaign to reach out to this group. Several of our members together also sent out more than 1000 cards in Round 1! Thank you all for your efforts!

In addition, we continue to enrich our knowledge of and connections to our community here in Polk County and the wider world, through **Trudy Rankin's** continued "Closing the Gap" presentations—we can't thank you enough, Trudy, for continuing these educational presentations which in October will top out at almost 35 weeks' worth! This program helped us keep focus with all the distractions created by Covid.

Continue to be safe and take care of yourselves in the coming days!

Vicki Lowe

****Registration, Education, Advocacy, Outreach***

Vote by Mail Information & Deadlines

When may a voter request a vote by mail ballot?

Deadline for request that a ballot *be mailed to you* is **no later than 5:00 p.m. by October 24, 2020.**

How may a person request a vote-by-mail ballot? [There are three different ways:]

- **Call** Election Headquarters at (863) 534-5888
- **Fill Out Request** [<https://www.polkelections.com/m/Mail-in-Ballot-Request-Form>]
- **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 November election, the deadline to request a mail-in ballot to be mailed to you is by 5 pm on Saturday, October 24th, 2020. After that date you can visit one of the offices above to pick one up in person for yourself or for a close relative if authorized. Source: www.polkelections.com

Committees & Action Teams

Education, chair open

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

Healthcare, chair open

Immigration, chair open

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 (for 2021),
Natalie Alexich, see page 2

Speakers Bureau, Trudy
Rankin,
trudycorryrankin@gmail.com

Voter outreach, Linda
Donaldson, see above

Voter services, Larry Rankin,
lallenr@gmail.com

**Women's reproductive
health**, Eileen Swiler, see
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.**

## Overheard at Our Last Board Meeting

- The state of LWV Polk's finances is good, reported treasurer **Terry Lauretta**.
- **Emily Crain** reported on her work with our committees and action teams in her role assigned by the board of program chair—coordinating our committees and providing a link to the board. Some committees remain without a chair, significantly health, education, and immigration.
- **Linda Donaldson** reported on both membership (total is now at about 125) and voter outreach efforts and the plan for the VBM/Vote Early sign campaign beginning October 5<sup>th</sup> and ideas for social media campaign (FB, Twitter, Instagram). **Volunteers are needed** for one (or more!) two-hour shifts with the roadside signs (always with at least one buddy) on key byways in Polk County.
- **Larry Rankin** reported on voter service activities during September (see "Action Alley" cont. below), made more challenging in the pandemic, including teaming up with other organizations' voter registration and GOTV efforts to distribute information about deadlines for registering, VBM, early voting. Upcoming events include **two parades**, one sponsored by the **SOE on October 3<sup>rd</sup>** (see "SOE's Office" on page 5) and **the other sponsored by the Rochelle Alumni Association and other community organizations along the MLK Jr. Day parade route in the Northside on October 17<sup>th</sup>**. In accordance with the LWV's non-partisan stance, both parades are non-partisan and open to all. **To participate in the Northside "Drive Thru Parade," register (\$25) with Larry or Andy Crossfield.**

## ACTION ALLEY (continued)

### *VS Volunteers Active in the Community*

Collaboration being the name of the game, Larry Rankin's Voter Services team joined several other organizations in efforts to Get Out the Vote (GOTV) and inform everyone of various deadlines. Our certified voter registration volunteers have been calling citizens directly, to provide them with non-partisan information. A nationwide organization, State Voices, administers the Voter Activation Network (VAN), and provides LWV FL with calling lists of all voters in Polk County who voted in 2012 but not in 2016. Larry and LWV Polk board member Jiwa Farrell represent us in the GOTV Collaborative.

In addition, Larry and his team were invited to food banking events on September 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> held at the Lake Church (formerly Lakeland Church at the Mall) by Feeding Tampa Bay. These volunteers handed out pamphlets to people waiting in line in their cars, and talked to them about voter services. The Hillsborough LWV was helpful in getting LWV Polk involved.

Larry stated, "All members of the LWV Polk are invited to participate in [Voter Services] activities and do not need to be certified in voter registration."

## A Little Electoral College History . . . by Marcia Boyce and Katy Pace Byrd

Four presidents (five if you include the election of 1824) have won the popular vote, yet failed to secure a majority in the Electoral College (EC). These include:

- **John Quincy Adams** defeated Andrew Jackson in 1824 in a contingent election held by the U. S. House of Representatives, neither man having succeeded in garnering an EC majority (Jackson had won the popular vote by more than a 10% margin)
- **Rutherford Hayes** defeated Samuel Tilden in the EC by one vote in 1876, Tilden having won 50.9% of the popular vote
- **Benjamin Harrison** defeated Grover Cleveland in the EC by 65 votes in 1888, Cleveland having received 91 thousand votes more than Harrison (less than 1% of the total vote)

In more recent history, in 2000, in a lengthy judicial process that culminated with the U.S. Supreme Court letting the popular vote count in Florida stand despite a ruling by the Florida Supreme Court ordering a recount, **George W. Bush** defeated Al Gore by 5 votes in the EC. The popular votes for each candidate were a hair's breadth apart. In 2016, **Donald J. Trump** defeated Hillary Clinton in the EC by 77 votes, although she earned 2.9 million more popular votes than her opponent.

Each state has electors equal to its number of representatives and senators; the District of Columbia is allotted three. In 1969, the 91st Congress proposed a direct, populist vote that would require a runoff when no candidate received at least 40% of the vote. The resolution passed the House, but failed to pass in the Senate. Use of the Electoral College has been and continues to be a much-debated process, having been originally established in 1789 in Article II, Section 1 of the U.S. Constitution, and modified by the 12th Amendment in 1804. (Each side in this debate makes a number of points, summarized in this article in Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_Electoral\\_College](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Electoral_College)). Yale constitutional law professor Akhil Reed Amar's 2018 article in *Time* magazine digs deeper into some more troubling roots of the EC (<https://time.com/4558510/electoral-college-history-slavery/>).

**Sources:** [history.house.gov/Institution/Electoral College](http://history.house.gov/Institution/Electoral_College); Wikipedia

### Want to Be a Virtual Poll Watcher?

The LWV has joined with the Common Cause Education Fund to create ways to monitor what is transpiring at individual polling places to individual voters on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. To become an Election Protection volunteer sign up at <https://protectthevote.net/>. After you complete sign-up forms, Common Cause staff will be in touch with you regarding any training and shift availability, as soon as schedules are set. If you want to learn more about this effort, visit <https://protectthevote.net/> and <https://www.commoncause.org/page/protect-the-vote/>. The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights will also be participating and the phone number 866-OUR-VOTE will be used for communication, reporting in, and getting answers to questions.

### Voter Guides Available at the Public Libraries!

This election year guide features in-depth discussions of proposed amendments, who supports and opposes them, and the League's recommendations. This year's guide is also published in Spanish. Here are links to the guides if you don't wish to make the trip out to your library:  
<https://www.lwvfl.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Voters-Guide-LWV-2020-1.pdf>  
<https://www.lwvfl.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Voters-Guide-LWV-2020-Spanish-1.pdf>  
Paper guides are available at all public libraries (although you have to ask at the front desk at the Winter Haven Public Library), and Bravo Market on Highway 98 North, Farm Fresh Market in Winter Haven, and the YMCAs on both north and south sides. More paper guides have been ordered.

## Diversity-Equity-Inclusion (DEI) Book Group Announces Black History Seminar Series

The LWV Polk-sponsored book discussion group is winding up our conversations on *How to Be an Antiracist*. Beginning on Monday, October 26<sup>th</sup> at noon via Zoom, we will be hosting a seminar series on Black History and the Black Experience in American History, led by retired History Professor **Bobbie Boatwright Harris**.

Open to anyone interested, this seminar series promises to bring to light little-known incidents in Black history, and to promote a deeper understanding of events which we may have learned something about in school. The first several sessions will focus on the period from the creation and final implementation of the U. S. Constitution in 1789 to the passage of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1865. The entire seminar series is expected to consist of six to eight sessions of one hour each, every other Monday (dates TBA, pending group decisions on holding seminars during Thanksgiving and Christmas weeks). Please email Katy Pace Byrd at [byrdkp@gmail.com](mailto:byrdkp@gmail.com) if you want to receive an invitation to the first meeting in our seminar series!

## From the SOE's Office

As most LWV Polk members know, **the deadline to register to vote** in the November General Election is **Monday, October 5<sup>th</sup>**, with an online application available at [www.polkelections.com](http://www.polkelections.com) and paper applications widely available at city halls, public libraries, and chambers of commerce. **SOE Lori Edwards** is sponsoring a **“Closing the Books” driving parade** on the Saturday before the registration deadline, **October 3<sup>rd</sup>**, from 8 am to 1:30 pm. The parade is in conjunction with the deployment of mobile registration units to 18 locations around Polk County. **LWV Polk members have been invited to participate in the parade, and those interested should gather in your cars in the SOE parking lot at 70 Florida Citrus Blvd., Winter Haven, Florida 33880 at 7:45 am.** Call the office at 863-534-5888 with any questions.

In addition, Edwards wants to remind everyone that if you have moved or changed your name, you should **update your voter registration** before the General Election! You also need to notify the SOE if your signature has changed. She states, “If a voter updates their records before the election, we can eliminate inconveniences on Election Day,” and reiterates that many changes can be made by calling the phone number above, visiting the website above, or visiting one of the mobile units (locations available at

<https://www.polkelections.com/Portals/Polk/Documents/Mobile%20Reg%20Routes.pdf?ver=2020-09-30-192355-017>

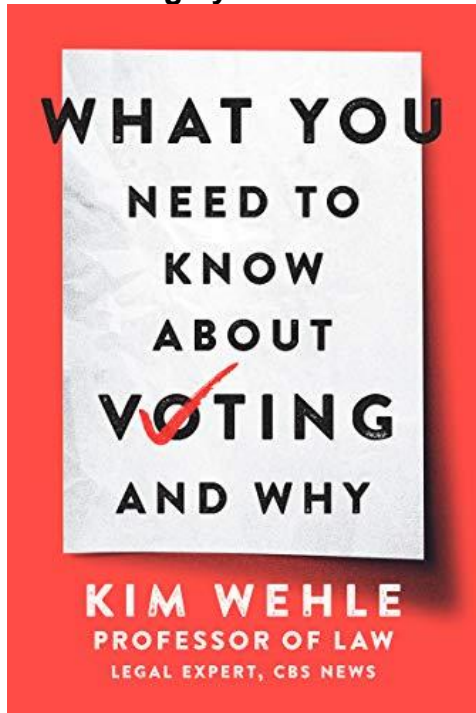
Also, don't forget to sign the outside of your ballot envelope! You won't need a stamp to mail in your ballot! Mail in your ballot asap, or drop it in one of the secure boxes at the nine early voting locations.

Sample ballots are now available online too! Study your choices “in advance and bring [your] sample ballot when [you] go to vote,” Edwards suggests. In response to some questions from LWV Polk, Edwards stressed that voting by mail, voting early, and voting on November 3<sup>rd</sup> are equally safe for assuring that your ballot is counted. She also went into detail regarding when mail-in ballots and early votes are counted:

- “We begin counting [**mail-in ballots**] 6 days before the election and continue counting as more ballots arrive. We do not press the ‘total’ button to tabulate the results until Election Night.”
- “[An **early vote**] is counted when you put it in the scanner. However, the results are not tabulated until after Early Voting is complete.”

Additionally, she stated that, “Florida law specifies that only the Polk County Canvassing Board has the authority to reject your ballot.” <https://soe.dos.state.fl.us/pdf/DE%20Guide%200020-%20Canvassing%20Board%20Membership%20and%20Activities.pdf>

Hot-Off-the-Presses!  
Highly Praised!



Thanks to **Beatty Raymond** for her recommendation!

**MAKE SURE YOU'RE**



## The Classifieds

### Welcome New Members!

Shelley Swenson  
Gloria Brooke  
Richard Isinghood  
Breezi Hicks  
Sylviane Russo  
Nancy Crissman  
Colleen Vann

### Donation Needed!

No nibbles yet on this one, but for our new storage area, open, metal utility shelving-4'W X 6'H X 12"D. Metal needed to support weight of our boxes, so please no plastic or particle board. Contact Vicki Lowe if you can donate at [vgl.art@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:vgl.art@tampabay.rr.com)

Your League thanks you!



# October

| Sunday                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Monday                                             | Tuesday                                                                          | Wednesday                            | Thursday                             | Friday                               | Saturday                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>To volunteer for <b>Voter Outreach</b> activities (roadside signs and social media campaign), contact <b>Linda Donaldson</b> at <a href="mailto:lindajdonaldson@yahoo.com">lindajdonaldson@yahoo.com</a>.</p> <p>To volunteer for Voter Services activities (providing information to voters and GOTV programs), contact <b>Larry Rankin</b> at <a href="mailto:lallenr@gmail.com">lallenr@gmail.com</a>.</p> |                                                    |                                                                                  |                                      | 1                                    | 2                                    | 3<br>SOE/VS "Closing the Books" caravan 7:45 am – 1 pm                  |
| 4<br>2 pm – VO comm meeting                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 5<br>Roadside signs<br>Voter registration deadline | 6<br>Roadside signs                                                              | 7<br>Roadside signs                  | 8<br>Roadside signs                  | 9<br>Roadside signs                  | 10<br>Roadside signs                                                    |
| 11<br>2 pm – VO comm meeting                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 12<br>Roadside signs                               | 13<br>Roadside signs                                                             | 14<br>Roadside signs                 | 15<br>Roadside signs                 | 16<br>Roadside signs                 | 17<br>Roadside signs<br>VS "Drive Thru Parade" – noon until...          |
| 18<br>2 pm – VO comm meeting                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 19<br>Roadside signs<br>Early voting               | 20<br>Roadside signs<br>Early voting<br>Recommended deadline to mail VBM ballots | 21<br>Roadside signs<br>Early voting | 22<br>Roadside signs<br>Early voting | 23<br>Roadside signs<br>Early voting | 24<br>Roadside signs<br>Early voting<br>Mail-in ballot request deadline |
| 25<br>Early voting<br>2 pm – VO comm meeting                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 26<br>Roadside signs<br>Early voting               | 27<br>Roadside signs<br>Early voting                                             | 28<br>Roadside signs<br>Early voting | 29<br>Roadside signs<br>Early voting | 30<br>Roadside signs<br>Early voting | 31<br>Roadside signs<br>Early voting                                    |