

Calendar

September 30th

LWV of Sanibel Forum on
Amendment 3, 6:30 pm, via
Zoom **See page 2**

October 2nd

First Friday, 6-9 pm, Kentucky
Avenue, Downtown Lakeland
**Come visit the LWV Polk
County booth!**

October 3rd

LWV Polk County Day of
Action, 9:30-11:30 am, Lake
Morton Public Library,
Lakeland **See page 3**

October 12th

Indigenous Peoples Day

October 14th

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

October 15th

Candidate Meet & Greet, 5:30
pm-7:30 pm at The Well
See page 2

October 25th

New Member Orientation, 2
pm, location TBA

October 26th

Board Meeting, 5 pm at The
Well

October 28th

Voter Services Action Team
Meeting, 6 pm via Zoom

October 31st

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

November 3rd
Election Day

Presidents' Message

It's time for the final push to get out the vote (GOTV) before the general election!

Below is information about one more useful tool to share with anyone looking for voting information. Members of the Voter Services Action Team spend hours throughout the year registering new voters and answering a myriad of questions. They often hear the voters say, "How do I know if I'm registered to vote?" or, "How do I know what is on the ballot?" and the most common question we hear is "I don't know anything about the people running for office. How can I find out?"

In 2006, the League of Women Voters developed the tool **VOTE411.org** to be a "one-stop shop" for everything election related. It provides nonpartisan information about national, state and local elections. Need to know your polling location? Do you have questions about acceptable forms of ID? Want to learn about the amendments and referendums on the ballot? Want to hear directly from the candidates?

All that and more is contained in Vote411.org. League of Women Voters of Polk County members have collected and posted information on all local races. This year we had a 100% return rate from the local candidates on our requests for information for the primaries. Kudos to Chandra Frederick and her team for a successful effort.

Take a minute and look at the website and then refer all your friends, neighbors, co-workers and family to www.vote411.org. We also hope to see you at our October 15th Candidate Meet and Greet, a great opportunity to hear from the candidates or their campaigns in this last run-up to November 3rd.

In League,
Jo Shim & Pat Denham

Table of Contents

Candidate Meet & Greet.....	2
Book Corner.....	2
Action Alley	3
Q & A with Kristen Carlson.....	4
The Classifieds	4
Photo Album	5

**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
Micah Jarrett
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

**Candidate Meet & Greet
October 15th, 2026, 5:30-7:30 pm
The Well, 114 East Parker Street, Lakeland**

The League of Women Voters of Polk County is proud to sponsor, along with the Lakeland Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., the Polk County Voters League, the Puerto Rican Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Polk County, the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.-Omicron Kappa Omega Chapter, and the NAACP-Lakeland Branch, an opportunity to hear from candidates (or their representatives) running on November 3rd for the US House of Representatives and Senate, the Florida House of Representatives and Senate, and the Polk County School Board.

As always, all are welcome!

Keep your eyes on your email for a flyer about this upcoming event!

Another Chance to Learn More About Amendment 3!

Still not sure what to think or how to vote on Amendment 3?
LWV of Sanibel is sponsoring an in-person forum specifically on this proposed amendment. But if you don't live in Sanibel, fear not! The forum will be live-streamed by Zoom webinar, so that all can access accurate information about the impact on local communities and (un-)intended consequences of this proposed drastic reduction of property taxes in the state of Florida. The forum will feature the former president of the Florida League of Cities, Holly Smith. Register for the webinar here: <https://events.humanitix.com/coti-lwv-amendment-3/tickets>

Book Corner

In honor of Banned Books Week, October 4th-10th, 2026 Isabella "Izzy" Miletic, League of Women Voters of Tallahassee board member and Florida State University student, has created a six-page mini research guide for researching banned books in Florida. The guide can be accessed here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KtemkAkp4Fpv2pQUKnUdauT-0TxB3R72/view>
Complete with snappy graphics, the booklet provides questions to ask as you embark on your research, as well as lists of local, state and national resources for doing your research. Thanks to Izzy for her continued work on this vital issue!

General Election Ahead!

Deadline to register: Monday, October 5, 2026

Deadline to request VBM: Thursday, October 22, 2026

Election Day: Tuesday, November 3, 2026

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,** Litreace Coppit,
voterservices@lwvpolk.org

Organizational Teams

Communications, Ben
Graffam,
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

The run-up to the November general election has seen numerous efforts related to voting. LWV Polk County celebrated National Voter Registration Day on September 8th and 15th by holding tabling events at the Goodwill stores in both Lakeland and Winter Haven. Both outreach days were very successful.

LWV Polk County also celebrated Constitution Day on September 17th with three events. Voter Services Action Team members partnered with students for events at both Florida Southern College and Florida Polytechnic University. In addition, a Constitution trivia contest was held during our Hot Topic program on the proposed state constitutional amendments that evening. League members did well on answering the questions, which were challenging! We were especially pleased to have former County Commissioner **George Lindsay** and current City Commissioner **Terry Coney** speak about the local impacts of Amendment 3 during the gathering. *(See photos on page 5.)*

In other action related to ensuring that LWV Polk County is doing its best in regard to both internal and outward-facing communication, board member **Micah Jarrett** is engaged in a review of our website which may result in a new look and some new features. Our Facebook presence is also under review. Outgoing communications chair **Ben Graffam** will be conducting training on our email communication system, after giving several years of service in this area.

Day of Action

On Saturday, October 3rd, LWV of Polk County members and friends will gather at the Lakeland Public Library on Lake Morton from 9:30-11:30 am. Members may stay to write postcards and enjoy the group fellowship, but are also welcome to stop by and pick up a stack to complete at home. Printed address labels for the postcards and sample scripts will be available. Thanks to **Robin Adams** and **Brenda Weeks** for their recent donations to defray the cost of postcard stamps. Donations of postcard stamps or stamp money are always welcome!

Election Hero Day

Representatives of LWV of Polk County will celebrate Election Hero Day on Tuesday, October 20th by visiting both Polk County SOE offices and delivering baskets of goodies. "Election Hero Day is a nonpartisan, national celebration recognizing the tremendous contributions that election officials, their staff, and poll workers make to ensure a safe, secure voting experience for all Americans. . . Election Hero Day will help boost election official morale ahead of Election Day and send a clear message to the public that we support our friends and neighbors who play such a vital role in preserving our democracy."

Source: <https://www.electionheroday.org/>

Q & A with Co-Vice President Kristen Carlson

Kristen Carlson is well known in Polk County business and political circles, even having run for public office in 2018. She is a supportive and energetic member of our organization.

Q: Where do you hail from, Kristen, and where in Polk County do you live currently?

A: My father was in the Air Force so I grew up all over the US and overseas. I moved to Lakeland in 1981 and have lived in Polk County ever since. Currently I live in Winter Haven.

Q: Please describe your educational background.

A: I graduated with a BS in journalism from the University of Florida (UF) and a JD from Stetson University College of Law. I am a lawyer and mostly handle citrus and trade association clients.

Q: Tell us about your career and volunteer experiences.

A: In the past, I have been active with Girls and Boys Clubs of Lakeland, serving on their board for 12 years. I also served on the board of the Polk Museum of Art (now the Ashley Gibson Barnett Museum of Art) for several years and the Lakeland Zoning Board of Adjustment and Appeals. I have enjoyed a number of volunteer roles connected to the citrus industry, including being a founding board member of UF's Wedgworth Leadership Institute, which focuses on developing leaders in the agricultural and natural resources industries.

Q: Have you been involved with any particular action teams or other League programs since joining LWV of Polk County?

A: I have been a member of LWV of Polk County for eight years. After the heated and divisive election cycle of 2018, I sought nonpartisan civic involvement and was encouraged to join the League by Paula Mims. I filled in as treasurer for a brief time, and represented our state League as co-chair of a group of non-profits fighting to preserve voter protections in the state legislature. Today I coordinate LWV of Polk County's Speakers Bureau.



Q: What do you like best about the League?

A: I have found that our members are serious about the League's work and hold dear the core missions of research, education and advocacy.

The Classifieds

Welcome & Thank You,
New & Renewing Members!

Karen Neubart
Amy Adler
Madeline Kiley
Marcela Stanislaus
Doretha Tillman
Frances Howell-Coleman



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 Quote

"There never will be complete equality until women themselves help to make laws and elect lawmakers."

Did You Know?

On October 14, 1964, Martin Luther King, Jr. became the youngest person ever awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

It Takes a Village . . .

Thanks to all contributors to this month's Voter: Pat Denham, Jo Shim, Kristen Carlson and Jim Byrd.-The Editor

Happy Constitution Day, September 17th 2026



Above left and right: LWV Polk County members and friends listen and learn about the state constitutional amendment proposals which will appear on our November 3rd ballot, through an excellent LWV Florida presentation (see example of one of the slides, below middle) delivered by Jo Shim. Longtime League member and former president Sue Schultz lightened up the proceedings with a Constitution trivia quiz. Earlier in the day, Pat Denham staffed a voter services table at Florida Polytechnic University (seen below right with a student).



Robin Adams and Sue Schultz staff our table at Goodwill on September 8th, and right, happy attendees at our inaugural Second Wednesday Brown Bag.

