



Calendar

November 2nd
Election Day
Polls open 7 am-7 pm

November 3rd
Closing the Gap #69:
Kristen Carlson, noon via Zoom (see right)

November 4th
Diwali

November 7th
Daylight Savings Time ends

November 8th
DEI Book Group: *Claudia Slate and Anne Farris Rosen present Deep South Dispatch, noon via Zoom*

November 10th
Closing the Gap #70:
Suzanne Mills Wenn, noon via Zoom (see right)

November 11th
Veterans Day
Tree planting (see right)

November 17th
Closing the Gap #71: *Sarah D. McKay, noon via Zoom (see right)*

November 19th
Board meeting, noon via Zoom

November 22nd
DEI Book Group: *Katy Pace Byrd presents The Crusades of Cesar Chavez, noon via Zoom*

November 25th
Thanksgiving Day

November 28th
Hanukkah begins

Vote in the Municipal Elections—Tuesday, November 2

Voters in the upcoming city elections should check their polling locations before they go to vote on Tuesday, November 2nd. City residents in Fort Meade, Lakeland and Winter Haven are eligible to vote, but polling locations may be different! All affected voters have been mailed a postcard indicating their city election voting location. To confirm the correct location for this election, voters are encouraged to click on “Voter Lookup” on the Supervisor of Elections (SOE) web page at PolkElections.gov or simply click the link for their city’s election to find complete information regarding Tuesday’s elections. Florida law requires voters to vote at the precinct they are assigned.

Source: Office of the SOE

Join Us for a Memorial Tree Planting

LWV Polk members will gather at **Lake Morton at 3:30 pm on November 11th** to dedicate two Hong Kong orchid trees. The trees will stand as a beautiful testimony to the lives of **Edie Yates Baylis Henderson and David Henderson**, well-known citizens of Lakeland, who died together on November 10, 2020. Edie was a resident of Lakeland since childhood, a graduate of Lakeland High School and Florida Southern College, and according to her obituary, “a trailblazer for professional women.” She contributed her time, talent, and leadership skills to countless community organizations including LWV Polk County. A former public defender, David became a commercial real estate developer with interests in several local hotels. Edie and David are each survived by a son and other family. LWV Polk members are thankful to be able to remember these two remarkable people. An electronic “plaque” will be located near the trees

Closing the Gap Lineup for November

On November 3rd, host **Trudy Corry Rankin** will welcome attorney and LWV Polk member **Kristen Carlson** to discuss the redistricting process currently underway in Florida. On the 10th, **Suzanne Mills Wenn** of the Lac Courte Oreilles Reservation will be back to talk about Native American concerns. And on November 17th, community leader, philanthropist, and longtime champion of civics education **Sarah D. McKay** will speak from her perspective of many decades in Polk County. Trudy has referred to Mrs. McKay as a Wise Elder in our community, and there is no doubt of that!

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**Terms end in 2023; all others
end in 2022.*

**Follow Us
on Social Media!**

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

Senate Bill 90: Ramifications and Implications

As many of you know, LWV Florida brought suit over this bill in May 2021 against Florida's secretary of state and attorney general and all 67 SOEs. Joining in this suit are Black Voters Matter, the Florida Alliance for Retired Americans, Cecile Scoon and other individual voters. The NAACP Legal Defense Fund has filed a separate suit. You can use this helpful website to learn about and track this case: <https://www.democracymatters.com/cases/florida-voter-suppression-bill/> **Jiwa Farrell & Emily Crain** are available to answer questions.

Overheard at the Last Board Meeting

Per LWV Polk co-president **Sandy Sheets**, our incorporation application requires an affirmative vote by the general membership, to be on the agenda at our annual meeting in spring 2022.

The board created a DEI task force to be co-chaired by **Bobbie Boatwright Harris** and **Katy Pace Byrd**. The group's purpose will be to implement the LWV Florida's *DEI Work Plan for Local Leagues*.

<https://lwwfl.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Florida-Diversity-Equity-and-Inclusion-Work-Plan-20210417.pdf>

Jiwa Farrell and **Andy Crossfield** reported on progress in facilitating the implementation of a clearer path for Polk County's returning citizens to register to vote. Currently, the process for a former felon to determine fines and fees to be paid in full before registering is labyrinthine in the extreme. Others helping with this complicated task include **Breezi Hicks**, **Larry Rankin**, **Jean Baker**, and **Trudy Corry Rankin**.

The First Thanksgiving: Was It Actually in Florida?

Blaring trumpets and thundering artillery serenaded Don Pedro Menéndez de Avilés as he waded ashore on September 8, 1565. The Spanish admiral kissed a cross held aloft by the fleet's captain, Father Francisco Lopez, then claimed Florida for both his God and his country. As curious members of the indigenous Timucua tribe looked on, the 800 newly arrived colonists gathered around a makeshift altar as Father Lopez performed a Catholic mass of thanksgiving for their safe arrival in the newly christened settlement of St. Augustine. At the invitation of Menéndez, the Timucuan then joined the newcomers in a communal meal.

Some Florida historians have argued that this feast—and not the one held 56 years later by the Pilgrims and Wampanoags in Plymouth, Massachusetts—was actually North America's first Thanksgiving. "It was the first community act of religion and thanksgiving in the first permanent settlement in the land," wrote University of Florida professor emeritus of history Michael Gannon in his book *The Cross in the Sand*.

The menu for the meal shared by the Spaniards and Timucuan lacked most of today's typical Thanksgiving

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Committees & Action Teams

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), Bobbie Boatwright Harris and Katy Pace Byrd, see page 2

Education, Bobbie Boatwright Harris, see page 2

Gun safety, open

Healthcare, Paula Mims, pmmims@aol.com

Immigration, Natalie Alexich, see page 2

Juvenile justice, Andy Crossfield, see page 2

Libraries, Lillian Blessing, lillianblessing@gmail.com

Media, Jerry Weeks, geraldibus1@gmail.com

Membership, Linda Donaldson, lindajdonaldson@yahoo.com

Natural resources:

Climate action, Charlene Bennett and Karen Freedman, see page 2

Plastics, Sharon Masters, smasters4549@icloud.com

Nominating (2022), Marcia Boyce, msboyce11@gmail.com

Outreach and social media, Linda Donaldson, see above

Reproductive health and justice, Eileen Swiler, seswiler@msn.com

Speakers Bureau, Trudy Rankin, trudycorryrankin@gmail.com

Voter registration, Jiwa Farrell, see page 2

Returning citizens voter registration subcommittee, Andy Crossfield, see page 2

Action Alley

~**Eileen Swiler** reports that reproductive health and justice is a top-six legislative priority of LWV Florida. Indeed, Rep. Webster Barnaby (R-27th) has already filed HB 167, a bill based on Texas' SB 8 which bans abortion after six weeks and allows any citizen to sue anyone assisting a woman believed to be seeking this type of care. As of October 22nd, no companion Florida Senate bill had been filed.

~**Katy Pace Byrd** recently represented LWV Polk at a two-day Racial Equity Institute training provided to all local leagues by LWV Florida. The full leadership and staff of LWV Florida also attended. LWV Florida first vice president **Marisol Zenteno**, and board members **Jonathan Hackley** (who DEI book club members met at their August 30th meeting), and **Maegen Pierce** will be coordinating local league DEI efforts.

In Memoriam: Asa Donaldson

The sincere condolences of LWV Polk members are extended to Linda Jansen Donaldson on the death of her beloved husband, Asa Lynn Donaldson on October 8, 2021 in Winter Haven. Asa and Linda were married for 51 years. He was a devoted father, grandfather, brother, uncle, cousin, and friend. An engineer before his retirement, Asa was a man of many talents and hobbies who also loved to travel and spend time with his family. After he retired in 2003, he and Linda moved to central Florida where he gave back to the community by delivering for Meals on Wheels. Asa was also an advocate of free and fair elections. He helped register voters and encouraged voting at every election. In addition to Linda, Asa is survived by their two daughters and three grandchildren, as well as a large group of family and friends. The complete obituary can be read here: <https://www.facebook.com/linda.donaldson.585>

The First Thanksgiving, continued from page 2

dishes, but it did feature a traditional post-Thanksgiving staple—leftovers. Unlike the Pilgrims, who served food freshly harvested from American soil, the Spanish were forced to make do with whatever provisions survived the long voyage across the Atlantic Ocean.

According to Robyn Gioia, author of the children's book *America's REAL First Thanksgiving*, the European colonists likely ate hard biscuits and cocido—a rich garbanzo stew made with pork, garlic, saffron, cabbage and onion—washed down with red wine. "The Timucua ate what was available to them locally and that could have included alligator, bear, wild turkey, venison, tortoise and food from the sea such as turtle, shark, mullet or sea catfish," Gioia says. -----

Excerpted from
www.history.com/news/did-florida-host-the-first-thanksgiving

So whether you celebrate with garbanzo beans, alligator, or turkey, have a Happy Thanksgiving!
The Editor



LWV Polk board member and clean energy committee (CAC) co-chair **Karen Freedman** is **all in** on environmental issues such as electric vehicles (EVs), sustainability, and solar energy. She has worked tirelessly on these issues, not only with LWV Polk, but also Tampa Bay Watch, Tampa Bay Clean Cities, Ancient Islands Sierra Clean Energy Committee, National Drive Electric Week, American Solar Energy Society, both the clean energy and EV teams of LWV Florida, and the wildfire committee of the LWV US climate team.

Karen's background has prepared her well for this work. She comes from a large family in the northeastern US that was steeped in environmental stewardship. She earned a bachelor's degree in environmental science with an emphasis on aquatic ecosystems. Relocating with her husband Mark to Lakeland in the early 1980s, Karen raised three children, all of whom became scientists. She taught AP environmental & marine biology in the Polk County public schools for a decade, involving her students in local habitat restorations and coaching teams for the Envirothon (an annual competition sponsored by the National Conservation Foundation) and Future Farmers of America Forestry Contests.

An inveterate notetaker, Karen is the model of a lifelong learner on many subjects, including having been an active participant in LWV Polk's DEI book discussion group. Karen's "inquiring mind" continues to be a great asset to LWV Polk!

The Classifieds

**Wanted for a New Voter
Newsletter Feature Coming
in December:**

**Calling all chairs!!!
Send your top three websites
(brief description + link)
for information about your
group's issues, even if your
committee is not currently
active, to the editor at
byrdkp@gmail.com. We'll
compile them for our new
monthly column, "So You Want
to Know More About . . ."
Thanks to for Paula Mims for
this great idea!**

So They Say . . .

"The answer to one is the answer to all. Government by 'the people'" is expedient or it is not. If it is expedient, then obviously all the people must be included."

~Carrie Chapman Catt

