



**Calendar**

**April 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**Earth Day**

*BOD meeting, noon via Zoom;  
LWV Florida Lunch & Learn,  
Paula Mims on maternal health  
inequities, 1pm via Zoom*

**April 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**National Drive Electric Day**

**9 am-1 pm, Munn Park,  
Lakeland**

**(see right & pages 4 & 5);**

*Last day of Passover*

**April 25<sup>th</sup>**

*DEI Book Group*

**Part 2 of Open Veins**

*discussion, noon via Zoom*

**April 30<sup>th</sup>**

*Last day of Ramadan*

**May 1<sup>st</sup>**

*Asian/Pacific American Heritage  
Month begins*

**May 5<sup>th</sup>**

*Cinco de Mayo*

**May 8<sup>th</sup>**

*Mothers Day*

**May 9<sup>th</sup>**

*DEI Book Group*

**Stony the Road** *discussion,  
noon via Zoom*

**May 16<sup>th</sup>**

*Vesak (Buddha Purnima)*

**May 21<sup>st</sup>**

*Paul A. Diggs Neighborhood  
Association event (VR)*

**May 23<sup>rd</sup>**

*DEI Book Group*

**Part 2 of Stony the Road**  
*discussion, noon via Zoom*

**May 27<sup>th</sup>**

*BOD meeting, noon via Zoom*

**Annual Meeting a Success!**

After two years of holding the LWV Polk annual meeting via Zoom, we returned to a well-attended in-person meeting at beautiful Grasslands Country Club. To top that off, we welcomed LWV Florida’s first Black president, **Cecile Scoon**, who was accompanied by her spouse, **Alvin Peters**.

In addition to conducting LWV Polk’s business (election of officers and board members, 2022-23 budget approval, voting to adopt new articles of incorporation), attendees were privileged to serve as the first live audience for LWV Florida’s “Lunch & Learn” series on topics of interest, this episode concerning the vitally important results of the League’s case against the state regarding SB 90. Of vital importance to the League as a third-party voter registrant (3PVRO) is the abolishment of the requirement that we inform registrants that we may not submit completed forms on time—a warning that was completely contrary to the League’s sterling record.

Significantly, Chief District Court Judge Mark Walker opined in his 288 page decision that SB 90 was drafted “with the *intent* to restructure Florida’s election system in ways that favor” one party over another [*italics ours*]. For more information click here: <https://lwvfl.org/league-victory-federal-court-strikes-down-florida-voter-suppression-law-senate-bill-90/>

**Drive Electric Earth Day on Saturday!**

**Be there for Mother Earth on Saturday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9 am to 1 pm at Munn Park in Lakeland for Drive Electric Earth Day (DEED)! EV owners will be at this FREE event with their cars or bikes to answer your questions and share their enthusiasm. This national all-volunteer, non-profit event occurs every year, as EVs are becoming ever more popular! Find out more at the Lakeland DEED website, <https://driveelectricearthday.org/event?eventid=3179>, and the National DEED website, <https://driveelectricearthday.org/>**

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**2022-2023  
LWV Polk  
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*\*Terms end in 2024; all others  
end in 2023.*

**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  
U.S.

**Moms With Monitors**

Congratulations to **Paula Mims** and the **LWV Polk healthcare committee** for their successful pursuit of establishing “Moms With Monitors,” a program that distributes blood pressure monitors to pregnant women at risk of pre-term births, maternal death, and infant mortality or severe developmental outcomes. An incredible amount of focused study followed by persistent action by members of the healthcare committee members led to this success in Polk County, where maternal and infant health inequities for women of color as compared to white women are even worse than the state average.

The staff of the Polk County Health Department has agreed to distribute the monitors and collect the women’s regular reports of their pressures. Along with the monitors, health and nutrition materials will be distributed, along with voter registration information.

Florida LWV president Cecile Scoon commented at the LWV Polk annual meeting on April 8<sup>th</sup>, “This is exactly the kind of project Florida Leagues should be doing!” The March of Dimes provided significant support in this effort, with major additional funding for the project coming from the **T. Mims Corp.**

**If you feel moved to contribute to this meaningful cause (keeping in mind that each monitor costs \$50), please send your check** made out to LWV Polk or LWV Polk Education Fund (the latter is tax-deductible) to PO Box 934, Lakeland FL 33802. **Don’t forget to write “monitor” on your check. Thank you!**



**Did You Know?**

“According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Black women die at three times the rate of white women” in pregnancy-related deaths. – “Birthing while black is a national crisis,”

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/apr/19/black-mothers-birth-maternal-mortality>

## Committees & Action Areas

**DEI**, Bobbie Boatwright Harris, see page 2, and Katy Pace Byrd, byrdkp@gmail.com

**Education**, [open](#)

**Gun safety**, [open](#)

**Healthcare**, Paula Mims, pmmims@aol.com

**Immigration**, [open](#)

**Juvenile justice**, Andy Crossfield, usandy@aol.com

**Libraries**, Lillian Blessing, lillianblessing@gmail.com

**Media**, Jerry Weeks, geraldibus1@gmail.com

**Membership**, Linda Donaldson, see page 2

### Natural resources:

**Climate action**, Karen Freedman, kefreedman@hotmail.com

**Plastics**, Sharon Masters, smasters4549@icloud.com

### Newsletter

Ashley Laurretta, ashleyannlaurretta@gmail.com

**Nominating (2023)**, Sue Schultz, sueschultz1@verizon.net

**Reproductive health and justice**, Eileen Swiler, see page 2

**Speakers Bureau**, Trudy Rankin, trudycorryrankin@gmail.com

**Voter outreach and education**, Linda Donaldson, see page 2

**Voter registration**, [open](#)  
**Returning citizens voter registration subcommittee**, Andy Crossfield, usandy@aol.com

## Action Alley

Following the success of the League's SB 90 lawsuit, the League now pivots to a focus on redistricting in Florida. Subsequent to a meeting at The Well led by LWV Florida president **Cecile Scoon** on Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, a group of potential collaborators met again at The Well on April 19<sup>th</sup> in a meeting moderated by **Rick Maxey**, assistant vice president for D & I at Florida Poly (and new member of LWV Polk!). The group consisted of Leaguers and members of NAACP-Lakeland, Polk County Voter's League, National Coalition of 100 Black Women and others. The business of the meeting was to identify events in the BIPOC community to take place in the next several months at which education about redistricting can be done (using the grant money recently received by LWV Polk from LWV Florida). LWV Polk's website will include a calendar of events.

Voter services has received the post-SB 90 decision voter registration guidelines from LWV FL. **Anyone interested in learning how to register voters should contact Linda Donaldson immediately.** Doing double—or triple duty—Linda also reports that LWV Polk now boasts 119 members.

**Bobby Harris** will lead a League presence at a fundraising event by the Paul A. Diggs Neighborhood Association on May 21<sup>st</sup>. In May, the DEI book discussion group will be reading ***Stony the Road: Reconstruction, White Supremacy, and the Rise of Jim Crow*** by noted public intellectual Henry Louis "Skip" Gates, Jr.

Four committee and action team chairs are vacant, and we would love to get them staffed up: **education, gun safety, immigration and our core mission-related voter registration team.** Please consider whether you might be able to provide some leadership in one of these areas, and contact Emily at [ecrainlwvpolk@outlook.com](mailto:ecrainlwvpolk@outlook.com).

## Thanks to Old & New Officers and Board Members

First of all, thanks go to **Vicki Lowe** and **Sandy Sheets** for serving two terms as co-presidents (during the pandemic, no less). And gratitude to **Emily Crain** for following them in her new term as president! **Andy Crossfield** has served as vice president for many years, and has performed such heavy lifts as coordinating our celebrations of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment (before they were cut short!), preparing successive annual meeting bulletins, and most recently, making arrangements for the multiple events connected to our annual meeting. This is not a complete list of Andy's service! Thank you, Sir! Thanks to past president **Jessie Gomez** for returning to the board as secretary, and thanks to new board members with two-year terms, **Mary Dwight** and **Blair Allen**. **Katy Byrd** and **Karen Freedman** rotate off after completing two-year terms, and Katy is relinquishing the newsletter to newcomer **Ashley Laurretta**, who is also joining the board for a one-year term. The board says farewell to the energy and dedication of **Natalie Alexich** and **Jiwa Farrell**, with **Eileen Swiler** and **Linda Donaldson** rejoining the board in their places. Deserving our utmost gratitude are outgoing nominating committee chair **Marcia Boyce** and incoming chair **Sue Schultz!**



## *Volunteers Needed!!*

*Saturday, April 23, 2022*

*Lakeland's Munn Park*

### *Shifts:*

- 8:00 am - 10:00 am
- 10:00 am – Noon
- Noon - 2:00 pm

### *Volunteer needs:*

- Set up (8:00 am)
- Register & guide EVs to proper parking locations
- Help staff table, answer questions, give out “swag”
- Kids’ crafts activities
- Check on EV owners, provide water & snacks as needed
- Make sure DEED COVID protocols are being followed
- Help sanitize steering wheels, etc.
- Take down (2:00 pm)

### *To volunteer, contact:*

Karen Freedman, 863-398-5329, [naturalsolar@lwvpolk.org](mailto:naturalsolar@lwvpolk.org)

Kathie Sutherland, 650-305-0139, [kksutherland@aol.com](mailto:kksutherland@aol.com)

**NOTE:** The Lakeland Farmers Market does not allow any political or partisan activities, so please do NOT wear LWV nametags or T-shirts. We will provide DEED nametags (& T-shirts if desired). Thank you!

# *Drive Electric Earth Day Lakeland*

## *Downtown Lakeland's Munn Park*

*Saturday April 23, 2022*

- Date: Sat., April 23, 2022
- Time: 9:00 am – 1:00 pm
- Location: Lakeland's Munn Park, 198 N. Kentucky Ave, Lakeland, FL 33801
- Contacts: Karen Freedman & Kathie Sutherland, Lakeland DEED City Co-Captains
- Contact phone: 863-398-5329 (Text or Voice Mail is best)
- Contact email address: [NaturalSolar@lwvpolk.org](mailto:NaturalSolar@lwvpolk.org)
- Drive Electric Earth Day Lakeland website:  
<https://driveelectricearthday.org/event?eventid=3179>
- Drive Electric Earth Day Lakeland Facebook event page: <https://fb.me/e/1ddZYdFIQ>.

**This FREE family-friendly event** will have several EV owners showcasing their Electric Vehicles (EVs), answering your questions, and sharing their enthusiasm. A wide variety of EV models will be on display.

**Local DEED organizers:** League of Women Voters of Polk County & Ancient Islands Sierra Club.



## **The Classifieds**

### **Welcome New Members!**

**Lynn Paredes-Manfredi**  
**Tara Wheat**  
**Rick Maxey**  
**Jackye Maxey**  
**Doretha Brooks**

**LWV US, LWV FL, LWV Polk.**  
**Empowering voters.**  
**Defending democracy.**

### **So They Say . . .**

"I don't believe in charity. I believe in solidarity. Charity is so vertical. It goes from the top to the bottom. Solidarity is horizontal. It respects the other person. I have a lot to learn from other people."  
~Eduardo Galeano

# 2022 LWV Polk Annual Meeting Grasslands Country Club, Lakeland



*Marcia Boyce and Terry Laurretta greet attendees*



*Emily Crossfield arrives*



*Sandy Sheets is ready for this meeting*



*A great crowd!*



*Larry Rankin, Beatty Raymond, Trudy Rankin*



*Enjoying Grasslands' delicious food*



*Blair Allen gets to know some fellow Leaguers*



*Joan Steele dishes to Claudia Slate and Emily Crossfield*



*Katy Pace Byrd and Ashley Laurretta*



*Mary Dwight*



*Vicki Lowe and Bobbie Boatwright Harris*



*Sandy opens the business meeting*



*Vicki presents speaker Cecile Scoon with a special US flag*



***Rapmaster Paula takes the mike***



***Cecile commands both the in-person and Zoom audiences for "Lunch & Learn"***



***Battered flag in Cecile's presentation represents the League's work to maintain our voting rights***



***Alvin Peters with some new LWV Polk friends***



***Old pals, L to R: Sue Schultz, Paula Mims, Sandy Sheets, Suzy Bromwell, Nancy Simmons***



***Mario Stone and Dr. Sallie Stone of The Well, who ably handled the meeting's technical requirements***