



Upcoming Events

February 7th
BOD meeting
noon, 4005 Cheverly Drive
East, Lakeland

February 8th
Hot Topic-Election Reform
Kristen Carlson, 1:30-3 pm,
Public Library on Lake
Morton

February 13th
National Day of Action
Voter registration and
sharing of carnations,
11:30 am-1:30 pm, Munn
Park, Lakeland (see p. 4)

February 14th
Founding of the League
of Women Voters
In 1920 (see p. 4)

February 15th
Susan B. Anthony Day

February 17th
Presidents Day Holiday

February 18th
Deadline for February
newsletter information to
byrdkp@gmail.com

March 6th (tentative)
BOD meeting

March 15th
Iron Jawed Angels film
screening, 2 pm, Public
Library on Lake Morton

New Member Social & LWV 101

New members of LWV Polk gathered with some “old hands” at the lovely home of membership chair **Linda Donaldson** on January 25th. Attending were **Jerry Weeks, Sharon Masters, Juanita Zwaryczuk, Charlene Bennett, Sandra Thompson, Nancy Simmons, Eileen Swiler, Ann Suich, Marcia Boyce, Georgianna Pentinen, Claudia Slate, Barbara Wallace, Karen Freedman, Mary Acevedo, Natalie Alexich, and Katy Pace Byrd.**

All present introduced themselves and mentioned what initially drew them to the League, as well as previous volunteer and professional experiences. After a break for refreshments, Linda made a presentation on the history of the League, including the organization’s strictly non-partisan stance while promoting informed and active participation in government at all levels.

Linda described the three tiers of League organization, stressing that we as a local League must distribute significant portions of our dues to the state and national LWVs. Our contributions to our umbrella organizations help to fund contracts with professional lobbyists, legal actions in the Florida courts, Speakers Bureau PowerPoint presentations that are available for our use, and other publications and information about League positions on many issues (determined after thorough study of the facts and with input from local chapters).

Linda and Nancy Simmons explained further the League’s process of study and action using examples of issues for which we have advocated in the past. All present were invited to find an area in which they are interested and become involved!

Contact information for chairs of our various action committees and teams is available at our web site, and always shown on pages 2 and 3 of the monthly newsletter.

LWV Polk Annual Dues for 2020-2021

Watch your snail mail boxes for a reminder to pay your annual dues. Dues for FY 2020-21 are payable between January 1st and March 31st. You may pay your dues (\$60 individual, \$90 household) by check to PO Box 934, Lakeland, FL 33802-0934, or by credit card at www.lwvpolk.org/join-renew-or-donate.html. Please consider paying your dues at the Susan B. Anthony level (\$100), in honor of our Double Centennial. The increased amount remains with the local level. Thank you!

2019-2020

LWV Polk Board of Directors and Committee Chairs

President, open

Vice president, Andy Crossfield,
usandy@aol.com

Secretary, Barbara Wallace,
barbaraw6@gmail.com

Treasurer, Terry Lauretta,
terry.lauretta@bayliscpas.com

Past president, Jessie Gomez,
jgomezlwv@gmail.com

Membership, Linda Donaldson,
lindajdonaldson@yahoo.com

Media, Jerry Weeks,
geraldibus1@gmail.com

Charlene Bennett,
charleneben@earthlink.net

Karen Freedman,
kefreedman@hotmail.com

Sharon Masters,
smasters4549@icloud.com

Eileen Swiler,
seswiler@msn.com

SPOTLIGHT ON 2020

March 17th

Presidential Preference Primary Election

Deadline to register February 18th

August 18th

Primary Election

Deadline to register July 20th

November 3rd

General Election

Deadline to register October 5th

Source:

<https://dos.myflorida.com/elections/for-voters/election-dates/>

League Thanks Harrison Theatre Department

Leaguers **Andy Crossfield**, **Trudy Corry Rankin**, **Eileen Swiler** and **Katy Pace Byrd** visited Harrison School for the Arts on January 16th to present the Theatre Department with an honorarium of \$500.

In a ceremony in the school rotunda, following remarks by Trudy and Andy, Acting Principal **Kevin LeVine** accepted the honorarium and praised the students and their teacher **Danelle Cauley** for their hard work—rehearsals over many months—and professionalism in regard to their performances of *The Remarkable Susan* on January 9th-11th.



Left: Trudy, Andy, and the Harrison Theatre Department

Bottom, L to R: Eileen, Trudy, Principal Levine, & Andy



Speakers Bureau Volunteers Wanted

League members who are willing to train on topics both current and sizzling hot in 2020 in Florida are urgently wanted! “League members willing to volunteer in [the] Speakers Bureau are in great demand. Using skills perfected in their professional lives or attained through experience and LWVFL training, speakers are provided with material and presentation guidelines.” (Source: www.lwvfl.org) Choose a topic from the list in which you are particularly interested, and contact Speakers Bureau Chair Trudy Rankin at trudycorryrankin@gmail.com for more information.

2020 Census*
Open Primaries*
Election Reform*
Banning Plastic Bags
Solar Energy
Voter Registration
Gun Safety

The Stolen Girls of Americus, Georgia

***The National LWV has prioritized these topics for 2020.**

Additional Committee and Action Team Chairs

Natural resources:

Climate action, Bill Foege,
wfoege@tampabay.rr.com
Banning plastic bags & straws in Polk County, Sharon Masters, see above

Juvenile justice, Andy Crossfield, see above

Voter registration, Larry Rankin, lallenr@gmail.com

Women's reproductive health, Eileen Swiler, see above

Speakers Bureau, Trudy Rankin,
trudycorryrankin@gmail.com

Healthcare, Catherine Price,
catprice2199@gmail.com

Immigration, Ivelisse De La Fe, ivelisse3@gmail.com

Education, open

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

Libraries, Lillian Blessing,
lillianblessing@gmail.com

Census, Mary Lee Duncan,
MLDMJKHPNS@aol.com

Don't Forget to 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.

Remembering the Play



Opening night audience



Sharon Masters & J. Lenora Bressler



A real courtroom set



Christina Cunningham & Garrett Finnan
(SBA & her lawyer Henry Selden)



Myrtice Young in period costume

SAVE THE DATE!

*LWV Annual Meeting & Luncheon
Thursday, May 14, 11:30 am - 1:30 pm
Grasslands Golf & Country Club
1600 Grasslands Boulevard, Lakeland, FL 33803
Watch your mailbox for your invitation!*

Herstory: The Founding of the League of Women Voters

Since 1920 we have been an activist, grassroots organization whose leaders believed that voters should play a critical role in democracy. The League of Women Voters was founded by Carrie Chapman Catt in 1920 during the convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association [in Chicago]. The convention was held just six months before the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, giving women the right to vote after a 72-year struggle.

The League began as a 'mighty political experiment' designed to help 20 million women carry out their new responsibilities as voters. It encouraged them to use their new power to participate in shaping public policy. From the beginning, the League has been an activist, grassroots organization whose leaders believed that citizens should play a critical role in advocacy.

It was then, and is now, a nonpartisan organization. League founders believed that maintaining a nonpartisan stance would protect the fledgling organization from becoming mired in the party politics of the day. However, League members were encouraged to be political themselves, by educating citizens about, and lobbying for, government and social reform legislation.

This holds true today. The League is proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public. The League has a long, rich history, that continues with each passing year." [Source: <https://www.lwv.org/about-us/history>]

LWV Polk will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the LWV on February 13th with a voter registration (VR) event in Munn Park from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm for the League's National Day of Action. We will be sharing commemorative carnations with election dates for 2020

The Classifieds

WANTED: Nominations!

The Nominating Committee is seeking your thoughtful suggestions regarding candidates for several officers and board members who will take office at our annual meeting on May 14th. Please contact committee chair Lisa Miller at lbmiller1101@yahoo.com.

The current board has proven to be a dynamic and hard-working group whose members actually look forward to monthly board meetings! If you yourself are interested in serving, or you know of a League member who would like to join the leadership of our great organization in this pivotal year, please don't hesitate to contact Lisa!

WANTED: Hot Topics Coordinator!

Hot Topics are monthly presentations by LWV Polk members on issues of great interest. Hot Topics are coordinated with Trudy Rankin, chair of the LWV Speakers Bureau. These educational talks fulfill part of the core mission of the League to educate voters. If you would like to handle this key area for the League, contact Jessie Gomez at jgomezlwv@gmail.com

Good news for the one who volunteers: Hot Topics speakers for several months in 2020 have already been selected, including February (Kristin Carlson on Election Reform—see calendar), April, and September.