

Calendar

July

July 3—Lakeland City Commission Meeting
July 3—Red, White & Kaboom
July 4—Independence Day
July 10—Winter Haven City Commission Meeting
July 17—Lakeland City Commission Meeting
July 24—Winter Haven City Commission Meeting
July 25—Polk County Public Schools Board Meeting
July 28—LWV Polk Board Meeting

August

August 7—Lakeland City Commission Meeting
August 14—Winter Haven City Commission Meeting
August 21—Lakeland City Commission Meeting
August 22—Polk County Public Schools Board Meeting
August 25—LWV Polk Board Meeting
August 26—Women's Equality Day
August 28—DEI Book Discussion Group
August 28—Winter Haven City Commission Meeting

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Need to contact the LWV Polk Board? Click on a name to send an email or email info@lwvpolk.org.

LWV Florida Issues New Voter Registration Guidance

Changes must be made as Senate Bill 7050 goes into effect July 1

At the end of June, LWV Florida finished discussions with its legal team on the best way for local Leagues to proceed registering voters once Senate Bill 7050 goes into effect on July 1. The bill brings new restrictions and requirements for third-party voter registration organizations (ours included).

Because of this, LWV Florida recommends the following, starting July 1:

- League members should register voters ELECTRONICALLY
- If unable to register voters electronically, League members should provide voters with an individual blank registration application and a pre-stamped envelope addressed to the Supervisor of Elections.
- It is vital that you do not collect the form or envelope once completed; voters must send in applications themselves (under the new bill).

We are still able to educate voters and advise them on the forms (for example, reminding them to write legibly). For further information from LWV Florida—including how to get certified to assist voters with registration—[view this helpful document](#).

LWV Co-Vice President Jessie Gomez Joins State Leadership

Three LWV Polk members—President Linda Donaldson, co-Vice President Jessie Gomez, and Jo Shim—all attended the LWV Florida State Convention in early June. It was there that Jessie was sworn in as a member of the



Board of Directors for LWV Florida (pictured above). Congratulations to Jessie and thank you to Linda, Jessie and Jo for representing LWV Polk!

Committees and Action Areas

COMMUNICATIONS

[Ashley Laurretta](#)

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI)

[Bobbie Boatwright Harris](#)

[Katy Pace Byrd](#)

EDUCATION

[Sarah Fortney](#)

GUN SAFETY

[Trudy Corry Rankin](#)

HEALTHCARE

[Paula Mims](#)

Reproductive Health and Justice:

[Eileen Swiler](#)

[Jo Shim](#)

MEMBERSHIP

[Linda Donaldson](#)

NATURAL RESOURCES

Open

Climate Action:

[Karen Freedman](#)

Plastics:

Open

NOMINATING (2024)

[Trudy Corry Rankin](#)

[Paula Mims](#)

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Open

SPEAKERS BUREAU

[Trudy Corry Rankin](#)

VOTER SERVICES

[Jo Shim](#)

Returning Citizens Restoration Rights:

[Larry Rankin](#)

Need to contact an LWV Polk committee chair? Click on a name to send an email.

Want to fill an open committee chair position? Email info@lwvpolk.org for more information.

Follow us on social media



Over 240,000 Signatures Gathered to Protect Florida's Abortion Access

Nearly a quarter of the signatures needed have been gathered in just two months



Reproductive Health and Justice subcommittee Chairs Jo Shim and Eileen Swiler recently joined a march in Lakeland one year after Roe v. Wade was overturned

Led by our Reproductive Health and Justice subcommittee, LWV Polk has joined statewide efforts to get abortion rights on Florida's 2024 general election ballot.

The ballot initiative launched in May by Floridians Protecting Freedom has already gathered over 240,000 signatures, with LWV Polk contributing over 200 petitions to the efforts (63 were collected at Pride in the Park!).

Volunteers for the petition drive are still welcome; contact reproductivehealth@lwvpolk.org for more information.



- Stephanie Buck
- Jennifer Cordova
- Diane Hurles
- Donna Jones
- Trinity Laurino
- Judy Lee
- Laura Milton
- Debora Misch
- Breannen Shim

Action Alley

Gun Safety Committee Begins Distributing Gun Locks in Polk County

750 gun locks have been handed out so far at various events and to the Sheriff's Office

The Gun Safety committee, led by Chair Trudy Rankin, has begun meeting regularly and gotten to work quickly since the formation of the group. They have begun working with the Polk County Sheriff's Office to educate gun owners, and provided 500 gun locks for the department to distribute.

**IT'S EASIER TO
CHILD-PROOF YOUR GUN
THAN BULLET-PROOF YOUR CHILD**

Keep an eye out for these bumper stickers around Polk County

Additionally, 1,000 bumper stickers (pictured) were ordered and are being distributed at events around Polk County along with the gun locks.

The committee is beginning to partner with day care centers in the area to hand out flyers and gun locks to families with the goal of keeping guns secure in homes. It is seeking volunteers who can drive and deliver gun locks as needed around the county. If interested, email gunsafety@lwvpolk.org to sign up.

DEI Book Discussion Group Wraps Third Season

First fall meeting will take place August 28

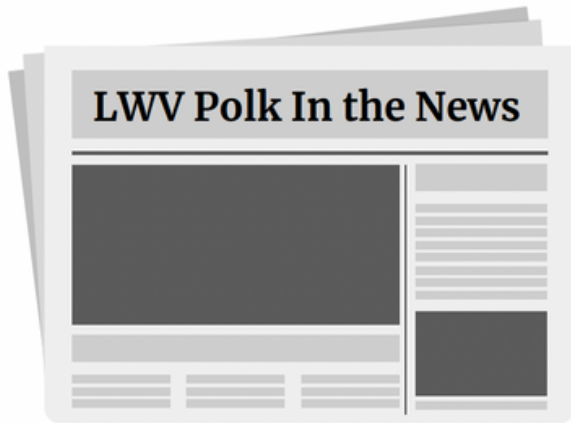
Bobbie Boatwright Harris concluded the DEI Book Discussion Group's 2022-2023 season (the third!) by leading a seminar based on her experiences of growing up Black in South Carolina and New Jersey. Members of the group also read essays from [You Don't Know Us Negroes](#), a recently published collection of little-known pieces by Zora Neale Hurston, who grew up in the all-Black town of Eatonville, Florida. Local group members met in person for a gala potluck lunch on June 22 at the home of Katy Pace Byrd.

During the month of July, volunteer reviewers from among the group will be looking at suggestions for fall, focused mainly on the memoir form as a way to hear some important voices from communities not considered in depth in the past. Their first fall meeting will be at noon on Monday, August 28 via Zoom, with the book selection TBA by the end of July. Contact DEI@lwvpolk.org for more information.



This bi-monthly newsletter is sent to all members of the League of Women Voters of Polk County. If you know of a member not receiving our email communications, have them write to info@lwvpolk.org and we will update their preferences. While non-members won't receive our members-only communications, they can opt to receive our newsletter for League updates.

For more regular news and photos, [follow us on Facebook](#) and be sure to like and share our posts.



LWV Polk has been busy the past few months and even garnered some news coverage, both locally and nationally, Click the links below to read more!

- [HCR4US April Newsletter](#): Moms with Monitors was featured in the April issue of the LWVUS healthcare newsletter!
- [WFLA-TV](#): The Tampa-based station was at Polk Pride and interviewed member Andy Crossfield about getting reproductive rights on the ballot and our gun safety efforts.

Returning Citizens Restoration Rights Postcard Campaign is Underway

Volunteers are welcome to join the Returning Citizens Restoration Rights subcommittee for its postcard campaign that is currently in full swing. The postcards inform returning citizens how to make contact with a pro-bono lawyer who can assist in establishing full voting rights.

To join the efforts, email Chair Larry Rankin at votingrights@lwvpolk.org.

LWV Polk Active in Pride Month Events

Members attended both Pride in the Park and the school board meeting to support our local LGBTQIA+ community



Photo provided by Andy Crossfield

During Pride Month, LWV Polk members were busy supporting our local LGBTQIA+ community. LGBTQIA+ rights are an important part of our DEI initiatives throughout the year.

On June 15, over a dozen members attended the Polk County Public Schools board meeting after superintendent Heid decided last minute to postpone the Pride Proclamation.

Then, on June 17, members gathered at Pride in the Park, where we had a table to educate voters and distribute gun locks.