

Calendar

- June 14 – Flag Day
- June 15 – Closing the Gap (LWVFL President Cecile Scoon on FL Supreme Court redistricting decision) via Zoom
- June 18 – Lakeland Juneteenth EV Show (3 p.m. - 6 p.m.)
- June 19 – Juneteenth and Father's Day
- June 20 – Juneteenth observed and DEI book club (*American Spy* by Lauren Wilkinson or *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett) via Zoom
- June 22 – Closing the Gap (Larry Rankin on 'Fresh Ideas of Voter Education and Registration') via Zoom
- June 23 – DEI potluck lunch
- June 24 – Board Meeting

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*Terms end in 2024, all others end in 2023.
Need to contact the LWV Polk Board?
Click on a name to send an email.

LWV Polk Prioritizes Gun Safety Committee, led by Andy Crossfield, holds first meeting in wake of recent mass shootings

The Gun Safety committee held its first meeting June 1 via Zoom. The special guest speaker was Patricia Brigham, past LWVFL president and current president of the non-profit organization [Prevent Gun Violence Florida](#).

"It is time—well past time—for lawmakers at the federal and state level to implement smart gun control reform." —[Prevent Gun Violence Florida](#)

Patricia alerted the group to legislation to be debated that would eliminate licensing restrictions on those wanting to carry firearms. Governor DeSantis has called this effort 'Constitutional Carry' but most law enforcement leaders are opposed, as passage would eliminate the fingerprint and background check now required of concealed carry applicants.

The Gun Safety committee is chaired by Andy Crossfield, who is looking for interested members and will craft a series of Zoom meetings to discuss the strategy, focus and events for the committee in the coming months. If you would like to participate, please contact Andy at info@lwvpolk.org.

Passing the Torch



Katy Pace Byrd and Ashley Lauretta

Not only do we have a new face running the newsletter—it got a facelift. If you haven't met me yet, my name is Ashley Lauretta. A new Lakeland resident, I'm a freelance writer and editor by day (and if the last name sounds familiar, it's because I am Treasurer Terry Lauretta's daughter-in-law). I'm thrilled to take the reins from the incomparable Katy Pace Byrd; don't worry, you'll still see plenty of her as she shifts her focus to continuing DEI initiatives, like the book club.

Join me in thanking Katy Pace Byrd for her years of work on the newsletter.

Committees and Action Areas

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI)

[Bobbie Boatwright Harris](#)

[Katy Pace Byrd](#)

EDUCATION

Open

GUN SAFETY

[Andy Crossfield](#)

HEALTHCARE

[Paula Mims](#)

IMMIGRATION

Open

JUVENILE JUSTICE

[Andy Crossfield](#)

LIBRARIES

[Lillian Blessing](#)

MEDIA

[Jerry Weeks](#)

MEMBERSHIP

[Linda Donaldson](#)

NATURAL RESOURCES

Climate Action:

[Karen Freedman](#)

Plastics:

[Sharon Masters](#)

NEWSLETTER

[Ashley Lauretta](#)

NOMINATING (2023)

[Sue Schultz](#)

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND JUSTICE

[Eileen Swiler](#)

SPEAKERS BUREAU

[Trudy Rankin](#)

VOTER OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

[Linda Donaldson](#)

VOTER REGISTRATION

Open

Returning Citizens Voter Registration

Subcommittee:

[Andy Crossfield](#)

Need to contact an LWV Polk Committee

Chair? Click on a name to send an email.

LWVFL Suit Will Not Be Heard by Florida Supreme Court

June 15 Closing the Gap event featuring LWVFL President Cecile Scoon will help answer: Now what?

Earlier this month, the Florida Supreme Court declined to hear a suit brought by the LWVFL, [Black Voters Matter](#), [Florida Rising](#) and [Equal Ground](#) to prevent the use of a redistricting map crafted by Governor DeSantis. You can read the joint statement issued after the decision was announced [here](#).

This means the ruling will be sent back to the lower court and the Governor's map will be used in the November 2022 general election. This, of course, is a setback to those of us hoping for equal representation in the politicized process of redistricting.

LWV Polk has the honor of hosting LWVFL President Cecile Scoon for Closing the Gap on Wednesday, June 15 at noon on Zoom to discuss what the LWVFL proposes now.

Later, on June 22, Closing the Gap will feature Larry Rankin, with a discussion on 'Fresh Ideas of Voter Education and Registration.'

Welcome
New Members

Philip Allen
Lynn Mawhinney
April Robinson

LWV Celebrates Pride Month

National office creates logo to celebrate the LGBTQIA+ community



[Pride Month](#) is here and is celebrated in June to commemorate the gay rights movement that arose from the Stonewall Uprising in 1969. Here in Lakeland, [Polk Pride](#) will be taking place from June 11-18, culminating in family-friendly [Pride in the Park](#) at Munn Park on June 18 from 10 a.m.- 3 p.m.

Action Alley

Inaugural Drive Electric Earth Day Lakeland Educates Visitors on Reducing Emissions



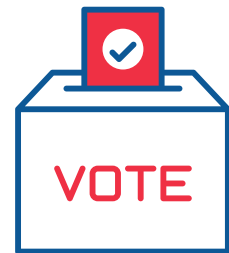
Photo by Karen Freedman

On April 23, eleven electric vehicle (EV) and plug-in hybrid vehicle (PHEV) owners came together for Lakeland's first ever electric vehicle outreach event, which also featured an electric bicycle. You can read a full recap of the event [here](#); the second annual event is scheduled for April 22, 2023. Congrats to Karen Freedman and Kathie Sutherland, who served as co-captains of the event!

Following on its heels is the upcoming Lakeland Juneteenth EV Show on June 18 from 3 p.m.-6 p.m. at the Coleman-Bush Building.

Upcoming 2022 Election Dates

- The deadline to register for the primary election is **July 9**.
- Vote-by-Mail ballots for the primary election will be sent to domestic voters **July 14-21** and they must be returned by **August 13**.
- Early voting for the primary election will be held **August 13-20**.



Primary Election: August 23
General Election: November 8

For more information, visit the [Polk County Supervisor of Elections](#).

LWV Polk Meets with Local Organizations to Utilize Grant Funds

The [Polk County Voters' League](#) has been leading meetings with LWV Polk, the [NAACP](#) and [Phi Beta Sigma](#) to discuss how to utilize three grants that must be used for education, incentives and training on the redistricting process. LWV Polk needs members to attend future meetings to gather information and show support. Contact Jessie at jgomezlwv@gmail.com for information.

The deadline for project completion of all three grants is September 15, 2022.

The Classifieds

Calling All Readers!

Since June 2020, LWV Polk has sponsored a bi-weekly diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) book discussion group, which meets midday on Mondays. That group continues to learn and thrive! We'd like to gauge interest in a group that might meet after work hours to discuss books like Ibram X. Kendi's *How to Be an Antiracist* or Isabel Wilkerson's *Caste*.

Please contact Katy Pace Byrd at byrdkp@gmail.com if you might be interested, and if you can, let her know whether late afternoon (5 p.m.-6 p.m. or 5:30p.m.-6:30 p.m.) or early evening (6 p.m.-7 p.m. or 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.) would be better for you. Katy and other members of the current midday group would be glad to meet via Zoom with anyone interested to offer resources and answer questions. Let's expand our knowledge of racism and its impact on our country!

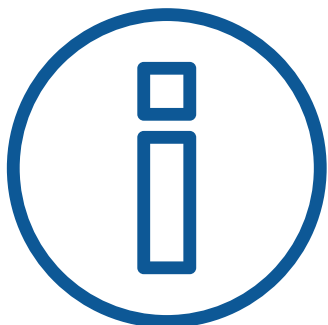


Call for Volunteers

Volunteers and electric vehicle owners are needed for the **Lakeland Juneteenth EV Show** on Saturday, June 18 from 3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. at the Coleman-Bush Building. To volunteer, email Karen Freedman at kefreedman@hotmail.com.

Committee Chairs Wanted

Three committee chairs are vacant: Education, 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.



Suggested Reading from Around the Web

- The Supreme Court could overturn *Roe v. Wade* in the coming days. [This interview from NPR](#) discusses what life may look like post-Roe.
- The House Committee is listening to testimony on gun violence. [Follow along with the New York Times](#).