



Upcoming Events

March 6th

BOD meeting,
noon, 4005 Cheverly Drive
East, Lakeland

March 8th

Daylight Savings Time begins

March 10th

Purim

March 15th

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

March 17th

Presidential Preference
Primary Election, polls open 7
am-7pm

March 17th

"History of Women's Suffrage"
presented by Dr. Sharon
Masters, noon, Polk County
History Center, 100 East Main
Street, Bartow

March 23rd

Deadline for April newsletter
information to
byrdkp@gmail.com

April 1st

Census Day

April 3rd (tentative)

BOD meeting

April 16th

"The Woman's Suffrage
Movement in Polk County"
presented by Jennifer
Houghton Canady, 6:30 pm,
Kathleen Historical Society,
8950 North Campbell Rd,
Lakeland

2020 Census: Getting a Complete Count

Note: The editor interviewed Mary Lee Duncan, chair of our census committee, who can be contacted at MLDMJKHPNS@aol.com.

Mary Lee, thanks for taking on the leadership of this committee for LWV Polk! Please tell us a little about what's going on, and what your committee is doing.

We are focused on getting information out to traditionally under-responding areas in Polk County and setting up contacts in these communities to encourage and facilitate responses. Presentations to civic groups, one-on-one contacts with civic leaders, and church congregations, and flyers at public transportation stops and transfer points are some of the efforts we are making to get the word out.

What is new about the 2020 census? One thing is that participants have the option to answer online. The other choices are telephone and paper-based questionnaires. By the way, participants can mail their completed paper questionnaires back postage free.

What would you tell folks who are worried that their personal information won't be protected? On the info mailed to each house address is a security code to be used for internet and telephone responses. The code is **unique to the address** and **not** to a specific individual. There is no citizenship question, and responses are confidential and won't be available to the public until 2092. A census worker will actually visit the address only if a response is not made by one of the three methods by mid-May.

Mid-May? When does the 2020 census start? Most Polk County residents will receive information on how to be counted by mail to their address in mid-March. April 1st is the official start date, and is known as Census Day. *(continued on p. 4)*

LWV Polk Annual Dues for 2020-2021

Don't forget to 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**

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Vice president, Andy Crossfield,
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 Sharon Masters,
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SPOTLIGHT ON 2020

March 17th
 Presidential Preference Primary Election
 (Deadline to register was February 18th. Absentee ballots have already been mailed out and must be received by the Supervisor of Elections no later than 7 pm, March 17th.)

August 18th
 Primary Election for other offices
 Deadline to register July 20th

November 3rd
 General Election
 Deadline to register October 5th

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

February 17th, 2020: Lakeland City Commission Proclaims “Women’s Right to Vote” Day



Leaguers and city officials at the commission meeting, including **John and Saranya Wing, Andy Crossfield, Jessie Gomez, and Bill Foege**. **Kudos to Sharon Masters** (also pictured) on bringing this about. In January and February, **Juanita Zwaryczuk** (above right, pictured in full costume!) made presentations to three civic groups on the history of women’s suffrage, and in addition had an article appear in the Lake Wales News on February 19th. Kudos! Thanks for **Jerry Weeks** for the commission photos.

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.

**What's YOUR Story?
Inquiring Minds Want to Know!**

The League's dual mission of educating and advocating has reached the century mark this year! To celebrate the event, we are planning a special program for our annual meeting on May 14th. "She Is Me" is the theme, with the purpose of helping to connect the lives and challenges of the women who began the League one hundred years ago to the lives of our members today. To do that, we want to present stories of everyday, purposeful women and men in our organization!

Advancing our mission still occurs each day in acts large and small. Maybe you counseled your daughter or son, spoke on women's issues or history at a school, organized a voter registration drive, or enlightened a friend about a cause or issue. Maybe you have even run for public office. Or maybe you admire someone for his or her work in the community.

Participating is easy, and it starts with your story. Please contact us today at: info@lwvpolk.org

Board and Climate Action Team News

Rick Garrity, Bill Foege, Charlene Bennett, Karen Freedman, and John Wing of our climate action team made a special presentation to the LWV Polk board at its last meeting on the so far unsuccessful, but ongoing campaign to urge Lakeland Electric to replace old and failing Unit 3 power plant with solar installations rather than a natural gas plant. Other communities in Florida are very much ahead of Lakeland in such conversions. Lakeland Electric's policies seem to be based on a bias against solar, blocking removal of the company's several consumer disincentives to go solar.

Be it known that the LWV Polk board welcomes any and all members to attend our monthly board meetings! Usually at noon on the first Friday of every month, meetings are currently being held at the Byrds' house, 4005 Cheverly Dr E, Lakeland.

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!*

Census Interview with Mary Lee Duncan (continued from p. 1)

Why should people be sure to get counted? So many decisions will be made based on data from the census! These decisions will affect every single one of us and our communities. Everything from the amount of federal funding for our Polk County schools, hospitals, roads, and bridges, to how many representatives Florida can send to the U. S. House of Representatives depends on our having a full count!

What are you most concerned about in this regard? We know that some constituents (Hispanic, elderly, economically disadvantaged, and transient people) may be under-counted, partly because they may be less tech-savvy. Response centers will be located in corresponding areas to help with support and data entry. Also, three Lakeland public library locations have offered to provide computer assistance to those needing help to respond via the internet. Hopefully, some other library locations in the county will follow suit. I want to stress again that information collected in this census is confidential and cannot be used by the government for any purpose other than statistics.

Anything else, Mary Lee? Yes, if you have questions about the process, you can contact any of LWV Polk Census 2020 committee members: **Charlene Bennett, Sue Schultz, Ann Weeks, Nancy Simmons**, or me. Or you can visit <https://2020census.gov>.

Image of the listing for Susan B. Anthony and her sister Mary from the 1900 Census. Though the image is too small to read here, her profession is described as "woman suffrage."
Source:
https://www.census.gov/history/www/genealogy/decennial_census_records/famous_and_infamous_census_records.html

The Classifieds

WANTED: Your Stories!
 Send the herstories of someone you know who has done something in her (or his) community to advance League issues or issues affecting women to info@lwvpolk.org. And remember, that person might be you! See page 3.

WANTED: Hot Topics Coordinator!
 Hot Topics are monthly presentations on issues of interest. Hot Topics are coordinated with Speakers Bureau chair Trudy Rankin. These talks fulfill part of the mission of the League to educate voters. Volunteer to handle this key area for the League, and contact Jessie Gomez at jgomezlwv@gmail.com.