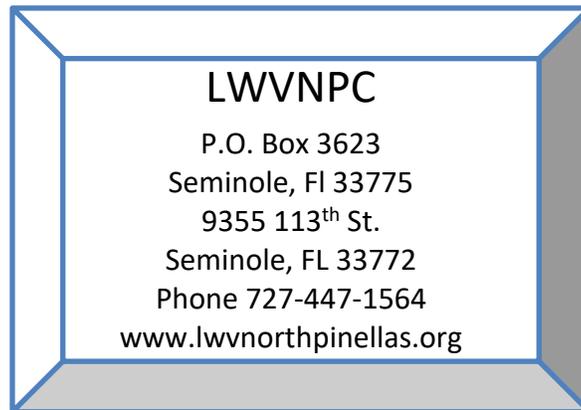


OCTOBER 2018 VOTER

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OFFICERS & DIRECTORS  
2018-2020

Karen Karinja, President  
Beth Hovind, Second Vice President  
Gayla Larson, Treasurer

Directors 2018-2020

Anne Bokneberg  
Marti Folwell  
Judy McSwine  
Stephanie Bolden

Continuing Officers & Directors 2017-2019

Eliseo Santana, First Vice-President/ Membership  
Vicki Cohen, Secretary  
Whit Blanton, Strategic Planning  
Peggy Toohey, *The Voter*

Nominating Committee Chair 2019

Barbara Letvin

Off Board Chairs

Pona Piekarski, Education  
David Sillman, Environment/Natural Resources

*The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy.*



## LWV North Pinellas 2018-19 Calendar Meetings and Voter Information

October 4	Thursday	10:00 am	VR at The Oaks of Clearwater
October 4	Thursday	5:30 pm	Webinar on TANF and SNAP (Food Stamps) - Cindi Huddleston,
October 8	Monday		Mail Ballots go out
		1 – 3 pm	Freedom Square Independent Living – Amendment Presentation
October 9	Tuesday		Voter Registration deadline (“closing date”) for November 6 election
October 17	Wednesday		Wednesday Poverty/Health/Juvenile Justice Committee, Contact Beth Hovin, bethse@gmail.com, 727-809-1686 for time and place.
October 19	Friday		Volunteer arrival at 6:45 am for Candidates’ Forum, Dunedin CC
October 19	Friday	7 – 8:30 am	Candidate Forum, Dunedin DCO Candidate Forum
October 29	Monday	12:00 noon	Speaker with PowerPoint, Rotary Club of Dunedin, Church of Good Shepherd, contact Sallie Parks, 727-742-5555
November 1	Thursday	5:30 pm	Webinar on Florida MEDICAID, Amy Guinan Liem, Florida Legal Services
November 2	Friday	5 – 8 pm	Celebrating 70 Pre-Election Reception & Fundraiser, Fenway Hotel
November 5	Monday	2:00 pm	International Relations, <i>Global Health Progress and Challenges</i> , Pinellas Park Library, 7750 52 <sup>nd</sup> Street, Pinellas Park, FL
November 6	Tuesday		National General Election
November 11 – December 19			Leadership Conference in Orlando, FL
November 21	Monday		Poverty/Health/Juvenile Justice Committee, Contact Beth Hovin, bethse@gmail.com, 727-809-1686 for time and place.
December 3	Monday	2:00 pm	International Relations, <i>South Africa’s Fragile Democracy</i> , Pinellas Park Library, 7750 52 <sup>nd</sup> St., Pinellas Park

## 2019

January 11-12 2019	Leadership Conference in Orlando
March	Women’s History month
April 9-10 2019	Legislative Summit at State Capitol in Tallahassee
April 27 2019	LWVNPC Annual Meeting, Countryside CC
June 22 2019	LWVFL Convention in Naples at Edison Center



## Launching Our 70<sup>th</sup> Year

Preparations are being finalized to kick off our chapter's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary and fundraiser to be held on November 2, 2018, from 5-7 PM at the Fenway Hotel in Dunedin. Patti Brigham, president of the Florida LWV, will recognize our life members who have been affiliated with the LWV for more than 50 years. They are **Lola Brett, Marti Folwell, Virginia Howie, Fay Law, and Kathleen Woods Masalski**. Amy Hollyfield, Deputy Managing Editor of the Tampa Bay Times, will be our keynote speaker. This celebration includes LWV members and friends, along with community leaders including candidates and office holders. Seating is limited.

Guests attending the reception will be among the first to witness the transformation of the Fenway's Caladesi Ballroom. The women who founded what was then called the Clearwater Chapter of the LWV met at the Fenway almost 70 years ago, so it is fitting that we celebrate their efforts in the same location. This time members and guests will sample gourmet hors d'oeuvres created by an award-winning chef, as well as an array of cheese displays, sliced meats and desserts and finish the evening with 'a toast to the vote'.

The anniversary kick-off is a fundraiser for the chapter and our Education Foundation and offers a way to promote the chapter in the community. The planning committee, which started to meet in 2017, is proud that major sponsors include the *Tampa Bay Times* and The Fenway. The group has continued to solicit ads, sponsorships and donations. **Miriam Benitez-Nixon** is preparing an attractive program to recognize those who have supported the chapter's event. Guests will be able to bid on several gift baskets during the silent auction, some of which come directly from donors and others that will be prepared by **Gayla Larson**. Gayla has also organized and mailed invitations as well as tracked donations, ticket sales, and other income and expenses. **Anne Bokneberg**, the event's social media expert on Facebook, was responsible for overseeing the design of the invitation. She has continued to update public and membership Facebook pages on a regular basis. **Bill Jonson**, League member and Clearwater City Council member, has secured proclamations from some of the neighboring towns in north Pinellas. **Kathleen Woods Masalski** originally suggested we try to book the Fenway Hotel. **Kathy, Beth Hovind** and **Barbara Letvin** rejoined the planning committee after a summer break. **Karen Karinja**, chapter president, has hosted all committee meetings at her home and worked as liaison between the national and state LWV organizations.

Silent auction items include various vintages from the Boisset Collection in Napa Valley, tickets to the Florida Orchestra, Busch Gardens, Florida Aquarium, as well as gift baskets from Dillard's and Macy's, an in-home wine tasting, dinner gift certificates and more. Those who still wish to purchase tickets can go to [Eventbrite.com](http://Eventbrite.com) and type 'Celebrating 70' or make a check payable to LWVNP, PO Box 3624, Seminole, FL 33775. Come join our celebration and 'toast the vote'! But remember, tickets are limited and going fast. So please act fast!



# ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

## Environmental Action Group Fall 2018 Update

We are a new group and still evolving! We have four focus area and are making progress in each – read below for reasons to join us!

### **Focus Area 1: Ensure voters know candidate’s position on environmental issues.**

1. With St. Pete Chapter submitted Pinellas-county specific questions to local candidates for inclusion in Voter Guide.
2. Compiled list of questions regarding environmental issues for upcoming forums.
3. Assist in voter registrations.

### **Focus Area 2: Assist in local environmental activities to reduce single-use plastics.**

1. Investigating local efforts to lend hand: Sierra Club, Suncoast Rise Above Plastics
2. With Keep Pinellas Beautiful efforts to recycle campaign signs.

### **Focus Area 3: Educate members**

1. Developing best practices
2. Field Trips
3. Speaker Series
4. Identify and share emerging issues
5. Tidal Town Hall coming to Clearwater!
6. Seek ways to encourage and assist local governments to implement environmentally friendly efforts: traffic solutions, recycle, Florida Forever, etc.

### **Focus Area 4: Encourage Renewable & Sustainable Energy**

1. Encourage solar cooperatives and communicate availability
2. Identify means for public facilities to go solar
3. Investigate availability for apartment and condominiums to support solar panels
4. Encourage environmentally friendly transport: electric cars, bicycles, buses

Thank you for reducing, re-using and then recycling.

Informed and Active Citizen  
Participation

**POVERTY ACTION WEBINAR: 5:30 PM THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2018**

**Topic: TANF AND SNAP: Temporary Aid for Needy Families in Florida; and Food Stamps-Florida style**

Registration link for 10/4 webinar: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7643903084388592641>

**Presenter: Cindi Huddleston, Staff Attorney for Florida Legal Services  
Norin Dollard will be hosting this conference.**

As a staff attorney for the past 19 years, Cindi is responsible for public advocacy in the areas of TANF and Snap. Prior to that she was Senior Attorney with Legal Services of Greater Miami. She has represented clients, conducted trainings and co-counseled rules challenges in the program. She has received awards from the Florida Bar Foundation and is a Reginald Heber Smith Fellow.

She brings her vast experience to our task force to bring us:

- a brief history of the programs
- benefit changes over time
- percentage of eligible clients actually receiving benefits and the value received
- areas where the state of Florida has influence over the program
- suggestions for League advocacy.

With Cindi's vast knowledge and experience, we can expect a greater understanding on how our welfare system works and doesn't work. Her presentation will be a Webinar so sign on with your computers. Afterwards the Power Point will be available at the LWVFL for the use of all members of the League.

If you are not registered with the Poverty Action Team, you can do so by contacting the state office.

**POVERTY ACTION TEAM: WEBINAR: 5:30 PM, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2018**

**TOPIC: MEDICAID**

Registration link for 11/1 webinar: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8654109079221750017>

**PRESENTER: Amy Guinan Liam, Staff Attorney for Florida Legal Services**

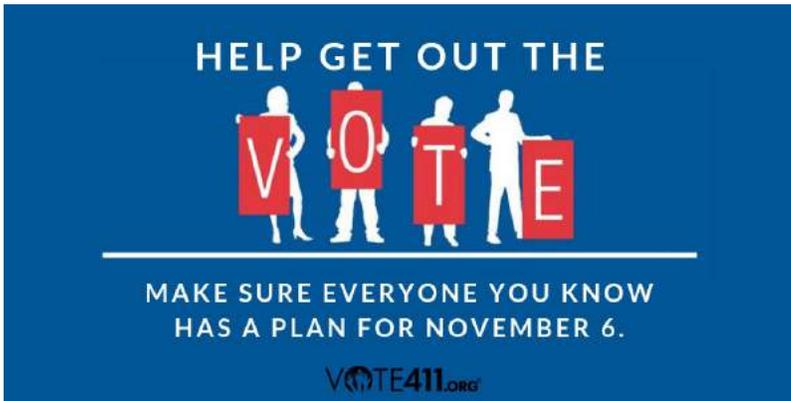
Amy has been an attorney with Florida Legal Services for the past 11 years and is currently serving as the organization's Director of Policy and Advocacy. Prior to this she led the FL Legal Services' Children's Advocacy Project and specialized in children's access to health care. She also previously served as the Legislative Counsel for the Academy of Florida Trial Lawyers, as Director of Public Policy and Advocacy for the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, and as staff attorney for the Florida House of Representatives' Committee on Health Care Services, among other titles.

Amy will be discussing:

- a brief history of the program
- benefit changes over time
- percentage of low income covered
- areas where the state legislature can and has influenced the program
- suggestions for League advocacy

With Amy's vast knowledge and experience, we can expect to come away with a greater understanding of how our Medicaid does and does not work. Her presentation will be on Webinar so sign on with your computer. Afterwards the PowerPoint will be available at the LWVFL for the use of all members.

If you are not registered with the Poverty Action Team, you can do so by contacting the state office.



## Positions on the 2018 Amendments as listed by the Florida League of Women Voters

Below are the many constitutional amendments which will be appearing on the ballot in November, along with explanations and the positions taken by the League of Women Voters. The President of the League, Patricia Brigham, explained:

“As you know, this year's amendment count is higher than usual due to those submitted by the Constitution Revision Commission.

“The board examined every amendment that voters will decide on and determined positions on each. The bundling of topics within amendments presented a challenge, but the board weighed already established League positions heavily in their decisions.

“Below you will find brief descriptions of each amendment and the board's position. We hope this clarifies any remaining questions you might have.”

**Amendment 1** - Amendment placed on the ballot by legislation to increase the amount of a home's value exempted from property tax

LWVFL position: Oppose. The League has a position that "no tax sources or revenue should be specified, limited, exempted, or prohibited in the Constitution."

**Amendment 2** - Amendment placed on the ballot by legislation that makes the cap on non-homestead parcel assessment increases permanent.

LWVFL position: Oppose (same reasoning as Amendment 1).

**Amendment 3** - Amendment placed on the ballot via citizen initiative that requires approval of any new casino gambling through a citizen initiative constitutional amendment, effectively barring the Legislature from making gambling decisions by passing laws.

LWVFL position: Support. It restricts casino gambling and allows Florida voters to make any decisions regarding increases of casino gambling, consistent with League position against gambling. This amendment is also supported by No Casinos, Inc. and Disney. .

**Amendment 4** - Amendment placed on the ballot via citizen initiative that automatically restores the voting rights of felons after they've completed their sentences, except for those convicted of murder or sex offenses

LWVFL position: Support. The League was one of the sponsors of this initiative. Florida is one of only four states that permanently bars felons from voting after their sentences are completed. This restriction on voting is a vestige of Florida's post-Civil War Constitution. Everyone deserves a second chance.

**Amendment 5** - Amendment placed on the ballot by legislation that requires a two-thirds vote of the Legislature to approve any new or increased taxes or fees.

Now those same politicians and their big business funders are doubling down by asking Floridians to approve Amendment 5. **Amendment 5 would require a two thirds super-majority vote to eliminate any of the existing corporate tax advantages.** That means that a handful of politicians and their corporate cronies could block any attempt to make corporations pay their fair share. **Amendment 5 — which will be on your November 6 ballot — would make it nearly impossible to eliminate big business tax loopholes and tax breaks.**

LWVFL position: Oppose, as in 2012 when a similar amendment was on the ballot. This amendment does not include a provision that would allow for tax increases in times of emergencies (hurricane, floods, recession, etc.) and is an abrogation of the Legislature's fiduciary responsibility to pass a reasonable budget.

***The next eight amendments are all from the CRC:***

**Amendment 6** – Vastly expands the scope of victims’ rights under the state Constitution; increases the mandatory retirement age for judges from 70 to 75; forces courts and judges to interpret laws and rules for themselves rather than rely on interpretations by government agencies.

LWVFL position: Oppose. Victims' rights are already protected in the Constitution, and this amendment would eliminate an existing provision that victims' rights do not interfere with the constitutional rights of the accused.

**Amendment 7** - Creates a supermajority requirement for universities to impose new or increase existing student fees, enshrines in the Constitution guidelines for the State College System, mandates that the state pay a death benefit to first responders or members of the military killed in the line of duty.

LWVFL position: Oppose. We oppose a supermajority vote to increase fees or taxes. Family members of the military who die in the line of service are already compensated through the federal government.

**Amendment 8** -.Removed by the Florida Courts

**Amendment 9** - Prohibits oil and gas drilling beneath all waters controlled by Florida and prohibits vaping in enclosed indoor workplaces.

LWVFL position: Support. Our concern for the environment overrides our concern about putting vaping in the Constitution. We also believe that if this amendment passes, it sends a signal to the federal government that Florida cares about off-shore drilling.

**Amendment 10** - Requires the Legislature to hold its session in early January on even numbered years, creates an Office of Domestic Security and Counter-terrorism, mandates the existence of a state Department of Veteran Affairs, and forces all counties (both charter and non-charter) to elect rather than appoint all constitutional officers.

LWVFL position: Oppose. This limits the voters in local communities from deciding on the election of county officers. It adds an unnecessary provision as the Legislature already has the power to set dates during even numbered years. FDLE is already the lead agency in coordinating efforts to prevent terrorism, and the Constitution already has authorized the Legislature to create a Department of Veteran Affairs. This amendment is clearly an effort to restrict the powers of local government.

**Amendment 11** - Repeals the state's ability to prohibit non-citizens from buying, owning, and selling property; deletes a provision that forces the state to prosecute criminal suspects under a law that has become obsolete; deletes obsolete language regarding high speed rail in Florida.

LWVFL position: No position. Although we think that removing obsolete language is a good thing, there is a lot of other obsolete language that is not being addressed. Although the first issue regarding the ability of non-citizens to purchase and sell property cannot be enforced, the provision that requires criminal suspects to be prosecuted for an obsolete law should be changed.

**Amendment 12** - Expands ethics rules for elected officials and government employees by changing from 2 to 6 years the time that they would have to wait before being able to lobby state government.

LWVFL position: No position. Although there is need for lobbying reform, we felt that six years might be onerous, and this amendment does not address the real issue regarding lobbying, which is the impact of money in political campaigns.

**Amendment 13** - Bans wagering on any type of dog racing, notably greyhounds, by Dec. 31, 2020, while continuing to allow dog tracks to offer other types of gambling, including poker rooms.

LWVFL position: Support. This is primarily a gambling issue, and the League has held a consistent position against gambling.