



# THE VOTER **LWV**

*The official newsletter  
of the League of Women  
Voters North Pinellas*

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## MARCH-APRIL 2022

### NAACP Candidates' Forum

LWVNP members gathered March 1<sup>st</sup> in Clearwater to support the NAACP Candidates Forum at the Martin Luther King Jr. Neighborhood Center. Pictured from Left to Right: Ruthann Richwine, Doris Reeves-Lipscomb, Bill Jonson, and Tanya Landry



### More LWVNPC Members in Action



Member Dave Silliman with co-author Sarah Matthes Edwards wrote a column for the Tampa Bay Times: *“Legislature’s attempt to kill booming solar industry an attack on economy, consumer choice”* on February 15, 2022. Dave is also the Clean Energy Committee Chair of the Suncoast Sierra Club.



LWNPC President Bill Jonson was quoted in an article which appeared in the Tampa Bay Times on March 8<sup>th</sup>, "In next week's election, Clearwater voters poised to surpass 2018 turnout. *"Voting in a local municipal election probably has more impact on the citizens of that precinct than some of the state elections,"* Bill Jonson, president of the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County, also said the nonpartisan group has been encouraging voter participation by advocating for mail ballots as "an easy, safe and secure way to vote."

Joe Nixon, Miriam Benitez-Nixon, Jacqueline Farrell, Mary Harper, Barbara Letvin, and Ruthanne Richwine distributed copies of Voter Guides and Vote by Mail Reminder Cards in low-voting precincts in the Tarpon Springs and Clearwater areas in preparation for municipal elections on March 15<sup>th</sup>. Materials were offered to local libraries, businesses, apartment complexes, and churches. Thanks to the Voter Service Committee, led by Doris Reeves Lipscomb for spearheading this initiative.

Ruthanne Richwine organized three voter registration opportunities to attract young voters at Faith United Church of Christ in Dunedin opposite Dunedin High School.



Ruthanne Richwine, Fran Mitchell, Miriam Benitez-Nixon, Martha Mullinax, Jacqueline Farrell

## New Member Orientation and Social April 3, 2022, at Anderson Park



On a beautiful Sunday afternoon, nineteen people gathered in Anderson Park to talk about the League and get to know each other. There was a lot of positive energy in the air as people spoke of their passions, talents, hopes and concerns. Kathy Smith did her usual bang-up job of organizing and presenting, and Vivian Posey supplied the best cookies in North Pinellas.

**Welcome New Members:** Julie Funk, Mina Harkin, Mike and Valerie Hughes, Laura Jackson, Fran Mitchell, Pamela and Charles Stiers. We all welcome you aboard!!



## Julie Marcus, Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections Visits East Lake Library

By Jacqueline Farrell

On April 13<sup>th</sup> Julie Marcus, Supervisor of Elections for Pinellas County, accompanied by Dustin Chase, Deputy Supervisor of Elections, gave a presentation at East Lake Community Library. Six LWVNPC members were in attendance. Supervisor Marcus opened by saying the presentation would be entirely question-and-answer, and there was no shortage of questions. At the top of everyone's concerns were the effects of SB90, the voting legislation passed by the State Legislature during the 2021 session.

As per the legislation, voting by drop boxes is restricted to early voting sites and early voting hours. However, Supervisor Marcus reported that drop boxes will be available at three election offices from 7am to 7pm on the Monday immediately prior to Election Tuesday. Also discussed was the change in vote-by-mail, which has been responsible for past high voter turnout in Pinellas County. Anyone who currently receives a mail-in ballot will continue through the end of the 2022 year. However, vote-by-mail ballot status expires on January 1, 2023, meaning EVERYONE who wishes to continue voting by mail will need to request a mail-in ballot for the coming new year. Ms. Marcus reported that the election office explored multiple ways to manage re-application with minimal steps and best chance of compliance. WHEN YOU RECEIVE YOUR NEXT VOTE-BY-MAIL BALLOT, BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR NEW INSTRUCTIONS. You may be able to request simply by furnishing information on your vote by mail ballot, which will be in a special sleeve, so as not to be visible from the outside. Although everyone may request Vote by mail by phone or online, everyone must be willing to supply their date of birth and one of the following pieces of personal information: driver's license number, last four digits of social security number, or state identification card number.

The most surprising information was given in response to a question about voters in long-term care facilities and senior living facilities. Previously, one person was able to collect multiple ballots, and bring them to drop boxes or the polls. Under the new legislation, one person cannot bring ballots of more than two non-family members to drop boxes or the polls. Supervisor Marcus reported that there is a provision in the new legislation that the Supervisor of Elections office can appoint a person in the facility to request voting teams (two from each party) to assist residents with the renewal process for vote by mail and ballot collection.



Julie Marcus and Dustin Chase

Speaking of elections in general, it was clear that Supervisor Marcus was completely committed to a scrupulous election process and ensuring that everyone who *can* vote, *does* vote. She spoke of her passion for voter education programs which have been initiated at every level in the school system. She reported that it takes up to a year to get ready for a general election, even though her office wants the process to look effortless and streamlined to the voter. During the peak of the pandemic, she said that her greatest worry was not the pandemic itself, but voter misinformation about the election process, coupled with deliberate campaigns of disinformation to destroy trust in the process itself. She also spoke of being concerned about the diminishing supply of poll workers, which are paid positions. If you are interested in becoming a poll worker, the process will give you a new-found respect for just how much is involved in running an election. To sign up go to <https://www.voteinellas.com/Election-Worker>

*Note: This article was written prior to LWVNPC information regarding changes following the federal court ruling on SB 90. Please see the following article for updated information.*

## LEAGUE VICTORY: Federal Court Strikes Down Florida Voter Suppression Law (Senate Bill 90)

March 31, 2022

TALLAHASSEE, FL – Today, a U.S. federal court struck down key provisions of Florida’s Senate Bill 90 that equated to voter suppression. Chief U.S. District Judge Mark E. Walker ruled that Florida’s Senate Bill 90 violates federal law, unconstitutionally impeding the right to vote for Floridians. He noted that “the right to vote, and the Voting Rights Act particularly, are under siege.”

Plaintiffs in this litigation included: League of Women Voters of Florida, Black Voters Matter Fund, the Florida Alliance for Retired Americans, and several individual Florida voters. A number of other suits brought forth regarding Senate Bill 90 were later consolidated into the League of Women Voters of Florida’s suit.

“For democracy to work, it must include all voices. A federal judge has ruled that the Florida legislature has engaged in decades of intentional discrimination against Black voters with a series of voting laws like Senate Bill 90,” said Cecile Scoon, president of the League of Women Voters of Florida. “Senate Bill 90 was clearly an anti-voter measure that raised barriers to voting for marginalized groups with specific impacts on elderly voters, voters with disabilities, students, and communities of color. The League is gratified that once again the constitutional rights of all of Florida’s voters have superseded partisan politics and that the targeted attack on Black voters will be stopped.”

Florida’s Senate Bill 90 bill passed both chambers of the Florida legislature in early 2021 and was subsequently signed into law by Governor Ron DeSantis (R). Immediately following the bill signing, the League and partners filed a suit objecting to its implementation. Senate Bill 90 imposed limits on voter registration, mail-in voting, and vote-by-mail drop boxes.

“Today’s ruling affirms voters’ rights to fair access to and participation at the polls,” said Celina Stewart, chief counsel and senior director of advocacy and litigation at the League of Women Voters of the United States. “Florida’s Senate Bill 90 was one of the most egregious anti-voter laws in the country. And it was aimed squarely at Black voters, voters with disabilities and voters with limited income. State legislatures everywhere should recognize that anti-voter laws like Senate Bill 90 violate the fundamental rights of their constituents. We call on legislatures around the country to stop making laws that impede the rights of the people they are elected to protect and serve.”

Walker’s ruling blocks provisions including stringent restrictions on third-party voter registration drives, limits on access to ballot drop boxes, and a criminal law barring anyone from helping voters who are waiting in line to vote.

### Key takeaways from the court ruling:

- The warning provision in Senate Bill 90 requiring Third Party Voter Registration Organizations (3PVROs) to tell citizens that a 3PVRO may not turn their application in on time and that they could register to vote in other ways **has been struck down**.
- The provision in which Senate Bill 90 prohibits providing assistance to a voter such as providing water, a snack or “comfort assistance” within 150 feet of the entrance of a polling place **has been struck down**.
- The provision in which drop boxes were limited to regular business hours and required a Supervisor of Elections (SOE) to provide a paid employee to monitor a drop box or be subject to a \$25,000 fine **has been struck down**.

## Provisions of Senate Bill 90 that remain intact:

- Voters must request mail ballots every election cycle (every two years)
- Voters must sign voter certificates on back of vote-by-mail envelopes
- Voters must provide one of three ID numbers to request a vote-by-mail ballot: o Driver's license o State identification card o Last four digits of social security number
- Voter registration applications must still be turned into the SOE's office where the voter resides or the Division of Elections in Tallahassee within 14 days of completing application or before book closing, whichever first occurs.
- There is still a 2-ballot limit per election on the number of ballots a person can possess from non-family members. A violation is a misdemeanor.
- Canvassing board activities can be observed by candidates and party members and signatures can be challenged.

There are several updates to the League's Voter Registration & Assistance procedures following this court order: To read about these, refer to the link at the top of this page.

**Appeal filed:** Florida's Secretary of State Laurel M. Lee has appealed this ruling. The Republican National Committee, Republican Senatorial Committee, Supervisor of Elections Alan Hays of Lake County, and Tommy Doyle of Lee County have also appealed.

## The attempt to stifle Florida's booming solar industry is an attack on consumers

By Dave Sillman and Sarah Matthes Edwards



Solar is already the cheapest new source of electricity, which is why the solar industry is booming in Florida, across the nation and around the globe. The economic and social benefits of solar adoption, both direct and indirect, are profound and getting better every year as costs continue to decline and industry learning curves improve. Yet the Florida Legislature is considering bills this session, SB1024 and companion HB741, that we believe are an attack on our state's solar industry and our rights as consumers to invest in cheaper electricity via rooftop solar.

These bills propose changes to net metering — the regulation that compensates solar customers for the excess electricity they send to the power grid — that would dramatically lower the fair market rate solar customers now receive. If passed, these bills would decimate Florida's burgeoning residential and commercial solar industry and result in the loss of many solar businesses, thousands of jobs, millions of dollars in projects and investment in local communities, and multi-millions of dollars in energy savings (otherwise known as "returns on investment"), just as it has in other states that have slashed net metering in recent years.

A recent study by Conservatives for Clean Energy Florida found that rooftop solar creates \$18.3 billion in economic impact for Florida. They identified more than 400 solar businesses and more than 40,000 solar jobs in our state and concluded: "Solar energy serves as a catalyst for economic growth and job creation in the state." Policies that threaten our solar industry are economic self-sabotage.

Unsurprisingly, these bills were authored by [lobbyists](#) and push the [idea](#) that solar customers are somehow “subsidized” by non-solar customers. According to the Solar Energy Industries Association, 16 state-level [studies](#) have disproven this cost-shift argument, as has a national study by Lawrence Berkeley National Lab and [others](#). In fact, much analysis shows quite the [opposite](#). In one [study](#) Joshua Pearce, endowed professor of Materials Science & Engineering and professor of Electrical & Computer Engineering at Michigan Technological University shows that grid-tied solar owners are actually subsidizing their non-solar neighbors. “Anyone who puts up solar is being a great citizen for their neighbors and for their local utility,” Pearce said.

Here is just a partial list of how solar customers [add value](#) to the grid for *everybody* through avoided:

- Wear and tear on the grid.
- Fuel usage (putting downward pressure on fuel prices).
- Need for new power plants and transmission.
- Line loss (electricity lost in transmission).
- Use of peaker plants (standby generators used when loads peak, which are the most expensive part of utility operations and our bills).

Then there’s the *real* “cost shift”: the eye-popping sums we now incur from carbon and methane pollution, which are warming the planet and causing more extreme weather events ([\\$145 billion](#) in damage in 2021), along with massive health costs from air pollution. (In the [United States](#) alone, it is \$600 billion in economic losses annually.)

Florida should be leading the nation in solar, but sadly the Sunshine State is hostage to a government-granted monopoly that inherently works at cross purposes to innovation and incentivizes investor-owned utilities to block our solar rights. This helps explain why the utility industry spends [less](#) than any other on research and development but ranks [fourth](#) in lobbying spend. Attacking net metering is a naked attempt to fend off competition from a young industry that is, for the first time in more than a century, disrupting their business model with distributed, local, *democratized* energy. Don’t think we don’t see you.

Article link: [https://www.tbnweekly.com/opinion/article\\_059b26f4-941c-11ec-b2b3-e770c8b5cf3f.html](https://www.tbnweekly.com/opinion/article_059b26f4-941c-11ec-b2b3-e770c8b5cf3f.html)

Links in **bold green** above are links to supporting articles.

*Note: SB1024 and HB741 passed in the Florida State Legislature with Governor DeSantis expected to sign.*



## KISS THE GROUND

Based on a New York Times Review, *Kiss the Ground* is “An optimistic climate documentary narrated by Woody Harrelson that argues for the healing power of soil, which could offer a solution to the climate crisis.” It is available for viewing on Netflix, for \$1 on Vimeo, and students and teachers may watch for free. Go to <https://kissthegroundmovie.com/>

## LWVNPC Recognizes Beth Hovind!



People who know Beth Hovind have often heard her mantra; “My goal is to eliminate childhood poverty in my lifetime. “Now Cecile Scoon, LWVFL President, has invited Beth to gather voices of support for low-income housing, one of four selected priorities. Beth, who led North Pinellas League’s Poverty, Health Care and Juvenile Justice Committee for seven years, has been a passionate advocate for the underserved.

In 2016, she invited League members interested in addressing poverty to meet, investigate issues, and suggest solutions. The committee hosted hot topic meetings on local housing issues. In 2019, the Poverty, Health Care and Juvenile Justice Committee received grant funds to sponsor a conference “Reducing Poverty In Florida – Legislative Solutions.” More than 70 representatives of local and state organizations participated. The next year members hosted a forum with elected officials and leaders focused on poverty at the county level. In

December of 2019, Beth also was instrumental in organizing a public hot topic event at the Dunedin Library: “Are you my neighbor? A community Discussion on Poverty in Pinellas County” with local experts and elected officials as panel discussants. During Covid-19 she initiated a state-wide zoom meeting with Nikki Fried, the Commissioner for Agriculture, on the state’s role to address food insecurity. In 2020 she and Karen Owen presented a program on poverty at the League’s annual state conference. Beth credits the committee for any accomplishments. “We have had great people on the committee with such a wide arrange of talents and interests,” she said.

Before moving from California to Florida in 2004, Beth was a child welfare worker and a residence director of low-income housing. In Wisconsin, she served as State Program Director for Health and Human Services including pregnancy prevention, teen parents, domestic abuse programs and teen youth. She’s also worked with aging programs and shelters for neglected youth. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Beth holds a Bachelor of Science degree and Master of Science in Social Work.

“Congratulations to Beth! I want to thank her for her dedication to the committee and inspiring me personally. She is devoted to resolving poverty with studied and researched solutions,” said LWVNPC member Cathy Protopapas.

“Beth is fount of knowledge for all issues related to poverty. I don’t know how keeps up with everything, but she does!” said member Jacqueline Farrell.

Currently Beth is Vice President of North County Community Council, responding to the Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County, a member of the Advisory Board for the Florida Policy Institute, a volunteer with FAST: Faith and Action for Strength Together, Advocates for Race Amity, and the Pinellas Conservation Coalition.

# Board & Committee Reports

## Board Meeting - members welcome!



The LWVNP Board meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 4:30pm. Minutes for the March 2022 meeting can be found at:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sCa0hHv\\_6bUN5IOL6lD3XgLrheCRXQzc/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1sCa0hHv_6bUN5IOL6lD3XgLrheCRXQzc/view)

Please join us for any upcoming Board meeting to learn how you can participate more fully. Contact Gayla Larson ([nblarson@gmail.com](mailto:nblarson@gmail.com)) to obtain the link to join these informative and busy meetings.

## EDUCATION ACTION GROUP



### NEWS FROM THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Submitted by Vivian Posey, Chair and Karen Owen

The Education Committee meets monthly to discuss issues of concern related to students and educators in Pinellas County and to design outreach to further expand access to information regarding first-time voter registration. Among the projects the Education Committee is pursuing at this time, the one that is directly aligned with the mission of the League of Women voters, is the "My Vote Counts" project. The goal of this project is to increase the number of registered voters in Pinellas County who are considered members of the "Gen Z" age group, those individuals who were born after 1996, and are the first generation who have never known a world without the internet.

- Recently, The League was invited to assist with a student-led voter registration effort at Calvary Christian High School the first week of April. Student Mackenzie Bergstrom approached the Education Committee requesting support. Ms. Bergstrom had previously led voter registration efforts at her prior high school in St. Petersburg and sought a repeat at her new high school. The League supplied "why vote" rack cards, "vote" stickers, and "I registered" stickers along with candy and donuts and even copies of the Pocket US Constitution for anyone who requested them. Students registered themselves on their smart phones, checked their registration status, and filled out paper forms to mail in themselves to the Supervisor of Elections. Overall, 15 students were registered. 4 students had pre-registered, but learned the SOE never added them to the voting rolls upon turning 18. We were able to assist those students in re-registering. The History teacher requested a repeat event at the beginning of the school year in September. The League's Voter Services committee stands at the ready to support any high school in North Pinellas requesting our support and guidance!



Mackenzie Bergstrom



Karen Owen



- The next steps in the “My Vote Counts” project include the development of a Voter Registration Leader “Toolkit” with information designed to guide student leaders as they plan Voter Registration events, collaboration (specific to Florida), with one of the national providers of civic responsibility training for student leaders, and publication of a Study and Action Report on the need to strengthen voter registration activities in the schools in Pinellas County.



## Poverty, Healthcare, and Juvenile Justice Committee Updates

Submitted by Barbara Letvin: Chair

The Poverty, Health and Juvenile Justice Committee is undergoing a makeover! With the departure of co-chairperson Beth Hovind, Barbara Letvin will serve as chair for the next four months. The committee will be meeting in person for the first time in two years at Palm Harbor Library on April 23 at 10:00-11:30 AM with monthly meetings thereafter. The committee will focus on two social justice issues: Affordable Housing and Health Equity and will follow a book-club format. Let's get started and inspire each other in our collective efforts to address poverty! Some of you have asked about our focus for the future: How much effort do we place on addressing poverty at the state level versus the local level and where we can make the biggest difference? Help us resolve this question.

You do **NOT** have to be a League member to participate and may join anytime. Looking forward to seeing members and some new faces! For more information contact [bletvin64@hotmail.com](mailto:bletvin64@hotmail.com)

## GUÍA DE TRÁNSITO DEL CONDADO DE PINELLAS TRANSPORTATION GUIDE FOR PINELLAS COUNTY

By Kathy Smith



The Transit Guide for Pinellas County is now available in Spanish AND English in both digital and printable formats.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-OSYB3axU7d8QjbpkV1Vpwt99wevqFai/view?usp=sharing>  
(Spanish printable version)

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1A4lrxUGoBaB2G\\_ONyKvCq4ZvpGKiLPuh/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1A4lrxUGoBaB2G_ONyKvCq4ZvpGKiLPuh/view?usp=sharing) (Spanish digital version)

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1i906OQr7Eex6hezTZ43gHOP-sXqLI\\_Zc/view?ths=true](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1i906OQr7Eex6hezTZ43gHOP-sXqLI_Zc/view?ths=true) (English printable version)

[https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/transportation\\_guide\\_digital\\_9-27-21.pdf](https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/transportation_guide_digital_9-27-21.pdf) (English digital version)

# VOTER SERVICE



## Voter Service Update

Submitted by Karen Owen

After two long years, the League is re-engaging with the Pinellas Ex-Offender Re-Entry Coalition STARS workforce and life skills training class to provide voter education and registration. The League has partnered with the Pinellas Ex Offender Re-Entry Coalition (PERC)

since Amendment 4 passed. This amendment to the Florida Constitution served to re-enfranchise hundreds of thousands of Florida voters who formerly had no chance of regaining their right to vote - even after being convicted of nonviolent crimes.

LWVNPC's own Jill Armstrong, a STARS instructor and substance abuse counselor was recently promoted and is certified for voter registration by the Florida state League and has been especially successful in recruiting students to the STARS class. Together, Jill and Karen Owen educated 18 STARS participants and helped 15 who qualified register to vote for the first time on April 12th. Doris Reeves-Lipscomb and a team of volunteers previously designed a "why vote" card that is distributed along with Vote-Riders information card for many who have lost their ID but need it to register to vote or to participate in other government programs. Vote-Riders ([voteriders.org](http://voteriders.org)) pays for low-income persons who cannot produce the \$48 to gain their drivers' license or even obtain transportation to the FL DMV. Karen shakes up the class by opening with a few easy-to-follow saxophone pieces, an unexpected surprise to many in the classroom setting! You will also find Karen donating gift cards, goody bags, and food to help incentivize the participants to complete the 6-week workforce training class. The Serenity prayer and the motto "Your past mistakes are meant to guide you, not define you" are principles espoused during the class, where roadblocks to success are removed, and recidivism is reduced for those with a criminal past. The League is excited to continue to serve PERC and the STARS class to share in the pride and civic responsibility of the right to vote.



### Because who wins matters!

Elected officials decide what government does and how it serves the people.

They decide the standards, protections, and services, and who benefits and who pays.

Services could include education, clean water and air, health care, decent housing, unemployment benefits, public safety and the courts.

### What is important to you?



Get informed and vote

**S.T.A.R.S. students are important!**  
**Be empowered! Be the change**  
**you wish to see!**



Can you register or vote? Contact us!  
[lwnnpc.info@gmail.com](mailto:lwnnpc.info@gmail.com)

## Update on NAACP Project

By: Phil Stone, Campaign Coordinator of the NAACP Clearwater | Upper Pinellas County Branch's 2022 Get Out the Vote Campaign

The LWVNPC Board approved a proposal in January to support the NAACP Upper Pinellas Branch's Voter Outreach project. The North County League supported the project startup with a \$1,000 check and the ongoing time and expertise of LWVNPC, who will be providing training.



NAACP members Mike Hughes, Crista Smith, Zeb Atkinson, and Phil Stone

In 2022 there will be important elections for State Attorney, the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate, Governor of Florida, and local government positions. Recent state elections in Florida have been decided by razor-thin margins.

Historically voter turnout is lower during non-Presidential election cycles. Against a background of intentional voter suppression efforts, there is a sub-set of registered voters who are primarily Black/Latino who do not vote.

The NAACP Clearwater Upper Pinellas County Branch's 2022 Get Out the Vote campaign will focus on the dozen precincts in North Pinellas County with significant Black and Latino residents. Using VAN and mini-VAN software, our non-partisan campaign has identified registered voters who did not vote in recent elections.

We will be hiring young adult Black and Latino individuals to knock on doors at the homes of non-voters and follow up as needed **because every vote counts and every vote must be counted**. Members of the League of Women Voters will train our canvassers and volunteers; several League members have been working closely with us as we have developed our campaign.

During the 2020 election cycle, many people who signed up to vote by mail failed to return their ballots. In follow-up conversations many of these non-voters said they were unfamiliar with the candidates, or the positions for which they were running. To engage more voters and maximize turnout, a social media educational campaign will be necessary.

We will also be visibly present at community events. We will provide information on voting deadlines, how to vote by mail, and locations of early voting sites. If there are unregistered voters, trained and qualified volunteers will assist them with the registration process.

### WE NEED YOUR HELP TO GET OUT THE VOTE!

Primarily, we need help financially to hire canvassers. Our goal is to raise \$20,000 from individual donors, and we have raised half of that so far. An anonymous donor has offered to match an individual contribution of \$2,500. Do you know anyone who would be interested? We also need your time. Only the canvassers will be paid. We need people to

- Drive canvassers
- Staff voter registration tables at community events
- Conduct follow-up analysis after each turf is canvassed
- If you are able to help financially or with your time, please use the contact information below.

[PhilStone300@gmail.com](mailto:PhilStone300@gmail.com) or [branchsecretary5096@gmail.com](mailto:branchsecretary5096@gmail.com).

Thank you for your support!



## Have you looked at Vote 411 (Vote411.org)?



Brought to you by the LWV Education Fund! Vote 411.org includes State election-related information, nonpartisan info, register to vote, candidate information, and more!

## Want to Help Register Voters?

It's an exciting time for League members. If you wish to become more involved, why not become League-certified to facilitate voter registration, VBM, and getting-out-the-vote? One has to pass an 18-question quiz to become certified.

Go to <https://lwwfl.org/>.

Scroll down the page to a box that looks like this:



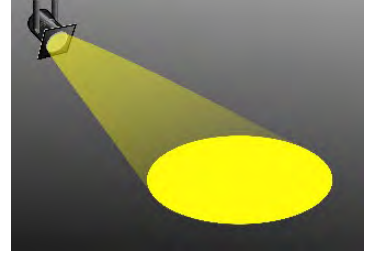
Click on the League Management box to enter a page that has lots of boxes including the *Register Voters* box.

Clicking once on the box will take you to a page requiring a password. (You may ask any LWVNPC Board member for the password if you are a League member.)

Once the password is entered, one can read the 3 pages of training material to take the quiz, repeatedly, if necessary, to score 100 percent on the quiz. With your perfect score, you are certified to register voters with a certified partner under the League auspices for the next year. See you in Voter Service soon!

## Spotlight Series:

### Introducing Hailey Scheinman



I am a 17-year-old high school junior who is now a student advocate for LWVNPC. I first learned about the League through my dad's former boss who now works at the national level of the LWV. I have spent time my whole life volunteering, in honor of my sister who has special needs. I got interested in voting and civic engagement during the most recent election. The empowerment that can be found working together, and the strength of the voices of kids and young people inspired me, even if we are not yet old enough to vote. All this made me want to do more.

After joining the League last October, I became part of the LWVNPC's Education Committee and My Vote Counts subcommittee. My role includes providing a student perspective to help with the mission of educating students about the importance of voting and giving them the tools to vote when elections come around. I have met some wonderful, committed people through these initiatives and am thankful to be a part of something that can make an impact.

Besides this, I enjoy reading comic books, drawing on my tablet, listening to music and spending time with my family. I plan to attend college within the state of Florida after high school. My hope is that my experiences will help me find my passion and career path. I know for sure that wherever my path takes me, I want to continue to be a motivated advocate helping people find how much of an impact they can make.



Please Join us by Zoom for the Annual Meeting of the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County.

Saturday April 30<sup>th</sup> 10AM-12PM

## 2022 LWVNPC Annual Meeting Keynote Speaker

*Sam Boyd, Esq., Southern Poverty Law Center*

### Costly & Cruel: How Misuse of the Baker Act Harms 37,000 Florida Children Each Year.

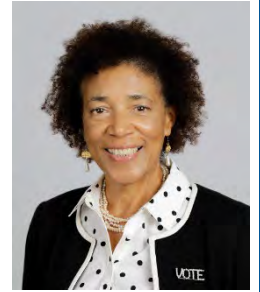
Sam Boyd is a senior staff attorney in the Children's Rights Practice at SPLC.

In that role he has developed a novel lawsuit and related advocacy campaign challenging a school district's use of involuntary psychiatric examination on children as young as five, represented youth groups seeking to advocate against policies that harm children of color, challenged a law allowing armed non-police officers in schools, among other matters.

Prior to joining SPLC he was an attorney in private practice and clerked on the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit.



Cecile Scoon, our LWV Florida President, will also make a special appearance to highlight legislative results from the Florida session.



Here's your chance to hear about our work, to approve our policy agenda, and to vote for our slate of officers and directors! The meeting is for League members.

## League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County Online Virtual 73rd Annual Meeting Saturday, April 30, 2022, 10:00 am – 12:00 noon

Room will open at 9:30 am to support an on-time start of the meeting.

To join the LWVNPC meeting in Zoom with audio and video, please click on the link below or copy and paste it into the browser of your internet connected device.

<https://tinyurl.com/LWVNPC22>

Meeting ID: 834 3861 4978

You will need to put in this passcode: 666409

When you join the meeting on April 30, you will first enter a waiting room until you are approved to enter the meeting room.

- To participate by phone only dial (929) 205-6099
- The meeting ID is: 834 3861 4978.
- You will need to put in this passcode, too: 666409

Text to 703-929-9222 if you're having technical issues connecting.

**This will be a voting meeting.** If you are unable to attend, you can vote ahead of time at

<https://forms.gle/2UABvsJq9BeMDJGw9>

The link to the Annual Meeting Book is

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o1Fo8MZXABBeUXbilrZ4UzSFwMV8fr4M/view?usp=sharing>

## And now, a word from our President.....

Bill Jonson, President of the LWVNPC will be stepping down this month after two years of stellar leadership. Bill is a 25-year member of the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County and was treasurer in 2008. He has a long history of serving his community, both in the League and in Pinellas County. For 14 years he served as a Clearwater City Council member starting 2001-2007 and again from 2010 – 2018. He represented Clearwater on the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) where he is past chair of the board and was previously the city's representative to the Tampa Bay Estuary Program. Recently, *the Voter* caught up with him and asked a few questions about his time as President.



### Looking back, what did you value about being League president?

*During the last two years, I have considered it a privilege to serve as your League President. I have been blessed to have an active Board of Directors and many enthusiastic volunteers.*

### What do you see as the LWVNP greatest achievement during your time in office?

*The most interesting and the biggest accomplishment was the Study and Action Consensus related to the Landings in Clearwater. That existing City golf course was proposed for conversion to an industrial park. By following the required League Study and Consensus Action process, the membership committee determined that the City's own environmental planning process was not followed to protect open space land. That report went through both Board and General Membership approval reviews. The citizens of Clearwater subsequently voted down this proposed land use change.*

*The last two years were also some of the most controversial in regard to claims of voter fraud nationwide. It was heartening to observe first-hand the lengths Pinellas County goes to ensure this does not happen here. Your League members served as paid poll workers for the Pinellas Supervisor of Elections and as Election Protection organization observers for both early voting and on Election days.*

*Despite the pandemic, the North County League continued to register voters and to encourage participation in the actual election. Thousands of postcards were written and mailed to low turnout precincts.*

*From an organizational perspective we made several steps to reduce our Chapter's overhead costs and improve accessibility to financial records. Additionally, we have applied to once again be an IRS 501(c)3 charity which should facilitate the ability to apply for grants for our mission.*

### What do you hope for the LWVNPC in the near future?

*It is my hope that the future will allow the regular schedule of in person Hot Topics presentations that engage and energize our members. I also hope that we will be able to do more legislative advocacy in support of our mission to Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy*

### Bill, what's next for you?

*I am not going too far away, but I will be spending more time with my grandchildren.*