



THE VOTER LWV

The official newsletter
of the League of Women
Voters North Pinellas

<https://lwnorthpinellas.org> lwnnpc.info@gmail.com

727-386-8525 | P.O. Box 7867, Clearwater, FL 33758

May-June 2024

Constitutional Amendments on the 2024 Ballot

Title	Briefly	Sponsor
#1 Partisan Election of Members of District School Boards	It would require partisan election of school board members upending a 1998 amendment that required school board candidates to run without party labels. It would take effect with the 2026 elections.	Florida Legislature HJR 1157
#2 Right to Fish and Hunt	It would preserve forever fishing and hunting, including the use of traditional methods, as a public right and preferred means of responsibly managing and controlling fish and wildlife. It would take effect 1/1/25	Florida Legislature HJR 31
#3 Adult Personal Use of Marijuana	It would legalize recreational marijuana for Adults throughout Florida. It would take effect 6 months after the November election.	Smart and Safe Florida Citizen Initiative
#4 Amendment to Limit Government Interference with Abortion	It would provide a constitutional right to abortion before fetal viability or when necessary to protect the patient's health, as determined by the patient's healthcare provider. Would be effective 1/1/25.	Floridians Protecting Freedom, Inc. Citizen Initiative
#5 Annual Adjustments to the Value of Certain Homestead Exemptions	It would require an annual inflation adjustment on the 2 nd of 2 \$25K homestead exemptions. Taxes levied by local school boards are not included in the adjustment. It would take effect 1/1/25.	Florida Legislature HJR 7017
#6 Repeal of Public Campaign Financing Requirement	It applies to the campaigns of candidates for elective statewide office and would repeal the requirement for public financing and campaign spending limits. It would take effect with the 2026 election.	Florida Legislature SJR 1114

Important News: Change in Dues Structure!

LWV is switching to a new member portal for all Leagues across the country. There is no action that members need to take right now, but we want to provide you with an overview of what these changes will mean for you.

Level	Current Structure	New Dues Structure
Minimum	\$60.00	\$20.00
Individual	\$60.00	\$75.00
Household	\$90.00	N/A
Cornerstone	\$120.00	N/A
Cornerstone Household	\$150.00	N/A
Ida B Wells	\$250.00	N/A
Ida B Wells Household	\$300.00	N/A

Under the new plan 20% of dues paid to National come back to LWVNPC
47% of dues paid to National go to LWVFL
33% of dues paid to National go/stay with LWVUS

- All registrations (new membership) and dues payment (membership renewal) will be **direct** to LWVUS.
- There will **only** be individual members – no household memberships
 - Household members will need to join as individuals (recommend paying \$20 for that membership)
 - There will be no student memberships – will need to join at the minimum \$20 (if desired)
- Our website will re-direct individuals wanting to join over **to the LWVUS website** to complete the application form there.
- If a new member signs up during LWVNPC events, that registration will have to be forwarded to LWVUS.
- Members may join (via LWVUS) at a minimum of \$20 – *pay what you can* model
- LWVUS will notify members when renewal dues are required.
- LWVNPC will no longer pay PMP to State and US Leagues.
- Additional donations (above the minimum) to continue our work **should** be paid **directly to LWVNPC** so that the above percentage deductions will not apply

On my Mind...

By Tanya Landry, President



Tanya Landry (Centre) with LWWHCL/Pasco President Teresa Potter and LWWSPA President Jackie Aziz

As a lifelong professed book nerd, reader of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry, I developed a love for words. Today, I am thinking about the word, Serendipity, defined as “a fortunate happenstance or pleasant surprise.” What does that have to do with the league? On April 17th 2024 I attended the LWWFL session, Community Conversations Highlighting Higher Education, hosted by the LWWHillsborough. At the end of the event, I met Teresa Potter, President, LWWHCL/Pasco and Jackie Aziz, President, LWWSPA. What are the chances that 3 area league presidents would be together in the same room? Serendipity! We chatted about our leagues, took a photo and spoke about the need to do something together.

Leaning into that conversation about connection and collaboration among the leagues, an opportunity! LWWFL Co-President, Debbie Chandler planned a visit to the LWWSPA, and in the spirit of collaboration, invitations were sent to four of the surrounding leagues.

Last Thursday, 80 league members from the various leagues provided updates on their League activities. In this age of ZOOM and the busyness of league life, it was a breath of fresh air to meet likeminded members and as one League member said, “to know that you are not alone, there are other leagues out there you can learn from.” There was an energy and enthusiasm among the group with plenty of side conversations after the presentations. All of the Leagues have the same mission; however, the local issues of each League create different challenges. It was interesting and inspirational to hear how each League empowered voters. This experience of regional leagues coming together is a perfect segue for me to the League of Women Voters National Convention, June 27-June 30, in Washington, D.C. - my first convention. Stay tuned!



Julie Marcus
PINELLAS COUNTY
SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS

HOT TOPIC

Join us for a morning conversation with
Julie Marcus, Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections!

- Do you have questions about Vote By Mail?
 - Are you interested in being an election poll worker?
 - Do you want to know more about the Supervisor of Elections office?

When: Monday, July 8, 2024
10:30 am – 12:00 noon

Where: Dunedin Public Library
223 Douglas Ave, Dunedin, FL 34698



Welcome New Members

Laurie Anello
Susan Glor-Scheib
Jeannette McCabe
Riley Mills

Board Meeting - members welcome!



The LWWNP Board meets the 1st Wednesday of each month at 4:00pm. Minutes for the May 2024 meeting can be found at:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CDkQzxtEpDPaiiHLAM_SFtXua0Vd0jxk/view?usp=drive_link

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

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Education Committee



Education Committee: North Pinellas County and the St. Pete LWV Education Committees have joined together to more effectively address the many issues occurring in Pinellas County Schools. Those topics include:

- Pinellas County School Board Candidate Forum is set for Monday, July 22, 2024, at 6:30 pm at the Pinellas Realtor Organization, 4590 Ulmerton Road.

Volunteers are needed to serve as greeters, ushers, timekeepers, and to help check in candidates. Also, brochures will need to be printed and distributed. **Any questions you would like to have posed to the candidates should be sent to candidates@pccpta.org**

- Pinellas County Commissioners unanimously approved a resolution to place **Pinellas County Schools Referendum on the November 5th ballot**. Passed since 2004, this supplemental funding referendum will help increase teacher and staff salaries as well maintain arts offerings in Pinellas County schools. For more information on the referendum, go to <https://www.pcsb.org/referendum>
- The Independent Citizens Referendum Oversight Committee (ICROC) oversees the expenditure of referendum funds to ensure they are spent as voters intended. LWWNPC joins 6 other community organizations in doing this work. **Vivian Posey** will assume the position of LWV observer for future meetings of ICROC.
- My Vote Counts Update: LWVSPA worked with student leaders at Hollins, St. Pete High, and Lakewood High to register voters. Jeanne Reynolds attended a meeting with LWV Palm Beach, Florida for All, Pinellas Indivisible, and others regarding strategies for increasing student registration in high schools. LWV President Tanya Landry met with Superintendent Hendrick to encourage a system-wide approach to registering graduating seniors and offering LWV support.

- Florida Amendment 1 (change from non-partisan to partisan identification for school board members). The education committee is looking for places to disseminate information on both the referendum and the amendment that will be part of the Nov. 5 ballot, in addition to voter registration table events. Members are asked to reach out to their networks and organizations to help get the word out.
- Pinellas County School Board Meeting Observations continue. LWV members are always welcome to sign in and observe meetings, demonstrating that the LWV considers public education an essential part of our democracy. On May 14th, Tanya Landry, Connie Kolosey, and Jeanne Reynolds attended the meeting and were recognized as audience members who support the referendum language that was voted on unanimously by the school board. Observers are still needed for July 16 (10:30am) and July 30 (5:00pm). To assist with the Education Committee, contact Chair Jeanne Reynolds at jeannevrey@gmail.com



*Jeanne Reynolds, Superintendent Kevin Hendrick, Tanya Landry:
Celebration of 10 years of Arts and Education, Museum of Fine Arts.*



This committee continues to be extremely active with many, many tabling events throughout the summer months. Linda Metzkw and Phoebe Tave will be working with Mease Life to help their residents with registration needs. Members are urged to reference the LWV [calendar](#) for upcoming events and how to volunteer for these events. The committee is also working on a date for a presentation to the public on Amendments for the November 2024 ballot.

The committee participated in two candidate forums: Oldsmar Special Election Candidate Forum (6/20) and Tarpon Springs Candidate Forum (6/25). To assist with Voter Services, please contact Chairperson Linda Metzkw at lindametzkw@tampabay.rr.com



Jamie Rasnick, Barbara Letvin, Riley Mills: Safety Harbor Library



Terry Conway, Evvy Bernstein: Dunedin Pride Event

Oldsmar Special Candidate Forum: Sue Cornett, Mary Giordano, Mina Harkin, Linda Metzkw

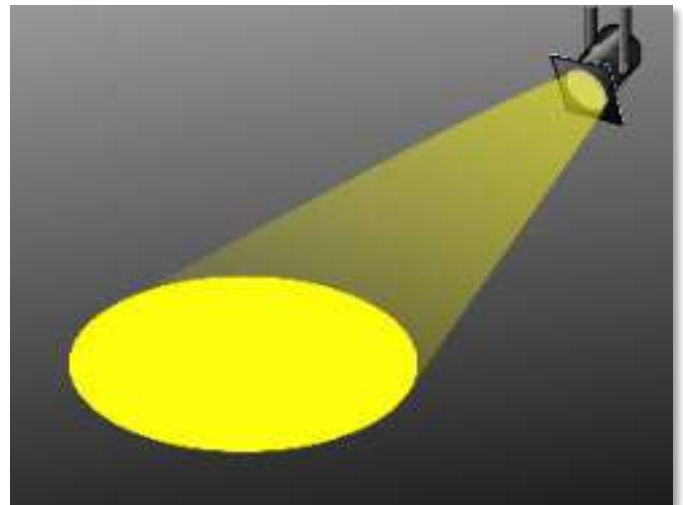


Use Your Website!

FYI, we have a terrific new website: <https://lwvnorthpinellas.org/>. Check it out! You can view photos; connect to Facebook, Instagram and X; read about our Board; view the blog and newsletter; and best of all, access the [calendar](#) for scheduled events and sign up to volunteer! After this issue, the newsletter *will no longer* be delivered via email, but will only be available on our website under the [News tab](#). You can select the latest issue and archives for past issues and download for viewing.

In addition, please take advantage of the information available to you on our “[Members Only](#)” website section. Here you can access the current active membership roster/directory, as well as the training guide, and the Voter Registration Certification Quiz. This portion of the website is password protected; so, please contact Gayla Larson (nbslarson@gmail.com) to obtain the password. You may also call her at (727) 393-2069.

Spotlight: Introducing Barbara Letvin



Did you know that Barbara Letvin is an educator, former elected official, Peace Corp volunteer, and dedicated League member? She joined the League in 2014 when she noticed an alarming trend and calculated efforts restricting voting rights throughout the United States. Barbara recognized that the League of Women Voters, whose mission is to empower voters and protect democracy, was in a unique position to educate voters and protect voting rights. During this critical election year, she is committed to helping build a strong local League: by assisting with registration; helping voters to check their mail ballot status; educating them on the issues; and most of all, emphasizing the importance of exercising their right to vote. Besides supporting the League’s mission, she values our stance of non-partisanship. She has served several years on our League's Nominating Committee looking for our future leaders.

Barbara has a strong message for our local League: personal involvement is effective! She supports in-person meetings and working the phones to increase engagement and energize people to action. She came by this knowledge with her experience as an elected member of the town council in suburban Rochester, New York, where she served for four years. She proudly states she was the first woman and the first of her political party to be elected to office in fifty years, and she did it by going into

neighborhoods, knocking on doors, and meeting her constituents. During her tenure, she learned firsthand the challenges and opportunities of questioning the party in power.

Barbara studied at Ohio State University where she earned her B.S. in Education. She and her husband, Richard, served as Peace Corps volunteers in Thailand where she taught English as a second language. They moved to Rochester, New York, where she earned her M.S. in Education, taught for the Rochester City Schools, served in public office, and resettled Vietnamese refugees. For 18 years she was director of International Students Services at Rochester Institute of Technology. In 1998, Barbara moved to Trinity where she works and volunteers for non-profit organizations. Barbara and Richard have three children and six grandchildren and enjoy summers with their family.



Check our Calendar for Complete Information: [Calendar](#)

LWVUS Annual Convention
June 27 - 30, 2024

Washington Hilton, Washington D.C.

Monday, July 8, 2024
10:30 to 12:00 PM

Conversation and Q & A with Supervisor of Elections
Julie Marcus, Dunedin Public Library

Monday July 22, 2024
6PM

Pinellas County School Board Candidates Forum
Pinellas Realtor Organization

Saturday, December 14, 2024
noon - 3 pm

2024 Holiday Open House
Chateaux de Bardmoor Clubhouse

For Zoom links to meetings, please contact Gayla Larson at nbslarson@gmail.com

For a complete listing of **Volunteer Activities**, go to <https://lwvnorthpinellas.org/calendar/>