

The VOTER  
December 2019

LWVNPC OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS 2020

**Officers**

President	2018-2020	Karen Karinja
1st Vice-President	2019-2021	Position Vacant
2nd Vice President	2018-2020	Beth Hovind
Treasurer	2018-2020	Gayla Larson
Secretary	2019-2021	Stephanie Bolden

**Elected Board Member**

Miriam Benitez-Nixon	2019-2020
Nikki Fleming	2019-2020
Doris Reeves-Lipscomb	2019-2020

**Appointed Directors 2018-2020**

Marti Folwell

LWV North Pinellas County  
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727-447-1564

[www.lwvnorthpinellas.org](http://www.lwvnorthpinellas.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/LWVNPC/](https://www.facebook.com/LWVNPC/)

If you haven't visited our North Pinellas League website recently, check it out at [www.lwvnorthpinellascounty.org](http://www.lwvnorthpinellascounty.org) and visit our Facebook page. Both are updated, and the website is easier to navigate. Lots of information for members and anyone interested in voting rights and our democracy.



You may recall that our LWNPC recently supported the nomination of the Florida Gulf Coast for a MISSION BLUE HOPE SPOT. Great news: the location was accepted, and our fantastic coast is now on the list of "special places that are critical to the health of the ocean." Find more information about the Hope Spot Project here: <https://mission-blue.org/hope-spots/>

Thanks, and remember that your LWNPC Environmental Action Group needs you! Give us an hour per month to help make our group as vibrant as it can be. Contact Dave Sillman or Stef Bolden to get involved.

In late October our LWNPC Environmental Action Group was proud to participate in the official kickoff of our new **Florida Gulf Coast Hope Spot**, a designation by the ocean conservation organization Mission Blue, founded and led by Dunedin’s own Sylvia Earle, a world-renowned oceans expert.

Hope Spots are special places that are critical to the health of the ocean – Earth’s blue heart. Hope Spots are about recognizing, empowering and supporting individuals and communities in their efforts to protect the ocean. Becoming a Hope Spot will open access to extensive resources from the Mission Blue alliance for public outreach and increased visibility to support protection of our unique and precious Gulf coast waterways, fisheries, wildlife and ecosystems. More information about Mission Blue Hope Spots can be found at <https://mission-blue.org/hope-spots/>



The weekend of festivities began with an evening Gala at the Fenway Hotel Ballroom and continued into the weekend with daylong events around Dunedin including films & speakers at the Dunedin Library; a ribbon cutting ceremony with words from Dr Earle & local dignitaries in Pioneer Park as part of an environmental festival promoting education, sustainable products & services and local sustainability initiatives; and a *Think & Drink* pub crawl featuring a hearty game of scientific Trivia at each stop. Our LWNPC chapter was proud to endorse this initiative, along with a Who’s Who of local environmental leaders. We also took the opportunity to do voter registration during the kickoff festivities. It was a joyful weekend, and the result of the incredible work of the Hope Spot team of Tracy Love Tippen, Vicki Love and Ray Bouchard. Our North Pinellas community is blessed with both beautiful surroundings and a wealth of amazing people working hard to

protect them!



## COMMITTEE CHAIR JOB POSTINGS

- CENSUS CHAIR
- COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR
  - SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER
  - WEBMASTER
- GRANT WRITER
- NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR
- VOTER SERVICE CHAIR

Contact LWVNPC president: karen.karina@gmail.com



Submitted by North Pinellas County in June 2019.



**Event Date:** January 6, 2020 2:00pm  
**Event Location:** Barbara S. Ponce Public Library of Pinellas Park  
 7770 52<sup>nd</sup> St. North  
 Pinellas Park, FL 33781

**Topic:** The Rise of Populism in Europe

## ARE YOU MY NEIGHBOR?

A Community Discussion of Poverty in Pinellas County  
How Citizens and Our Leaders Can Help

More than 70 community leaders attended the program prepared by our Poverty Task Force on December 17, 2019, at the Dunedin Library in conjunction with the League’s St. Petersburg chapter. About half of those in attendance were League members, including both Pinellas chapters as well as the Pasco unit. The purpose of the event was to solicit and involve the community in recognizing and addressing strategies to eliminate poverty in our neighborhoods.



**THE TEAM:** The event was organized by the Poverty Task Force led by Beth Hovind, chair, North Pinellas Chapter, co-sponsored with the League of the St. Petersburg Area chapter and

the Pinellas Community Foundation. Linsey Grove, President of the St. Petersburg chapter, conducted the question-and-answer session between the audience and panel. Our chapter's volunteers were instrumental in making the event a success. Thanks and appreciation to the team that made the event possible: Beth Hovind, Karen Owen, Miriam Benitez-Nixon, Alice Nightingale, Nyla Jo Hubbard, Theo Tamborlane, Cathy Protopapas, Karen Karinja, Sabrina Smith, Kathy Smith, Jackie Ferrell, Susan Rishworth, Dr. Brittany Peters, and Barbara Letvin. And a special "shout-out" to Home Plate Restaurant for their sponsorship support.

#### **FEATURED SPEAKERS:**

- Tim Dutton, Executive Director, UNITE Pinellas who provided graphics revealing the significant inequality between races that this has cost Pinellas 3.6 billion dollars. This is the first study measuring outcomes in the county's quality of life indicators, an effort to move the needle to greater equity. Three tools to address equity include: 1. Recognizing the history of national and local policies that placed racial barriers to education and housing. 2. Increasing roles for businesses and large institutions like hospitals to address racial inequities. 3. Address the narrative of blame surrounding those who fail economically. This leads to a failure to understand the lack of opportunity.
- Pat Gerard, Pinellas County Commissioner, described some of the hurdles they face with increasing affordable housing options, the importance of mixed-use housing and ways they are attempting to address pockets of poverty. She indicated that there may be another request for additional tax funds to support some of these efforts.
- Nicole Carr, newly elected member of the Pinellas County School Board, acknowledged the cuts in funding from the state and the struggle to address funding not only teacher salaries but other staff as well. She recognized the importance of adopting schools by businesses and individuals and encouraged the audience to mentor and volunteer in their neighborhood schools.
- Marcus Brooks, Community Impact Manager of the Foundation for a Healthy St. Petersburg, spoke to the importance of the direct involvement of the community in poverty. The Foundation's goal is to increase health equity regardless of race, income, gender or more, so all can live a long healthy life. Building trust, Brooks emphasized, after years of broken promises, takes commitment to reach out, and develop relationships takes time.

**FEEDBACK:** The program's evaluations indicated an overwhelming agreement that the panel provided important information and educated them on the issues addressing poverty. Over 35 people wrote comments including: "Speakers presented a variety of expertise across the topic", "Excellent-this should go on the road", "Amazing information -Thanks for sponsoring this event", "Glad I came!", "Gained a lot of knowledge and am impressed with the panel". The feedback indicated about half those in attendance were League members and the rest learned about the event from a League member, League postings on Facebook and from a newspaper. Suggestions for future presentations included a program on criminal justice reform and the child welfare system. Some wished for more time for their questions. Data and recorded details collected at the event will be made available for all members via our Facebook page.

Please visit <https://lwfl.org/issues/poverty> and <https://tinyurl.com/lwvpoverty> for research and reading material, and email [lwvpoverty@gmail.com](mailto:lwvpoverty@gmail.com) for questions or to join our efforts.



# National Popular Vote!

***Making Every Vote Count today finds nearly two of every three likely voters (62%) support their state joining the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact...more***

**Website:<http://www.nationalpopularvote.com/state/fl>**



Posted Thursday, September 5, 2019 - 9:15 pm

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes the direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice President is essential to representative government. The LWV believes, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished.

The League supports the use of the National Popular Vote Compact as one acceptable way to achieve the goal of the direct popular vote for election of the president, until the abolition of the Electoral College is accomplished. The National Popular Vote Plan is an agreement among the states to guarantee the Presidency to the candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. This would reform the Electoral College without the need for a constitutional amendment.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON LWV ISSUES AND  
CURRENT UPDATES ON LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES  
VISIT [WWW.LWVFL.ORG](http://WWW.LWVFL.ORG)





You are invited to attend an Education Action Group  
*Hot Topic:*

**Following the Money – Charter School Business Practices**

*The Hillsborough Example*



**Saturday, January 11, 2020**  
10 AM Dunedin Library  
223 Douglas Ave, Dunedin

Presented by  
**Patricia Hall (LWV Hillsborough)**  
**Robin R. Jones (LWV St. Petersburg)**

The Voter Service team and all League members are invited to an open house and kickoff party on January 10th from 5:30pm - 8:00pm at the home of Karen Owen (see below).



Receive training on Voter Registration, share stories and good reads, meet your fellow League members, and enjoy food and drink together.



If anyone has a friend interested in the League, please bring them along!

RSVP to [doris.reeves.lipscomb@gmail.com](mailto:doris.reeves.lipscomb@gmail.com)

**Star-Spangled Election Year  
Kick-off Party and Open House!**

For: League Members and Friends  
When: January 10, 2020 - 5:30pm - 8:00pm  
Where: 1702 Tall Pine Circle, Safety Harbor  
RSVP: [doris.reeves.lipscomb@gmail.com](mailto:doris.reeves.lipscomb@gmail.com)

- Meet & Greet at Karen Owen's home
- Food & Drink: Bring an appetizer if you feel creative (Karen provides drinks!)
- Prizes for vehicle transporting the most partygoers at once!
- Book Exchange: bring your favorites and borrow or trade
- Voter Service Training Available!

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Whatever your faith, may your holidays be filled with joy and the New Year bring health and happiness to you and your family of loved ones.