

**VOTER
JANUARY 2020**

LWVNPC OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS 2020

Officers

President	2018-2020	Karen Karinja
1st Vice-President	2019-2021	
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

Appointed Board Directors 2018-2020

Nikki Fleming 2019-2020

Doris Reeves-Lipscomb 2019-2020

Marti Folwell

LWV North Pinellas County
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727-447-1564

www.lwvnorthpinellas.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/LWVNPC/

If you haven't visited our North Pinellas League website recently, check it out at www.lwvnorthpinellascounty.org and our Facebook page. They are both updated and the website is easier to navigate. Lots of information for members and anyone interested in voting rights and our democracy.



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS



Are you interested in serving on the Board of the League of Women Voters of North Pinellas?
Our chapter's Nominating Committee is inviting you to *step forward and raise your hand to become part our leadership team.*

The League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County is required to maintain a Board of Directors consisting of 5 elected Officers and 3 elected Directors. These 2-year positions may be held for only 2 terms in order to continually bring new vision and energy to the Board. This year we have 5 positions turning over.

We are currently seeking nominations for the following positions:

(Detailed job descriptions available on request)

President – Plans, presides over meetings and promotes the organization

First Vice President – Programs, Membership and prepares to lead

Second Vice President - Administrative

2 Directors

All 5 positions will be voted on and elected by the membership at the Annual meeting on April 25th, 2020

If you are ready to step forward and be an integral part of this organization, **or**, you know an awesome individual whom you would like to recommend, **tell us!**
Please send your nominations or questions to any of the following Nominating Committee members by **February 9, 2020.**

Cathy Protopapas cathy.protopapas@yahoo.com

Kathy Woods Masalski woods.masalski@gmail.com

Nikki Fleming flemsci@gmail.com

COMMITTEE CHAIR JOB POSTINGS



- [CENSUS CHAIR](#)
- [COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR](#)
- [SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER](#)
- [WEBMASTER](#)
- [GRANT WRITER](#)
- [NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR](#)
- [VOTER SERVICE CHAIR](#)

Contact LWNPC president: karen.karina@gmail.com



EDUCATION ACTIONGROUP

Following the Money – Charter School Business Practices - summary

LWV public education advocates Sue Legg (Alachua), Robin Jones (St. Petersburg) and Pat Hall (Hillsborough)

presented “*Following the Money—Charter School Business Practices*” at the LWNPC Hot Topics on January 11.

Sue Legg gave an overview of the impact of school choice on teaching, learning and student enrollment.

She reviewed the political environment which promotes school choice and results in inadequate public-school funding and profiteering by charter management companies.

Robin Jones described the Newpoint scandal that serves as example of how one for-profit charter chain stole millions of dollars of public funds while operating 15 schools in 6 Florida counties, including Pinellas. Fortunately, the Escambia County State’s Attorney office spent two years untangling the scam and the two perpetrators are now in jail.

While not all charter business practices are as obviously fraudulent as Newpoint, many operate in a grey area between legal and illegal.

Pat Hall has spent five years investigating those practices in Hillsborough County. She describes the various schemes to divert public funding to two large for-profit chains (Charter Schools USA and Charter School Associates), the questionable budgets and academic results of a small, independent, charter school (Village of Excellence) and the poor performance of a for-profit alternative school run by a large national chain (Catapult).

We must all be on high alert during the 2020 legislative session as the privatization forces prepare to authorize additional ways to divert tax dollars to private entities while removing oversight control of locally elected school boards.



Excellent background reading:

Carol Burris. 2019. Asleep at the Wheel. <https://networkforpubliceducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Asleep-at-the-Wheel-Florida-Charters.pdf>



Event Date:

February 3, 2020 2:00pm

Event Location:

Barbara S. Ponce Public Library of Pinellas Park

Topic: Refuges & Global Migration

February Hot Topics: Israel-Palestine Situation

Event

Date: Feb 8 2020 - 10:00am

Event Location:

Dunedin Public Library



TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – The League of Women Voters of Florida (LWVFL) stood with a number of grassroots organizations this Election Day to support Florida's **Sen. Linda Stewart (D – Orlando) and Rep. Geraldine Thompson (D – Windermere)** in their efforts to protect voting rights in Florida.

Sen. Stewart, who filed SB 1802 on Elections during the 2019 Legislative Session, and Rep. Thompson, who filed HB 1365 during the same session, said they plan to file bills in 2020 addressing issues that have plagued elections in Florida for decades.

"The right to vote and ability to exercise that right by all citizens is the cornerstone mission of the League of Women Voters," said Florida League President Patti Bingham. "We commend these two legislators for ensuring these issues remain at the forefront, especially as we enter the 2020 election year."

"Voting is the bedrock of our democracy, and that bedrock has been fractured and uneven in Florida," Rep. Thompson said. "We must join together to fight for the voting rights of every Floridian and protect our elections system."

“Removing the barriers to vote should be one of Florida’s top priorities. We must continue to fight to ensure all Floridians have equal and fair access to polling locations and that their voices are heard,” said Senator Stewart.

The LWVFL developed out the suffrage movement and today represents a grassroots network of more than 29 local Leagues statewide striving to promote engaged citizenship. Members hold candidate forums, issue Voter Guides to inform citizens on local races and ballot amendments and sponsor public forums for both policy makers and citizens to broaden understanding of key issues.

We Need You at Lobby Days — Join Us!

The League is ready to make noise and lobby for our priority issues at League Lobby Days February 4th and 5th in Tallahassee. You don't want to miss this!

Lobby Days is a perfect opportunity to learn best practices on how be an effective advocate from our award winning lobby firm: Capitol Alliance Group.

Participants will join us on the steps of the Historic Capitol as we hold a press conference on the Census. Take this chance to meet with legislators, network with your fellow activists, and cap it off with our annual Gala where we will present our Defender of Democracy award to political journalist Steve Bousquet.

St Petersburg LWV Annual Conference - February 18-21, 2020

Join us for the eighth annual St. Petersburg Conference on World Affairs. The 3-1/2 Day will begin with the keynote address at the Palladium Theater, followed by three full days of panel discussions covering critical international issues at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg. Speakers and panelists include distinguished diplomats, military, media, and academic experts. Check back regularly as we add details about the 2020 St. Petersburg Conference

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>

The League's Position



The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. The League of Women Voters believes, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished. We support 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 League also supports uniform voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. The League supports changes in the presidential election system – from the candidate selection process to the general election. We support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates and their positions, public policy issues and the selection process itself.

The League supports action to ensure that the media, political parties, candidates, and all levels of government achieve these goals and provide that information.

Statement of Position on Selection of the President, as Announced by National Board, January 1970, Revised March 1982, Updated June 2004 and Revised by the 2010 Convention:

Sample statement to use for question #2 on the electronic LWVUS Program Planning Survey Response Form, 300 words or less:

Our League members are interested in working on the LWVUS position regarding the Selection of the President. The scope of our proposal is that we want to educate the public and advocate to our state and national legislators that our League supports (abolition of the electoral college by Constitutional amendment)(implementation of the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact.) The issue is that the 50 year-old LWVUS position on the Selection of the President supports a direct vote system to replace the electoral college system. The importance to the League mission is that the current electoral college system is grossly contrary to the LWVUS initiatives on securing fair and representative elections in our nation. Eliminating the electoral college fits perfectly under the umbrella of Making Democracy Work. The resources needed from LWVUS are small. Our League members will do the work. All we ask of LWVUS resources is support through a "Time for Action" announcement and permission for each League to advocate with their legislators and to share their efforts with other US Leagues. Please make this topic an action focus.