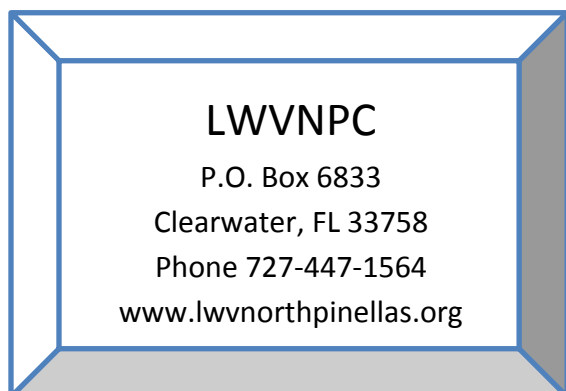


JANUARY 2018 VOTER



OFFICERS

President: Karen Karinja
& Voter Services

1st Vice President: Beth Hovind
& Poverty/Health

2nd Vice President: Eliseo Santana
& Membership

Secretary: Vicki Cohen

Treasurer: Marti Folwell

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Whit Blanton, Transportation

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Judy McSwine, International Relations

Eliseo Santana, Membership

Peggy Toohey, Voter

Off Board Chair

Pona Piekarski, Education

Carol Bailey, Historian



From the President

It is important to remember our Legislature priorities and our Legislative positions that were determined last year.

In this Voter we are repeating that information for your review. If you have any additional suggestions or need clarification please contact a director or chair of the committee.

If you would like be part of any committee you can volunteer for that committee by signing up on our website.

The LWVNPC needs nominations for Board of Directors for 2018-2019 and a new nominating committee.

We also need program recommendations for 2019-2020 and programs should be submitted by January 31.

Thank You

To all members and guests who came to the luncheon on January 13th and was informed about the legislative session by our guest speaker Dr. Susan McManus. And a big thank you to Dr. McManus for giving her helpful knowledge of government.

Welcome to new members and all who came to our New Member Orientation on January 20th to learn more about the LWVNPC and decided to join.

Informed and Active Citizen
Participation

The League of Women Voters of Florida is a grassroots organization, and as such, we focus on the issues that our members care the most about.

Each year, our membership is polled to see which issues are most important to them. Every local league submits priorities. After tabulating each local league's submissions, the top five areas become priorities for the Legislative Session.

Here are the 2017 Legislative Priorities:

1. Education

- Restore district authorization to levy 2.0 mills for capital outlay funding for school facilities construction and renovation.
- Increase operational funding to pre-2008 levels so that districts may increase the school day and curriculum choices.
- Revise the sole focus of the state accountability system from test scores to measures that more accurately reflect districts' progress in raising student achievement, meet the needs of diverse students and improve access to high quality academic and career programs for all students.
- Improve fiscal and operational oversight of charter schools by increasing transparency in student admission and retention data, ensuring the independence of charter boards from charter management companies and providing guidelines to reduce self-dealing opportunities in real estate transactions and other charter services.
- Eliminate the growth of corporate-tax credit scholarships to private schools and require private schools currently receiving these scholarships to participate in the state accountability system.

2. Election Law

- Support the automatic restoration of voting rights for former felony offenders, including support for a constitutional amendment to achieve same.
- Support legislation to reduce from 29 days to 19 days the time voter registration books must be closed before each election.
- Support legislation to restrict the ability of an elector to file as a write-in candidate, the goal being to minimize what has become a problem, as "ghost candidates" file in order to close primary elections.
- Monitor and support the progress of online voter registration implementation to ensure that it meets its 2017 deadline, and adopt legislation for Florida to join the at least 26 other states that are members of the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC).
- Support legislation necessary for Florida to join the at least 10 other states that are members of the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact (NPVIC), so that Florida's Presidential Electors would be required to

award all their votes to the candidate who wins the overall popular vote in the 50 states and District of Columbia.

- Ensure the adoption by Florida of the National Voter Registration Act ("Motor-Voter" law) requirement that every citizen be automatically provided voter registration update services when she/he applies for, renews or changes her/his address on a driver's license or state-issued identification card.

3. Gun Safety

- Support proposals that would expand background checks in Florida, thereby closing the gun show and Internet loopholes.
- Support proposals that would impose a statewide ban on semi-automatic assault weapons and large capacity magazines.
- Oppose any proposals that would make it legal for those with concealed weapons permits to carry firearms on Florida's public college and university campuses.
- Oppose any proposals that would make it legal for those with concealed weapons permits to carry openly firearms in public places.
- Oppose any proposals that would permit Floridians to carry concealed weapons without a permit.
- Oppose any proposals that would expand the current "Stand Your Ground" law.
- Oppose any proposals that would permit Florida School Boards or School Superintendents to designate employees or others to carry concealed firearms, for security purposes, on school grounds at K-12 schools.

4. Health Care

- Correct the Florida KidCare program's coverage so it will provide insurance to children ages 0 to 1-year old who are not eligible for Medicaid.
- Develop legislation to accept 2017 Medicaid expansion dollars for Florida, without being bound for future years, or develop a budget for a comprehensive plan to provide health insurance for working.
- Amend Florida's Public Health statute, Chapter 390, to remove the provision providing that a physician must delay at least 24 hours before terminating, with a pregnant woman's voluntary and informed written consent, her pregnancy.

5. Natural Resources

- Support sustainable energy solutions for Florida, including adoption of renewable energy standards and legislation promoting the expansion of solar energy.
- Support efforts to improve water quality of both surface water and aquifers through legislation to reduce pollution and excessive withdrawals, including prohibiting "fracking" statewide.
- Support full funding of the Florida Forever land acquisition program and proper implementation of the Water and Land Legacy Conservation Amendment (Amendment 1) adopted in 2014.

**League of Women Voters of North Pinellas County 2018 Legislative Positions
(as recommended in 2017)**

Government in Florida

Florida Constitution

- Support basic law that assures a government responsive and accountable to the people of the state.

Election Law

- Support automatic restoration of voting rights for former felon offenders.
- Support online voter registration statewide.
- Support Florida's participation in the Electronic Registration Information Center.
- Establish threshold criteria for write-in candidates that mirror current requirements for announced candidates. The presence of a write-in candidate as the only opponent should not close the primary.
- Support the use of an Open Primary election system that would allow for the broadest possible vote participation.
- Support retention of 1968 Florida Constitutional Amendment for home rule by municipalities and counties in the administration of local issues.
- Support the election of the President and Vice-President by direct popular vote. Support the National Popular Vote Compact. (LWVUS).
- Replace Florida's present closed Presidential Preference Primary with an Open Primary system of voting.

Education in Florida

- Promote adequate funding of public education with no use of public funding for the expansion of funding of private education through a voucher program.

Justice in Florida

- Support juvenile justice actions that emphasize civil citations and increased judicial oversight of direct file of juveniles to adult court.
- Support rehabilitation and other alternatives to incarceration.

Sustainability in Florida

- Support implementation of the March 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act in Florida, emphasizing access for all and control of costs for the individual including Medicaid expansion and mental health coverage.
- Support the education of Floridians regarding application for coverage.
- Support public transportation projects which yield multi-modal investments in local and state enhanced infrastructure.

Natural Resources in Florida

Land Use

- Support the implementation of the Water and Land Legacy Amendment consistent with the intent of the ad-adopted language.

Energy

- Support clean implementation of 2016 Amendment 4 regarding solar power.

Coastal Management

- Support intergovernmental stewardship of and fiscal responsibility for the Florida coast, under the management of the state, while recognizing the dominance of nature and the role of the sand transport system.

Environmental Protection and Pollution Control

- Support the ban of advanced well stimulation treatments ("fracking") including but not limited to hydraulic fracturing, acid fracturing, and matrix acidizing.

Poverty/Health/Housing

1. Increase the cash benefit level for families on TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) to a livable and realistic level.

Currently a mother with 2 children receives \$303-\$353/month. This is decided by the state legislature and has not been increased since 2008.

2. Advocate for employment at a livable wage for all workers.

12% of families in Pinellas and Pasco live in poverty. 24% of our children. 69% of all jobs in Florida pay less than \$20/hour, less than the survival budget for a family of 4.

3. Increase the supply of affordable housing. Prevent the transfer of Sadowski Funds for uses other than affordable housing. Utilize Pennies for Pinellas to build affordable housing.

In 2011 the average rent for a one bedroom apartment was \$765. In 2016 this cost was \$1031, a 30% increase. The Governor's budget is currently recommending taking funds from the funds Sadowski Fund for other uses. 5,000 families in Pinellas Co. are on waiting lists for housing assistance.

4. Ensure every child has affordable and competent early learning/childcare.

Only 55% of children receive quality child care, and often low income children do not.

5. Maintain current health care and improve access for those not covered by insurance or Medicaid. Improve access to clinics.

Florida has the second highest number of uninsured in the United States: 1 in 5 adults and 1 in 10 children. As ACA diminishes, this number will increase.

6. Support a competent, efficient and adequate county/regional mass transit system.

Low income people are severely limited without public transportation.

7. Expand the Earned Income Tax Credit Program which rewards workers.

15% of persons eligible for the program are not utilizing it.

8. Increase the use of Civil Citations for juveniles and increase judicial oversight of Direct File which transfers juvenile offenders directly into adult court.

Change Florida statutes to require the use of civil citations for less serious offences and require legal representation for any youth where Direct File is an option prior to the decision. Currently, youth in different counties are treated differently.

9. Restore rights to felons who have served their sentences.

1.7 million former felons cannot vote in Florida. They are also precluded from most forms of public assistance which could help them return to a regular life.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO JOIN OUR EFFORT, CONTACT BETH HOVIND; bethse@gmail.com

Social Policy in Florida

Libraries

- Support full funding of eligible public library systems as provided in Section 257.27 Florida Statutes.

Other Issues

Eliminate conflict of interests among legislators.
Provide children's medical insurance.



LWV North Pinellas 2018 Calendar

- January 24, 2018 LWVNPC will participate in the Indian Rocks Beach Candidates Forum Wednesday, by providing a Moderator, Timekeepers, and Question Collectors.
*see list below
- January 21 FYI Women's March, 12:30-4:30 pm, Williams Park, 350 2nd Ave N., St. Petersburg
- January 29 Candidates Forum, Belleair Beach
*see list below
- February 1 Candidates Forum, Safety Harbor
*see list below
- February 5 International Relations, Latin America, Monday 2pm Pinellas Park Library
- February 6-7 Legislative Summit, Tallahassee
- February 10 General Meeting, Dunedin Public Library, 10am Hot Topic-TBA
- February 13 Board of Directors Meeting 3:30 pm at Karen Karinja's,
- **February 21-23 FYI FREE St. Petersburg World Affairs Conference**, with outstanding speakers, USF Student Center, St. Petersburg
- March 5 International Relations, Geopolitics of Energy, Monday 2 pm Pinellas Park Library
- March 13 Board of Directors Meeting at Countryside Library 3:30 pm
- March 17 National Popular Vote, speaker Deb Mazzaferro, Dunedin Public Library 10 am
- April 2 International Relations, Saudi Arabia, Monday 2 pm Pinellas Park Library
- April 10 Board of Directors Meeting 3:30pm at Karen K
- ❖ **Saturday, April 28, 10-1. LWVNPC 2018 ANNUAL MEETING:** Jeff Johnson, Florida AARP State Director, at Countryside County Club, [3001 Countryside Blvd, Clearwater, FL 33761X](#), [727-796-2153](#). 10am Annual Meeting open to all LWVNPC members at no charge. Luncheon and speaker follows at a cost of \$30.00. Free valet parking. Additional information and reservation information will be sent to all members and available on our website: [LWVnorthpinellas.org](#)
- May 18-19 Council, Orlando

2018 LWVNPC Candidate Forums

Belleair Beach Monday 1.29.18 - confirmed

- Election type: Councilmembers (vote for up to 4)
- Forum date: Monday, January 29, 2018
- Meet & Greet: No
- Forum Time: 7PM to 8PM
- LWV arrival time 6:30PM
- Location: City Council Chambers, 444 Causeway Blvd. Belleair Beach 33786 – 3326
- Councilmembers Candidates (vote for up to 4):
Rob Baldwin

Marv Behm
Julie "Jewels" Chandler
Glenn Gunn
Nicolas Pavouris
Jody Shirley
Moderator: Marti Folwell
Moderator Trainee: Pat Windon
Timekeepers: Delia Miller & Becki Snyder
Timekeeper Trainee: Martha Clayton
Assistants: Anne Decker & Martha Clayton

Safety Harbor Thursday 2.1.18 - confirmed

- Sponsoring organization: Safety Harbor Chamber of Commerce and Safety Harbor Resort & Spa
- Election type: Commissioners Seat 1, 2, & 3
- Forum date: Thursday, February 1, 2018
- Meet & Greet: 6-6:30
- Forum Time: 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM (normally doesn't run that long)
- LWV arrival time: 5:30PM
- Location: Safety Harbor Resort and Spa Baranoff theater, 105 N. Bayshore Dr. SH
- Question priority: chamber supplies with questions & questions from audience
- Commissioners Candidates –all are confirmed

Seat 1 (Vote for 1)	Seat 2 (Vote for 1)	Seat 3 (Vote for 1)
Nancy J. Besore	Spencer Bell	Damon Lister
Scott Long	Cliff Merz	Andy Zodrow

Moderator: Marti Folwell
Moderator Trainee: Pat Windon, Ellen Siegman, Roberta Thorpe
Timekeepers: Delia Miller & Roslyn Banks, Vicki Cohen training
Assistants: Kathy & Bill Masalski
Videographer:

We're 70!

The LWV North Pinellas Chapter will celebrate its 70th anniversary in 2018. This is a prime opportunity to highlight our chapter's achievements, past leadership and its role in the future of our county.

To bring many voices to this effort, Barbara Letvin has volunteered to steer the planning committee. She is interested in involving members who can suggest ideas, lunch venues, a prominent speaker, fundraising options, sponsors and anything that will personalize the celebrations. Barbara prepared fundraisers for the Resource Center for Women in Largo and the Connections Job Development Program in New Port Richey where she also advised women on job search skills. Prior to her move to Florida in 1998, she was the director of International Student Services at Rochester Institute of Technology, taught fourth grade and served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Thailand.

"I prefer to talk to members on the phone for ideas, email too, and occasional short, crisp meetings," she said. "Members have busy lives, so I will be flexible."

Barbara would like to hear from you! Call her at 727-858-1402 or email her at bletvin64@hotmail.com with your thoughts. If you're interested in a short-term project and want to lend a hand, this committee might be for you. Your participation is important to bring greater visibility to our chapter, attract new members and strengthen its fiscal stability.