



The VOTER December 2023

President's Corner

Hello fellow league members! Since there many items coming up quickly, I'm going to highlight them here, but read the articles below for meeting details and other great information.



- November 30 - Deadline to take action on TECO rate hike. Click [here](#) for details. Per Pat Hall, you can also call Angelina, aide to Gabrielle Passadomo, at 850-413-6042.
- December 1 at 1pm - LWV-FL Lunch & Learn (Virtual)
- December 2 at 2pm - Urban League 'Voting 4 Women' Panel' at St. James Church at the Encore
- December 4 at 6pm - Evening Monthly Issues Update Meeting
- December 6 at 9am - Morning Monthly Issues Update Meeting
- December 6 at 5pm - Deciphering the NPV (Virtual)
- December 9 at 11am - Caryle Cammisa Environmental Justice Think Tank

If you had trouble registering for our Monthly Issues Update meetings, please let me know. I can register you and once registered, you will receive automatic reminders with the link before each meeting.

Petitions! Petitions! Petitions! Please read the articles below on how to help in this final month to collect petitions to get Abortion on the Ballot. There is a link in the 'It's all about Petitioning' article to events planed in the communities where the ost petitions are still needed. And don't forget the 'Right to Clean Water' petition also.

See details below and RSVP for our Holiday Party, which will be after the holidays (per popular demand) on January 9th. [Click here for the league's calendar of events for meeting details and links.](#)

Lunch & Learn on December 1!



Don't delay! This week's webinar from the Florida LWV features a program centered around the need to ensure that all voters have an equal opportunity to vote and have that vote count.

Register [HERE](#) to join the 1 p.m. webinar. If you can't join live, look out for the recording of the webinar in the LWVFL biweekly newsletter: The Florida Voter.

In an era where the integrity of elections is paramount, understanding and actively participating in efforts to protect our democracy and electoral process is essential. Safeguarding elections is vital for the health and sustainability of democratic societies. It ensures that elections are free, fair, and representative, fostering public trust, political stability, and the protection of fundamental human rights.

Join us on December 1st as we learn more from voting rights and election protection organizational leaders from across our state on ways we can work together to eliminate barriers to voting and ensure that all eligible citizens have an equal opportunity to participate in the electoral process.



Post-Holiday Party



All League members and guests are invited to celebrate the new year at our Annual Post-Holiday Party! We are gathering at 6:30 pm, Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2024, at the New World Brewery, [810 E. Skagway Ave., Tampa](#), near the intersection of Busch Boulevard and Nebraska Avenue.

The League will provide finger food such as pizza, sliders, hummus, and garlic knots. We will also provide one drink ticket per person. Please let us know any dietary restrictions so we can accommodate your needs. Additional food and drinks are also available for purchase.

We will gather on an outdoor patio with picnic tables, which offers privacy while also allowing us to enjoy the rest of the facility.

There is no charge to attend, and we encourage you to bring guests and potential League members!

Please RSVP no later than Tuesday, Dec. 19 [HERE](#)

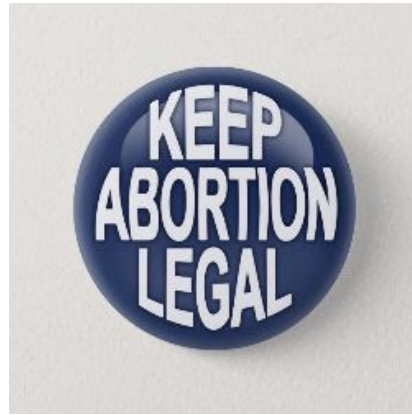
Petitions: The Good News (and the Bad)

by Laurie Winkles, Chair, Healthcare Action Group, healthcare@hclwv.org

First, let's hear it for Ohio!

Second, we have made progress on the abortion petition in Florida! Floridans Protecting Freedom (FPF) announced this week that we no longer need to collect petitions from the entire state of Florida.

Instead, FPF asks that we center collection efforts on **ten specific Congressional Districts** where more petitions are needed to satisfy geographic diversity requirements.



Put on your petitioning hats, because **two** of these districts include parts of Hillsborough and Pasco Counties.

<u>District #</u>	<u>Major Cities</u>
2	Tallahassee, Panama City, Crawford, Panama City Beach
3	Gainesville, Ocala, Newberry, Alachua
7	Oviedo, Port Orange, Longwood, New Smyrna Beach, Sanford
9	South Orlando, Kissimmee, St.Cloud
15	North Tampa/University, Lutz, Temple Terrace, Lakeland, Wesley Chapel
16	Bradenton, Riverview, Sun City Center, Valrico
17	Sarasota, Venice, Port Charlotte, Punta Gorda
21	Port St. Lucie, Jupiter, Palm Beach Gardens, West Palm Beach
22	Boynton Beach, Delray Beach, Lake Worth
23	Boca Raton, Ft Lauderdale, Coral Springs

What's the bad news? Well, we've met the minimum number of required petitions in only four congressional districts state-wide.

Plus, this is **the final month** to collect petitions. This is the final effort to place an amendment on the 2024 ballot to limit government interference with reproductive rights. Both volunteers and paid petition collectors have worked to ensure enough ballots are validated by enough Supervisors of Elections, but as hard as we have tried, we do not have enough.

Many petitions are invalid. Please make sure your friends, family, and others fill out their petitions correctly.

It's All About Petitioning

If you zoomed into the Lunch and Learn on Nov. 17, you heard that the Florida House website with the petition count will be updated Dec. 1 and then weekly after that. Check out that page at <https://dos.elections.myflorida.com/initiatives> if you wish to follow the numbers.

In the meantime, help us build up the numbers. The most efficient way to collect the most petitions in the shortest amount of time is to work the crowds at big events.

Collection events may be found on the [FPF events webpage](#). Planned Parenthood, Progress Florida, NOW Florida and other groups are also posting and/or organizing petition-gathering events. You can also check your social media, the newspapers, and your friends to find other events where you can gather petitions. Anywhere where

people are standing in lines is good. Anywhere where people are lounging in parks or other venues. Anywhere where there are people, basically.



If you haven't been out in the field yet, training for new petition collectors is held every week - [training registration link is here](#). The main point is to make sure each petition is completed correctly!

We can't let Ohio have all the glory!

The Abortion Ban and the Florida Supreme Court

by Laurie Winkles, Chair, Healthcare Action Group, healthcare@hclwv.org

Don't forget that the Florida Supreme Court is expected to make a decision soon on whether the 15-week ban is legal. (If the decision is that it is legal, the six-week ban will come into effect 30 days later.)

As a reminder, the Court announces its decisions on Thursdays. When this decision comes down, there will be some events that night. There will be large events two days later, on Saturday, in every county in Florida. Rally organizers will send out details. As soon as we hear about events in our counties, we will let you know.

We are in the middle of what might be for some the busiest time of the year, but we cannot lose focus on the most valuable gift of all: guaranteeing women access to abortion and other means of reproductive health care. This fight has just begun.

Sponsors for the Lunchtime Achievement Awards

We will host our 16th Annual Lifetime Achievement Awards Luncheon on Wednesday, February 28, 2024. During this event, we will present the Lifetime Achievement Award to Rev. Sharon Streater of Hillsborough Organization for Progress and Equality (HOPE) and the Nehemiah Action Plan and the Sydney & Thalia Potter Civic Leadership Award to Carlton Ward, Jr., National Geographic Photographer.

If you would like to sponsor this event or if you would like a copy of the letter to prospective sponsors, please contact Angela Birdsong at laa@hclwv.org.

National Popular Vote in Florida?

Few of us want the candidate who loses the popular vote to become President of the United States, which is entirely possible with the current statewide "winner take all" system. In 2006, the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact was introduced. It's an elegant solution to ensure that the candidate with the most votes in all 50 states wins the presidency.

According to this [article](#) in the Florida Phoenix, this idea is becoming more popular across

partisan lines. What this article gets wrong is that it states that NPV would eliminate the Electoral College. It does not; instead, it uses the electoral college system, just as is done now, with state legislatures directing their electors how to vote, consistent with their state law. NPV, where it is passed, changes state law from winner-take-all in that state to selecting electors by national popular vote.

Learn how the NPV can be implemented without a constitutional amendment. The LWVFL is offering the opportunity for Floridians for the National Popular Vote to make presentations during the next year, sponsored and promoted by the LWVFL, to educate League members and other Floridians about NPV.

Suzanne Low, the NPV team leader for LWV Collier County and District Chair of Floridians for the National Popular Vote, will present "Deciphering the NPV" on zoom on December 6. **Register below to learn more and join us December 6 from 5:00 - 6:00 pm.** The League is welcoming anyone interested to attend, so invite your friends and colleagues to sign themselves up, too!

[Click here to register now!](#)

Water Petitions



In brief, print, sign, and send in your petition in [English](#) or [Spanish](#). No printer? No problem! Click [here](#) to have five blank petitions sent to you. If you would like to track the number of water petitions received, click on [myflorida.com](#).

P.S. If you would like a yard sign for this initiative, contact voter@hclwv.org.

Kick Up Your Commitment

Your nominating committee is already working to put together a slate of officers and board members for the 2024-25 League year that begins next July. This slate will be put before the membership at our annual meeting in the spring.

Currently we are seeking members to fill the position of treasurer, as well as several director positions and nominating committee members.



Regarding the treasurer's position, our administrative assistant handles the League's bookkeeping duties, so the treasurer is responsible for serving on the budget committee to create the following year's budget, monitoring and updating the budget, and reporting to the board each month. It is a two-year commitment.

Directors generally chair a committee or action group, or have other leadership roles with the League; these are also usually two-year positions. Plus, we elect three members of a nominating committee, including a chair, each year.

We would love to hear from you if you have interest in serving on the board in any of these capacities, or if you want to recommend someone to fill a position! Please contact

our chair, Idelia Phillips, at nominatons@hclwv.org, or reach out to any of our committee members: Mary Switzer, Cindy Wilson, Ida Williams Campbell, and Christine Bright.

Caryle Cammisa Think Tank Event, Corrected

Last month, we ran this same graphic but the url to register was broken. It has been fixed. Please rsvp to tinyurl.com/ejusticethinktank. Please note that the time has been extended and is now 11 to 3. See you there!

DEC 9 2023

The CARYLE CAMMISA Environmental Justice Think Tank: The State of the Black & Brown Communities

11:00am - 3:00pm
The Reed Apartments
1240 Ray Charles Blvd
Tampa, Florida 33602

Register: tinyurl.com/ejusticethinktank

By the way, if you wish to contribute to a memorial bench in Caryle's name, go [here](#).

Another Plug for Katelyn Jetelina

We should all be so lucky to have Katelyn Jetelina as our local epidemiologist, and, luckily we all are! Read her regular posts about COVID. [This one](#) is about how states are withholding data about the pandemic. Not surprisingly, the Sunshine State is mentioned in the first paragraph and regularly after that.

Pasco Citizens Academy

Would you like to know more about how Pasco County's budget is developed, how the County is structured, or the basic functions of Pasco County's Constitutional Officers and administrative departments? Pasco County is now offering its Citizens Academy twice a year to provide citizens an opportunity to learn more about their county government.

For more information and the application, go to [Citizens Academy](#).

Pasco's Past

More interested in learning about Pasco County's past than its present? Interested in archaeological sites, museums, landmarks, and historic places? Check out this [new website](#) of historical and cultural resources.

Put On Your Dancing Shoes!*

Free zumba in Curtis Hixon Park every Tuesday at 6 pm!

*By "dancing shoes," we mean sneakers.

Urban League Events

Join the Urban League of Hillsborough County for the panel discussion "Voting 4 Women", on Saturday Dec. 2, at 2 pm. The panel will include Darla Otey, Erin Smith Abel, Esq., and Kathy Times. The event will be at St. James Church at the Encore, 1202 N. Governors St., Tampa. Find out more by contacting info@ulhc.org, 813-695-7422, or 813 404 6172 (cell).

The Urban League is also looking for volunteers for two events this month:

Unity in Our Community: December 10, 2023, Perry Harvey, Sr. Park, 1-5 pm, volunteers for a one-hour increment of time to provide voter and workforce development information.

Christmas Black History Book Give Away: December 16, 2023, Encore Apt. Complex (One of two locations, TBD) 2-3 pm. Distribute Black history books.

Sign up by writing to info@ulhc.org by Dec. 5.

1000 Friends of Florida



The 2024 Florida Legislative Session, slated to start on Tuesday, January 9, will have significant public policy impact on planning, conservation, transportation, community design, and other issues of concern to many Floridians.

1000 Friends of Florida is offering a [free 2024 Legislative Preview Webinar](#) on Wednesday, December 13, from noon to 1:30 Eastern. They will share information on bills moving forward and how we can play a role in the session.

Learn more [here](#).



Suzy Lopez will be the speaker at Café con Tampa on Friday, Dec. 1. State Attorney Lopez is taking a unique approach as Hillsborough County's top prosecutor. Lopez will discuss how her boots-on-the-ground leadership style is rebuilding relationships and bridging gaps in the community to keep our neighborhoods safer for families.

Every Friday morning at 8:00, people gather at the downtown Tampa Portico to eat breakfast, listen, ask questions, and learn about what's going on in Tampa or just as likely the world at-large. Want to know about the city's latest development project? Eager to learn more about historic preservation? Have a question about the political landscape? Want to grill a city council member? No topic is off limits at Café con Tampa whose founders describe the forum as a place for insightful conversations. Find out more at <http://cafecontampa.com/>.

Arts and Artists

The free exhibit at The Dalí, *Leonora Carrington: Writer, Painter, Visionary* is on until Jan. 7, 2024. Visit this introduction to the remarkable life of Leonora Carrington, a Surrealist artist, sculptor and writer whose work deals with the visionary, the fantastic and the occult. Carrington produced more than 2,000 paintings and authored several notable written works. The exhibition highlights Carrington's personal life, her time as a painter, and her written work.

The Woodson Museum's exhibit of works by the Florida Highwaymen is up until January.

Angelika Kollin: Turning Darkness into Light is up at FMoPA through Dec. 10.

The Tampa Museum of Arts' two Haitian exhibits are on display until 2024.

Tiger Bay Club

This month's month's discussion is, well, not a discussion. Join Tiger Bay on Dec. 15 for a holiday party.



The Tampa Tiger Bay Club is a non-partisan political group that usually presents candidates running for office and lively discussions on important issues. To find out more and/or to purchase a ticket to attend, go to <https://www.tigerbayclub.com/>.



Local Theater and Film

If you are quick, you can still catch *Funny Girl* at the Straz.

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute - USF

There are no OLLI courses starting in December. To get a headstart on winter classes, check the website. Registration has already begun! Winter lecturers include Angela Birdsong, Ron Weaver, and Anne Strozier!



Also check out the Shared Interest Groups on China, Politics, and more. Find out more at www.usfseniors.org.

Tampa Bay History Center

- Selected December programs include:
- A discussion of Black churches in Tampa, followed by a gospel performance!
- Stories about War and Peace in Vietnam
- Ybor City Walking Tour
- Downtown Tampa Walking Tour
- Central Avenue Walking Tour



Find out more [here!](#)

Florida Humanities

No in-person Florida Humanities programs popped up for December in Hillsborough or Pasco Counties, but there are a few virtual events. Learn more [here](#).



Hillsborough County residents are in the Tampa Bay Sierra Club while Pasco County residents can join either the Tampa Bay Sierra Club or the Suncoast Sierra Club! Both clubs are active. In December, the Tampa Bay Sierra Club has a holiday party, two hikes, and a holiday lit boat party. Find out more at <https://www.sierraclub.org/florida/tampa-bay>.

The Suncoast group has its own holiday party and has a great list of all events sponsored by three regional Sierra Clubs. Take a look at <https://www.sierraclub.org/florida/suncoast>.

One nice benefit of belonging to and volunteering with a local Sierra Club is that members may be able to attend events at Raymond James Stadium in exchange for educating the crowd about recycling. How cool is that? (Don't let the word get out!)

Upcoming Member Meetings

Dec. 4, 6-7 pm, Monthly Issues Update Meeting

Dec 6, 9-10 am, Monthly Issues Update Meeting (repeat)

Dec. 11, 6:30-8:30, HCLWV Board Meeting. Contact president@hclwv.org.

Check the League's website [calendar of events](#) throughout the month for new meetings and events.

Want to know what's coming up? You can now subscribe to our HCLWV Events Calendar so our events show up on your online calendar! Find the subscribe link just below the calendar heading [here](#).



*Be a sponsor and get your ticket today!
16th Annual Lifetime Achievement Award Luncheon
11:30 am - 1:00 pm Feb. 28 at the Glazer Family JCC
Go to hclwv.org/laa to sign up!*

EMPOWERING VOTERS. DEFENDING DEMOCRACY.

League of Women Voters of Hillsborough and Pasco Counties

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P.O. Box 1801, Tampa, FL 33601-1801

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