

The VOTER March 2024

President's Corner

Thank you so much to everyone who helped make our 2024 Lifetime Achievement Awards Luncheon so amazing! So much support from our community and our honorees were both so inspiring (see more info below)! Welcome to our 28 new members from the event! It was also nice to meet in person many other newer members for the first time. I hope many of you can join us next week for our virtual Issues Update meetings.



Scroll all the way to the bottom for a list of our upcoming events. (You can also always find them on hclwv.org). I am also looking forward to participating in next week's table at St. Leo's Women's History Month Celebration (table is full - thank you!). Look below for the sign-up for the five events at the Voice & Votes: Democracy in America exhibition starting March 23rd. And see also the request below for help coordinating Community Hot Topic and Candidate Forum events.

If you have a particular area of interest that you don't see mentioned, please reach out to me at president@hclwv.org.

The Lifetime Achievement Awards Luncheon

The 2024 Lifetime Achievement Awards Luncheon was a huge success.

Congratulations to our honorees:

Sharon Streater, Lifetime Achievement Award Winner &
Carlton Ward Jr., Sidney & Thalia Potter Civic Leadership Award Winner!



A big shout out to our table sponsors, including Andy Harris (above left) and also Linda Martel D'Aquila, COL (Ret) Anthony J. D'Aquila, Elizabeth Corwin, Girl Scouts of West Central Florida, 200 Muslim Women Who Care, Lenora Lake-Guidry and Joe Guidry, the Pasco Action Group of the HCLWV, Tampa Bay Sierra Club, USF Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), and the Women's Council of NAREB. We so appreciate their support!! Thank you also to Gary Gibbons, who provided all our fabulous event photos! You may find our event program [here](#). We'll also share more photos from the event very soon on our website [here](#).



This year we had eight Past Presidents in attendance: Liana Fernandez Fox (1991-92), Linda Martel D'Aquila (2007-09), Deborah Kauffman (2021-22), Shirley Arcuri (2014-16), Nancy Granda (1984-86), Maryellin Territo (1978), Pat Hall (1988-89), and Mickey Castor (2010-13).

The fabulous centerpieces made by [Community Stepping Stones](#) out of recycled campaign yard signs will make another appearance at our Annual Meeting!

See More of Carlton Ward Jr.

Hear more from Carlton Ward Jr., on March 7 from 5:30 to 7:00 pm at the Florida Museum of Photographic Arts as he gives an artist talk about his exhibition "Carlton Ward, Jr.: Path of the Panther."



The exhibit is on display until March 17, 2024. Purchase tickets for the artist talk [here](#). Of course, you can see Carlton's work every day if you put this license plate on your car(s).

League Voter Registration Orientation

Are you a new member interested in registering voters? Or just need a review of the process? This orientation session is for you!!

Saturday, March 16, 3-4 pm - Click button below to register!

This will be a focused and comprehensive overview of the voter registration process. The structured program will be 30 minutes or less and then it will be open discussion for questions. We will cover:

- Becoming certified to register voters
- Engaging the public in a non-partisan manner
- Review of the process and alignment with election laws
- Acceptable modes of voter registration
- Materials to bring to an event

[Register for the March 16 Orientation!](#)

Voices and Votes Exhibit
Sulphur Springs Museum: March 23 - May 19

Our league partnered with the Sulphur Springs Museum to bring the "Voice & Votes: Democracy in America" traveling exhibit to our community! Please join us for the **Grand Opening on March 23, 1-3 pm**. The youth groups Community Stepping Stones and Battleground Poets will also be there.

We will be hosting a League table at the Grand Opening and for the 2-3 pm Sunday Speaker Series events on April 7, April 21, May 5, and May 19.

Sulphur Springs
MUSEUM AND HERITAGE CENTER
1101 E. River Cove St., Tampa, FL 33604
www.sulphurspringsmuseum.org

**Voices and Votes:
Democracy in America**

March 23 – May 19, 2024

This multi-media exhibition, created by the Smithsonian, explores the 250-year-old American experiment of a government "of, by and for the people," from revolution and suffrage, to civil rights and protest.

Grand Opening
Saturday, March 23, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Art and poetry from youth groups Community Stepping Stones and Battleground Poets.
League of Women Voters; Hillsborough County Election Supervisor; elected officials, and community partners.

Sunday Speakers: 2 p.m.

April 7: Dr. David Ponton, USF:
"Racial Subordination & the Meaning of Democracy,"
April 21: Dr. Kimberly Voss, U of Central Florida:
"Politicking Politely: Women Making a Difference in the 1960s and 1970s."
May 5: Dr. Philip Levy, USF:
"The Act that Ruined America, and How to Fix It."
May 19: Dr. Elizabeth Aranda, USF:
"Contemporary Challenges to Im/migrant Rights."

Logos for Sulphur Springs Museum, LWV League of Women Voters, Smithsonian Florida, and Florida Humanities are at the bottom.

[Click here for more info and to sign up](#)

The museum is located at 1101 E. River Cove St., Tampa 33604.

We hope many league members will join us for the Grand Opening! We may have state league leadership in attendance and also an impromptu member social afterwards!

More about the exhibit:

Museum on Main Street "Voices and Votes" will be on view at the Sulphur Springs Museum and Heritage Center March 23-May 19. When American revolutionaries waged a war for independence, they took a leap of faith that sent ripple effects across generations. They embraced a radical idea of establishing a government that entrusted the power of the nation not in a monarchy, but in its citizens. That great leap sparked questions that continue to impact Americans: who has the right to vote, what are the freedoms and responsibilities of citizens, and whose voices will be heard? "Voices & Votes: Democracy in America" will be a springboard for discussions about those very questions and how they are reflected in local stories.

This exhibit is based on a major exhibition currently on display at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. This Museum on Main Street adaptation will have many of the same dynamic features: historical and contemporary photos; educational and archival video; engaging multimedia games; and historical objects such as campaign souvenirs, voter memorabilia, and protest material.

The museum is open Weds. through Sat., 11 am-4 pm. Admission is free but a donation of \$5 is suggested. Learn more at [Florida Humanities](#) or at [hclwv.org](#).

Gun Bills in Tallahassee

Good news for now! HB17, known as the Charleston Loophole (named for the massacre at the Charleston church where the killer bought his weapon before the completion of the background check), does not have a Senate version.

More good news! HB 1223, lowering the age for purchasing long guns from 21 to 18, a repeal of the Parkland Law, also does not have a Senate counterpart.

At the federal level, Rep. Adam Schiff is sponsoring HB 4184, a 13-year-old bill. This bill is a repeal of the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act of 2005 and would remove the immunity from lawsuits that gun manufacturers currently enjoy.

See [here](#) how gun policies save lives. If you want to follow gun violence and gun safety

more closely, *The Trace* is an on-line news site that tracks laws, bills, and shootings across the country. *The Trace* offers a weekly and a daily compilation. Sign up at [The Trace](#).

Moving Maternal Health Forward Event

The Florida Department of Health in Hillsborough is hosting a full-day event "*Moving Maternal Health Forward in 2024*," on Thursday, April 18, 2024 8am - 2pm. This event will be held at the Children's Board in downtown Tampa and will provide an opportunity to learn and connect with others about health issues affecting individuals before, during, and after pregnancy. This event is open to anyone working in a maternal and child health related field or anyone interested in health issues affecting moms. [Click here for event website](#).

Please contact healthcare@hclwv.org if you can attend this event on behalf of our League.

Nominate a League Member to the Florida Women's Hall of Fame!

Annually since 1982, the Florida Women's Hall of Fame commemorates women's history by honoring and remembering those women whose lives and contributions have improved the quality of life for both Florida and the nation. With this in mind, we ask that you take time to nominate a deserving woman who has made a difference in the lives of those they serve.

The Florida Women's Hall of Fame is located on the Plaza Level in the rotunda of the Florida Capitol building, where a bronze plaque with an image and biographical summary of each member of the Women's Hall of Fame hangs in tribute. In addition, two digital kiosks allow visitors to engage in a more interactive experience.

We would like our members to consider nominating our local and state-wide heroines to be entered into the Hall of Fame. More information can be found here: flwomenshalloffame.org.

Update on New College

The American Association of University Professors voted recently to sanction New College for substantial non-compliance with academic governance standards. The AAUP outlines an unprecedented politically motivated takeover and the imposition of an aggressively ideological agenda marked by a complete departure from shared governance. These actions have "impaired, if not irreparably damaged, the collective and individual functions of the New College faculty."

The AAUP has sanctioned just thirteen schools since 1995, including New College.

Getting the Young to Vote

Professor emeritus Susan MacManus spoke at Café con Tampa in January and, as usual, it was worth taking notes. One of her main topics was how to get young people engaged. Susan had the following suggestions:

- Inspire and engage;
- Don't condescend;
- Value diversity;

- Prioritize issues rather than principles, the top issues for young people being the environment and education; (Note that only 7% of voters have reproductive rights as a main concern.);
- Mentor;
- Use visual aids; and
- Make use of influencers.

I.e., do not present them with information that looks like this Voter item. Use pictures and charts.

Getting Out the Vote with Pictures Mural Project



This is not our mural. The St. Pete LWV commissioned this during the last presidential campaign to encourage voting.

This is not our mural either. This is the second mural commissioned by the St. Pete LWV in 2020.



THE LEAGUE'S MESSAGE HERE WITH THE SOE QR CODE

This blank slate could be our mural!

We are working with [Tampa Walls](#) and [Soaring City](#) to put up at least one mural in Tampa this spring! Exciting, yes?

Our mural(s) will have a QR code that enables passers-by to go directly to the SOE's website to start the voter registration process. We could also include QR codes for former felons and/or those requesting a VBM ballot. Way cool, yes? We can even keep track of how many people click on the QR code.

And our first mural will be located in precinct 566 in the former Suitcase City, a large precinct with a small voter turn-out. Additional murals, if we raise enough money for more, will also be located in low-voting precincts.

Would you like to be involved? There are three ways:

1. Stand in for project lead, Elizabeth Corwin, March 10 through April 10, while she will have little access to internet; this could involve checking out potential walls and/or artists. Contact Elizabeth at voter@hclwv.org.
2. Help choose the artist(s). Tampa Walls will provide images of works by local artists who are available this spring and we will select from them a few artists who will be asked to provide rough sketches. The HCLWV Board will select the final design, but we want your input!
3. Give money! Soaring Cities is a 501(c)3 organization so all donations are tax-deductible. You can give money on their website, <https://soaring.city>, but please send a concurrent email to suzi@soaringcity.com, telling her that your donation is for the LWV mural project. Or you can write a check and put "LWV mural project" in the memo line. Murals range from \$4,000 to \$10,000, depending on their size and the artists' fees.

[Donate for the Mural](#)

League Member Help Needed to Get Information Out to the Community!

Once upon a time, we organized, co-organized, and sponsored events. Then came COVID. We rarely do that anymore. We also have had organizations ask us to co-host candidate forums with them. But we need help to do everything we want to do!

Would you be willing to work on a committee to set up 'Hot Topics' events to share important information in our community? Would you help coordinate Candidate Forums? Please reach out to president@hclwv.org.

[Yes, I can help!](#)

Take the Survey on Hillsborough County Transportation

What comes next for safe roads, sidewalks, and bike paths in Hillsborough County? Add your thoughts via the Long Range Transportation Plan survey! This is your chance to have your voice heard as the Transportation Planning Organization sets its goals for our county's future.

One thing ominously missing from this survey: the relative cost of different project options. Road widening projects are more expensive by far than retrofitted safety projects, sidewalks, and trails. For example, the Florida Department of Transportation is designing a project to expand less than one mile of Gibsonton Drive, Riverview, from four lanes to six lanes for a proposed project cost of \$38 million. That amount could alternatively fund an entire new HART bus route or almost 50 miles of new sidewalk.

All of the projects and priorities listed on the survey are under consideration, whether urged by residents, elected officials, or state officials. The survey results will help determine which of these items receive top billing, so to speak, in county plans.

As you consider transportation priorities in this survey, remember that this is a Long Range Plan. How do you want the county to look in 2050? How do you want your children and grandchildren to be able to move around this region? It's up to you.

Find the survey [here](#).

Free Trees

Just a reminder that the City of Tampa will give you and your neighbors trees for free! Developers have to put money into a fund when they chop down trees and there is now over a million dollars in this fund. Let's get these trees planted! There is no cost to you - the City will even plant the tree(s) for you.

Just call 813-274-8615 or visit [Tree-Mendous-Tampa](#).

The Trees available are:

Live Oak, Florida Maple, Bald Cypress, Loblolly Pine, Purple Tabebuia, Yellow Tabebuia, Bottle Brush, Geiger Orange, Japanese Blueberry, Loquat, Silver Buttonwood, Crape Myrtle Natchez

Tampa used to have the largest canopy in an urban area in the world. We can see in our own neighborhoods how the trees have been coming down in record numbers and a recent report released by the City confirms it.

Learn about the benefits of trees [here](#). Learn how trees can save us money [here](#).

Please help spread the word!

Future Land Use Hearing March 7

Hillsborough County Planning Commission staff is bringing forth the final draft of the Unincorporated Hillsborough County Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Section update. The hearing is set for 6 pm Thursday, March 7 before the Board of County Commissioners, and anyone wishing to speak must register in advance two days before the meeting. This a hybrid virtual/in-person meeting, held in the 2nd floor boardroom of County Center, 601 E. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa 33602.

According to their notice, "The purpose of this update is to ensure that the character and location of land uses optimize the combined potential for economic benefit and the enjoyment and protection of natural resources while minimizing the threat to health, safety, and welfare posed by hazards, nuisances, incompatible land uses, and environmental degradation."

The proposed Section update is composed of **8 separate Plan Amendments**, one for each of the proposed goals. The [8 individual packets](#) for the March 7 BOCC Public Hearing are available.

If you wish to provide public comment at this public hearing, [please register 48 hours ahead of time here](#). Please note, the public hearing public comment registration link only opens 48 hours ahead of the meeting.

The Planning Commission found all eight Plan Amendments consistent at the January 22 public hearing ([watch the recording here](#)) and is sending their recommendation to the BOCC for the March 7 public hearing.

The latest information on the update can be found on the [project page](#).

Gasparilla Festival of the Arts

Come this weekend to the Gasparilla Festival of the Arts in Julian B. Lane Park. Over 250 artists and craftspeople from around the country and beyond will be showing and selling their work, including a number of local artists and artisans. It's 9-6 on Saturday and 10-5 on Sunday.

In addition to the artists' booths, there will be live music both days and plenty of food trucks and carts. If you have children, take them to make art and/or buy art -- there is a booth where kids can buy works from the participating artists for \$5-\$20. Check out the kids' activities at [kids](#).

For information about the festival in general, see [GFA](#).

By the way, you can ride your bike and park it safely with the Bike Valet and bring your own water bottle to fill up at the County's super water bottle filler. The GFA is getting greener.

Fancy Women Bike Ride

Dress up, hop on your bike and join Walk Bike Tampa and other bicycle safety organizations in the first ever Spring Fancy Women Bike Ride, on Saturday, March 16.

(Last fall's Fancy Women started out from Perry Harvey Park.)



Meet in the center square of Midtown Tampa at 10 am for talks and photos and roll out of the square at 10:30 am. The ride will go from Midtown to Downtown for the St. Patrick's Day festivities. Enjoy the sights, have lunch, and return to Midtown by 1pm. For more information, find details at [Fancy Women](#).

Celebrate the 27th Annual Women's History Month

Please join Mayor Jane Castor for the [27th Annual Women's History Month Celebration](#) on March 5 at 10:30 am, including a presentation of the [Josephine Howard Stafford Memorial Award](#) to Ocea Wynn, Administrator of Neighborhood and Community Affairs. The presentation will take place at the Tampa Bay History Center. Details are [here](#).

Brownfield Clean-Up

Do you know of a contaminated property within the City of Tampa that has the potential for reuse or development? With funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Brownfield Assessment Grant, the City of Tampa is working to clean up safely and reuse sustainably these contaminated properties. Current and future Tampa property owners are encouraged to [learn more about this program & apply here](#) by August 31.

Interested in an E-Bike but Hindered by the Price?

The City of Tampa's [eBike Voucher Program](#) is back - providing Tampa residents with an opportunity to receive a \$1,000 - \$3,000 discount on new eBikes. The program helps residents overcome some existing barriers to eBike ownership, provides access to reliable transportation to jobs, promotes sustainable transportation, and improves the City's carbon footprint. Applications will be accepted from March 1-15.

Join the City of Tampa and some participating local bike shops at one of four opportunities to test an eBike. E-bikes, helmets, instructors, and waivers to ride the bicycles will be available at these sites:

March 1, 5-7 pm: Ragan Park (1200 E. Lake Ave)
March 5, 5-7 pm: Al Lopez Park (4810 N. Himes Ave)
March 13, 5-7 pm: Copeland Park (11001 N. 15th St.)
March 14, 5-7 pm: Ballast Point Park (5300 Interbay Blvd.)

Summer Camps

The following organizations are among many offering summer programs for kids:

Little Red Wagon Nursery
Humane Society of Hillsborough County
American Stage Theatre in St. Pete
Tampa Museum of Art
Tampa Theatre
Tampa Bay History Center
City of Tampa Parks and Recreation
Glazer Children's Museum
Florida Aquarium
Berkeley Prep
Tampa Prep
Hillsborough County Schools
MOSI

Paid Summer Internships

The [East Tampa CRA Summer Youth Program](#) is now accepting applications! Students ages 16-19 can receive paid, hands-on groundskeeping experience through this internship program. Participants must be enrolled in a Hillsborough County school and live in zip codes 33602, 33603, 33604, 33605, 33610, or 33619.

And We Haven't Even Talked About Abortions

We are still waiting for the Florida Supreme Court to rule on the 15-week abortion ban, which, if left to stand, would automatically trigger the imposition of the even more drastic six-week ban, which would basically shut down the practice of abortion in Florida and turn us into Texas.

We are also still waiting to hear whether the Florida Supreme Court will approve the language in the ballot referendum. If it does, then vote yes on 4 in November!



Breaking News! As this issue of the Voter was being finalized, NOW reported that FL Senator Erin Grall has given up on her attempt to get SB 476 passed. SB 476 would have mandated penalties for the wrongful deaths of unborn children.

Why did Grall back down? Florida legislators received over 45,000 messages from their constituents, asking them to vote "no." Yay us!

1000 Friends of Florida Legislative Wrap-Up

1000 Friends' [annual free legislative wrap-up webinar takes place at 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 20](#) this year. 1000 Friends focuses on environmental and growth topics, so expect this webinar to cover key bills and budget recommendations related to planning and growth management, conservation, transportation, and water that passed or failed during the 2024 Session.

Register for the webinar at [1000 Friends](#).



Café con Tampa brings together community activists every Friday morning at 8:00, at the downtown Tampa Portico, for coffee, breakfast, community announcements, networking and a talk. Come 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/>.

The March 2 Café con Tampa will be a community forum. Feel free to bring up any topic of interest to the community or a topic you think should be of interest to the community.



Don't miss "Embellish Me" and "Pepe Mar" at the Tampa Museum of Art! Catch Fashion Design, The Dalí Student Exhibit, at Florida CraftArt. Be amazed by Time Flies, Hours Flee, on March 20, the winter solstice at the St. Pete Museum of Fine Arts. Visit the Kress Building in Ybor City and see the studios and galleries there. Thursday evenings might be the best time to go.

Tiger Bay Club

The March 15 lunch will feature a forum of candidates for the Hillsborough County School Board county-wide district 7. Tiger Bay meets for lunch on the third Friday of the month for good conversation and enlightenment.



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

In March, see:

Color Theory at Powerstories and attend the Voice of Women Theatre Festival;
The Beauty Queen of Leenane at the Straz;
The Immigrant at Stageworks; and
Syd at LAB Theater.

See plays and attend other events at American Stage's "Lift Every Voice New Play Festival", March 1-3, at the James Museum of Western and Wildlife Art in St. Pete.

Attend the BIPOC play-reading at the Straz.

Enjoy and marvel at modern dance company MOMIX at the Straz, as well!

Get ready for a staged reading May 8-9 of *Jane: Abortion and the Underground*. The Janes are coming and you will love them.

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute - USF

OLLI courses are starting up again and registration has already begun! Spring lecturers include our own Anne Strozier, Susan Northcutt, and Ron Weaver!

Courses starting in March that jumped out are:

- The Dreyfus Affair
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Political and Cultural Consequences
- Florida Aquarium: Extreme Environments
- The Wicked Problem of Climate Change
- Great Decisions

Check out these course and more at [OLLI](#).

Also check out the Shared Interest Groups on China, politics, and more and the wonderful courses on technology for Luddites and people with skills and knowledge. Also, did you know that OLLI leads hikes, bike rides, kayak trips, and more?



Tampa Bay History Center

So much going on at TBHC this month, including the following programs

- A much awaited one-time return of the Madame Fortune Taylor Walking Tour of downtown Tampa
- Ybor City Walking Tour



- Downtown Tampa Walking Tour
- Live History Saturday
- Book discussion on *The Apartment: A Novel*, by Tampa-born and-raised Ana Menendez
- A Florida Conversation at Weedon Island on the Origins of Tampa Bay
- Living Saturday presentation on Tin Can Tourists Discovering Florida
- Free history lectures
- A five-day program during spring break focusing on movies set in Tampa and Florida.

Also, check out the on-line exhibit "Florida Front and Center," on Florida's history. You don't even have to leave the house.

Find out more at tampabayhistorycenter.org.

NAACP Hillsborough

Monthly meetings are usually the third Thursday of the month. Check the website at <https://naacphillsborough.org/> for more information.



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.

The Tampa Bay Club usually meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7 pm. Check <https://www.sierraclub.org/florida/tampa-bay> to see whether it is live or zoomed. Outings are planned for Marchh 2, 10, 16, and 23..

Take a look at <https://www.sierraclub.org/florida/suncoast>. The Pasco Conservation Team is meeting on March 13.

Upcoming Member Meetings

March 4, 6-7 pm, Monthly Issues Update Meeting. Register [here](#).

March 6, 9-10 am, Monthly Issues Update Meeting (repeat). Register [here](#).

March 20, 1-2:30 pm, Monthly Voter Protection Meeting. Email voterprotection@hclwv.org for more information and the link.

March 23, 1-3 pm, Grand Opening of "Voices and Votes" exhibit in Sulphur Springs.

March 25, 6:30-8:30, HCLWV Board. All members welcome. Meeting link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84852744779>

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](#).

EMPOWERING VOTERS. DEFENDING DEMOCRACY.

League of Women Voters of Hillsborough and Pasco Counties
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