

The VOTER July 2024

I am pleased to let you know that the Amendments 2024 training by the LWV of Florida will be held on Tuesday, July 2nd! This is the presentation that explains each of the Constitutional Amendments that will be on the Florida ballot in November. See details and registration link below. For those new to the process, the training will be an opportunity to vet the presentation. Some changes are usually made based on our feedback and the presentation will be made available soon after the training.



Please see an update on Vote411 below - launch date announced! See the request to you all to help get the word out.

This is the time of year when many of us typically renew our membership. Please watch for a renewal email or if you would like to renew right now, go to our [website](#) and click on 'member log-in' at the top left.

We expect to see election activities ramp up in the coming months. We have already been approached by USF & HCC to do tabling events at their campuses to get out the vote once school is back in session in August. Please watch for sign-ups for these events (coming soon!). And as usual, please reach out to me at president@hclwv.org or 813-787-7328 with any questions on how you can get involved.

Sandy Grant, in Memoriam

Sandra "Sandy" Grant, 82, of Kokomo, passed away peacefully on Sunday, June 16, 2024. Please help us celebrate the life of a long time league member. The youngest of 12 children, Sandy Schaefer Grant was born in Kokomo, Indiana in 1942. She majored in elementary education and was an outstanding, passionate teacher at Seffner Elementary School for many years. Sandy and her husband, "Grant" Grant, resided in the East Lake area. The HCLWV was enriched by Sandy's active participation. As her close friend Patricia Moran stated, "she was a force." Nothing done by Sandy was halfway; her character, intellect, integrity, and sense of humor were legendary to those of us lucky enough to have known her.



Sandy lobbied for the teachers union and famously stated, "I vote 12 times each election by virtue of the people I influence!"

After Sandy retired from teaching, she moved back to Kokomo. The League of Women Voters in Indiana was resurrected by the "always in charge" Sandy. The editor of the Kokomo paper asked Sandy to sit in on editorial board meetings and attend government meetings and they knew not to cross her!

Read more about Sandy [here](#).

Meet the Candidates!

Candidate forums listed here are not affiliated with the League of Women Voters unless specifically stated. The list is intended to provide our members with opportunities to vet candidates running for public office. They may be held by partisan groups.

- **Pasco County Non-partisan Race Candidates Forum: July 18th - 6 pm, Hudson Regional Library (8012 Library Rd, Hudson).** Our Pasco Action Group is co-sponsoring this event with the Pasco County National Organization for Women. All candidates in non-partisan races in the Aug. 20 Primary Election will take part in the forum. All candidates for the Pasco County School Board, Circuit and County Judge, and Mosquito Control have been invited to participate. Free and open to the public. If you are interested and available to volunteer, please contact the Pasco Action Group at .
- **Hillsborough County Candidates, July 10 - 2 pm, MidFlorida Credit Union (1112 S Dale Mabry).** The Leona Huddle will be hosting Starr Brookins, Ashley Brundage, Johnny Bush, Christine Edwards, Dee Jones, Nathan Kuipers, and Lisa McClean at its July 10 meeting. The Leona Huddle can be found on [Facebook](#).
- **Hillsborough County Florida State House Candidates, July 18 - 6 pm, Corner Club (corner of Sligh & 15th St, Tampa).** This forum is sponsored by the Hillsborough Democratic LGBTQ+ caucus. Contact them [here](#).
- **Hillsborough County Florida State House Candidates, July 19 - Tiger Bay's non-partisan lunch.** For more information go to [Tiger Bay](#).

If you hear of other candidate forums between now and November, please, please send the information to president@hclwv.org and voter@hclwv.org.

Several organizations grade our legislators according to their votes on the issues of interest to those groups. We will include them here as we discover them so please share if you know of any. Have a look at report cards from:

- [Progress Florida](#)
- [Sierra Club](#), and the
- [Florida Chamber of Commerce](#)

Speak Now or Forever Regret You Didn't Amendments 2024 Presentation Training

LWVFL is excited to announce an upcoming Speakers Bureau training!

A training for a presentation entitled "Amendments 2024" will take place on July 2, 2024 at 6 p.m. The presentation is centered around the six constitutional amendments on Florida's ballot this November.

[Click here to register now!](#)

A recording will be made available on the Speaker Bureau webpage in the days following this training along with the presentation materials.

Vote411 on 7/12

Get out your reading glasses! Vote411 [on-line voter guides](#) for Hillsborough and Pasco County races will be on-line on **July 12**. Vote411 provides candidate-specific information for voters. Angie Pickren (Hillsborough) and Barbara Sheppard (Pasco) are creating the guide. Members are currently gathering candidates' campaign data and sorting their answers to our questions.

All voters will be able to go to the [Vote411 website](#), enter their addresses, preview the candidates on their ballots, and learn about the candidates. The voter guides will be updated and published again on September 20 for the General Election.

We would appreciate all members assisting in informing the public about this non-partisan voter guide. Email president@hclwv.org if you would like a Vote411 yard sign.

In addition, if you know of any local celebrities who would speak up about Vote411 on their social media sites, let's take advantage of the opportunity to promote the guide.

2024 Voting Dates - August Primary

- **July 22, 2024** - Deadline to register to vote in Primary Elections; Deadline to change party affiliation for Primary Elections
- **August 5-18** - Early Voting and drop-off of Vote-by-Mail ballots at 21 locations in Hillsborough County
- **August 10-17** - Early Voting and drop-off of Vote-by-Mail ballots at 12 locations in Pasco County
- **August 8** - Deadline for requesting Vote-by-Mail ballot; please allow at least a week for your completed ballot to reach the offices of the County Supervisors of Elections (SOE).
- **August 20** - Primary Elections Day - Vote at your local precinct or drop Vote-by-Mail ballots off at an office of the SOE. Dropped off and mailed ballots must be received by 7 p.m. at the SOE's office.

Also...

On election day, Vote-by-Mail ballots may only be delivered to office of the Supervisor of Elections, NOT to polling places. The Hillsborough SOE has offices in Tampa, Riverview, and Ruskin. The Pasco SOE has offices in Dade City, New Port Richey, and Land O'Lakes.

Getting In Touch with the Hillsborough SOE:

Email: voter@votehillsborough.gov

Phone: (813) 744-5900 or (888) 297-5843

Website: www.votehillsborough.gov

Getting In Touch with the Pasco SOE: Please check all options at

<https://www.pascovotes.gov>.

Become a Voter Concierge Training on July 1

Become a Personal Voter Concierge

The LWVFL is beta-testing a new voter concierge program, part of a series of Center for Artistic Activism (C4AA) works that protect the freedom to vote with creativity and innovation. In 2022, C4AA helped friends and family across the country in researching their ballots and figuring out their voting plan.

Now in 2024, the League is helping expand C4AA's efforts in Florida. Personal Voter Concierges help voters avoid common pitfalls and identify roadblocks before they happen.

Training will be conducted the evening of July 1st at 6 pm. [Click here to register.](#)

Just Say Yes to New Millage for Public Education

HEF Supports the Hillsborough County Millage for Public School Teachers.

Hillsborough Education Foundation (HEF) strongly advocates for registered voters in Hillsborough County to support the upcoming Hillsborough County Millage for Public Schools when it appears on ballots this fall. This critical vote will determine whether Hillsborough County can secure the necessary funding to compensate our educators and support staff adequately, improve our public education system, and ultimately ensure a brighter future for our community.

[Please click here for more information!](#)

The HCLWV board will discuss this subject at its July board meeting.

But Not to TECO

As a partner in the Hillsborough Affordable Energy Coalition, HCLWV is participating in a No Rate Hike Pledge, calling on elected officials to oppose electricity rate hikes. The Pledge launched two weeks before a June 13 hearing on TECO's proposal to raise the average residential bill to at least \$160.93 in January 2025 – an increase that amounts to over \$200 more annually per household. Last year, Tampa Electric customers paid the third highest bills in the nation.

Earlier in the month, the Coalition announced the pledge just before County Commissioner Gwen Myers' Gibsonton Town Hall and immediately requested her signature. Advocates have been calling all Commissioners to stop the proposed rate hikes on behalf of their constituents and pass an affordable energy and climate plan. Commissioner Myers refused to sign the document to oppose profit-driven rate hikes, which would help struggling families.

On June 13, in rare Public Service Commission hearings, dozens of Tampa Bay residents told utility regulators how their families' finances were threatened by the affordable housing crisis, inflation, and high utility bills.

Prior to the hearings, held at HCC Brandon, the Coalition led a small protest outside the hearing room. The HCLWV Environment and Climate Change Action Group was represented by Stephen Kauffman, the League's liaison to the Coalition. The Coalition protest was covered by many local media outlets.

We need to continue standing in opposition to corporate greed and TECO's continued use of fossil fuel.



Juneteenth and Voters

League members shared information with voters during the Juneteenth Celebration in Port Richey sponsored by the African American Club of Pasco. We reminded voters about

the upcoming Aug. 20 primary election and that vote by mail requests expire every two years now. We also promoted the League's VOTE411 website for candidate information.



We Live in an Amazing Neighborhood!

Cindy Wilson represented our League at a June 13 meeting hosted by the St. Pete LWV and joined by the N. Pinellas and Manatee Leagues.

Some notable accomplishments or interesting ongoing or future projects:

- The St. Pete League got a grant related to Yes on 4 for yard signs and bumper stickers.
- St. Pete's social justice team is planning a panel discussion on immigration for later this summer.
- St. Pete has a monthly book club/discussion group.
- St. Pete has sent thousands of postcards to returning citizens through postcard parties and other events.
- St. Pete does VR at city recreation centers 4-6 pm, when parents are picking kids up. St. Pete members also visit senior centers.
- St. Pete makes use of a Voting Issues Survey visual aid that is available from the State League and engages voters in conversations about which issues matter to them.
- There will be a hybrid meeting on July 9 about NPV.
- St. Pete has gotten two grants to create native habitats and rain gardens locally. School groups visit the gardens. If anyone likes to garden, they could use some volunteers from our side of the Bay.
- N. Pinellas is organizing three fora with candidates.
- N. Pinellas works with a church on helping returning citizens get information about voting rights.
- N. Pinellas hosts fora on education with area PTAs.
- N. Pinellas has adopted a mile of a street in Dunedin and coordinates with an elementary school located on that strip.
- N. Pinellas hosts family picnics.
- Manatee County has a program called "Why is Voting Important?"
- Manatee members are teaching a class on voting at a local high school and working with the Civics Club at that school. In the coming academic year, they will be working with Civics Clubs in a number of schools. They have created voting games for use with the clubs.
- Other leagues are holding monthly happy hours and/or other events open to members for networking.

The keynote speaker was FL VP Debra Chandler who wants to know what ideas we have for improving the FL League and what the FL can do to be more helpful to the local leagues. Contact Debra at Debra@lwvfl.org.

We Are Seeing Red

Did you hear? Reproductive Rights are on the ballot this November in Florida.

This is not just about reproductive rights. This is about the right to make personal medical decisions, the ability to find quality gynecological care, the availability of emergency procedures at hospitals, the health of pregnant women and girls, and access to accurate information about our own pregnancies and options.

Floridians overwhelmingly agree. Now we have to make sure they vote yes on Amendment 4 in November and for candidates who also believe that health decisions should be made by patients and doctors and not by judges or politicians.

How can you help?

- **Volunteer.** Sign up [here](#).
- **Join Floridians Protecting Freedom on July 20** and every Super Saturday. To join the St. Pete Super Saturday, sign up [here](#).
- **Plan your own Super Saturday event(s).** Contact the LWV [here](#) for help with logistics.
- **Donate to the campaign** [here](#).
- **Spread the word on social media.**
- **Talk to your neighbors!**
- **Talk to strangers.** Wear a button referring to Amendment 4 and conversations will happen in shops, restaurants, and elsewhere.
- **Call strangers.** Sign up [here](#) to phone bank.
- **Use Amendment 4 as a talking point** during voter registration. It's a winner. Just remind potential voters that it's not enough to vote yes on 4; they also need to vote for pro-choice candidates.
- **Join FPF's subgroups** for Blacks, Latinos, youth, rural residents, parents, people of faith, laborers, and Asian american and pacific Islanders. Click [here](#).
- **Join Men4Choice.** Click [here](#).
- **Stay informed.** Sign up for daily clips from Progress Florida [here](#).
- **Tell your story.** If you or someone you love has needed reproductive care in Florida, Yes on 4 is looking to hear from you! Do you have a compelling reason you support Amendment 4 as a male ally or member of the clergy? Do you speak other common languages in Florida and want to reach voters in your native language? Sign up [here](#).
- **Work for FPF.** FPF is paying \$15 an our to Youth Organizing Fellows. More [here](#).

We will be overwhelming you with information about Amendment 4 between now and November 5 and we hope that you will overwhelm everyone you know. We need to get 60% of voters to vote yes. If we don't, it will be the end of health care as we used to know it.



Remembering the Civil Rights Act 60 Years Later

July 2 will mark 60 years since the monumental Civil Rights Act was signed into law. To commemorate this anniversary, Florida Humanities will host a compelling conversation at Allendale United Methodist Church in St. Petersburg on July 2.

TV investigative reporter Emerald Morrow will explore the landmark piece of legislation's impact in Florida through the personal stories of authors Bill Maxwell and Beverly Coyle with historical insight from southern history scholar Ray Arsenault.

Doors open at 6:30 pm and program starts at 7. Register [here](#).

Now Accepting Community Project Grant Applications

Florida Humanities' Community Project Grants awards up to \$10,000 to support public humanities programming that promotes a deeper understanding of Florida's diverse cultures, histories, and ideas. Recent grants went to the Florida Museum of Photographic Arts in Tampa and Pioneer Village in Pasco County

The application deadline for the next round of grants is **12 pm on August 7**. New applicants are strongly encouraged to reach out to the Florida Humanities' grants team at least two weeks prior to applying. Learn more [here](#).

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If you missed this spring's four-part webinar series on the Florida Wildlife Corridor, you can watch it by clicking [here](#).

Listen Up!

HCLWV's Shelley Reback hosts MidPoint on WMNF 88.5 every Wednesday at 10 am. June's episodes focused on employment discrimination in the City of Tampa, legal protections needed by Florida farmworkers, and people wrongfully convicted in the state of Florida. Tune in to Shelley's July shows. Learn more [here](#).

NAACP Annual Dinner

Come to the 2024 NAACP Hillsborough County Freedom Fund Dinner on **Sept. 28** at 6 pm. More details [here](#).



The Arts



Did you know that the Bank of America Museums on Us program offers Bank of America and Merrill Lynch debit and credit cardholders free admission to over 225

museums and cultural institutions across the United States on the **first full weekend** of every month? Find out more [here](#).

July 11-21, discover Irena Gut Opdyke's remarkable true story —a Polish nurse who risked everything during World War II to save Jewish lives in German-occupied Poland. ***Irena's Vow*** captures heroism and the indomitable human spirit. Click [here](#) for information on this Powerstories production.

On **July 26**, the Straz Center for the Performing Arts, in collaboration with the Hillsborough County Alliance for Citizens with Disabilities and the Tampa Mayor's Alliance for Persons with Disabilities, will be celebrating the 34th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Enjoy a free concert, open to the public, featuring artists of mixed abilities including musicians, singers and spoken word performers. The community advocate recognition awards will illuminate the impact of the arts on building a more inclusive community. Find out more [here](#).

OLLI

Classes starting in July as part of OLLI include:
Florida in the Civil War: It's Not What You Think;
African-American Military History: The Lesser Known Contributors;
America's First Sex Scandal; and
Spies, Lies, Betrayal: The Secret World of Espionage II

To register or for more information, click on the USF logo below.

Are there any LWV members who are teaching this summer? This fall? Please write voter@hclwv.org



Tampa Bay History Center

Going on at TBHC this month:

- Summer Reading Review
- Gallery Tours galore!

Click on logo below for more information.



Friday, July 12, Café con Tampa's speaker is Fred Hearn. Since October 2021, Hearn has served as the Tampa Bay History Center's Curator of Black History. The topic will be "Creating Tampa's Black History Museum One Story at a Time."

Café con Tampa brings together community activists every Friday morning at 8:00, at the

downtown Portico, for breakfast, community announcements, networking, and a talk. No topic is off limits at Café con Tampa whose founders describe the forum as a place for insightful conversations. Click below for more information.

More



The Sierra Club has been a good partner to the HCLWV and has regular outings and events. Pasco County residents can join either the Tampa Bay Sierra Club or the Suncoast Sierra Club! Both clubs are active. The Suncoast Club is overtly active in social justice issues.

The Tampa Bay Group Conservation Committee meets on the second Monday of each month at 6:30 pm. Email [here](#) for details.

The Tampa Bay Sierra Club has outings on July 14 and 18. In addition, on July 17, it will hold its annual joint meeting of Tampa Bay Sierra Club, Audubon Tampa Bay Club, and Tampa Bay Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society. Paul Gray of the Florida Everglades Restoration Program will speak about conservation efforts in the Everglades. Potluck dinner starts at 6 and the program starts with announcements at 7. More information is available [here](#).

For information about the Suncoast Club's outings, meetings, and activism, click [here](#).

Self Care

Take a break from current events with free classes in Curtis Hixon Park, including yoga, zumba, barre, and pilates. Need we mention the food truck festival in Perry Harvey Park? The concerts in Lykes Gaslight Park? Rock the Park? Putt and Party? The Summer Series?

If you aren't comfortable taking time off, then wear Amendment 4 swag when you go to these events. Conversations will happen.

Find out more at www.tampasdowntown.com

Tiger Bay

Tiger Bay's July 19 lunch will be a non-partisan forum for Florida State House candidates.

Pet, er, click on the tiger to register. Doors open at 11:30 and the program starts at 12.



Upcoming Member Meetings

July 1, 6-7 pm, Monthly Issues Update Meeting. Register [here](#).

July 9, 5-6:30 pm, National Popular Vote update live or by zoom. [Details](#)

July 16, 1-2:30 pm, Voter Protection Monthly Meeting. Email voterprotection@hclwv.org.

July 18, 6-7:30 pm, Pasco Non-Partisan Candidate Forum. Email pcfnow@gmail.com.

July 20, Yes on 4 Super Saturday events. [Details](#) about St. Pete event.

July 22 - Deadline to Register to Vote in Primary Election.

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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