

The VOTER JULY 2026

Dear League Members,

Happy July and Happy 250th Anniversary to the United States. We hope you are all enjoying the holiday with family and friends. Our league continues to get requests to help defend democracy by getting out the vote for the 2026 elections so please sign up to help at one of these events if you can. We would love to see you!



One upcoming opportunity next week: our long time member, Joyce Schuetz, reached out and we will be doing voter support at her assisted living facility, The Crossings in Brandon, on July 9. We are also finalizing our next round of visits with LUSH, a nationwide partner of the LWV, for early August, as well as our annual college & university visits for National Voter Registration Day in September. These will all be added to this same sign-up: [Click here to sign-up.](#)

If you are new to tabling with us, we are holding two **Voter Services Training sessions today, July 1 (9am & 7pm)**. Each will last 30 minutes. We will record so please let us know if you are interested, but cannot attend. [Click here to register.](#)

You will see an article below about an upcoming Powerstories production. As you know, we're partnering with them to get out the vote (there are 3 slots left through the sign-up above). **Powerstories is also inviting members from all League of Women Voters chapters within driving distance to a special matinee performance of Predictor on Saturday, July 25 at 2pm**, created specifically for the League. This performance includes a post-show opportunity to meet Meg Crane, the inventor of the first home pregnancy test.

The special group rate is **\$30** which members can use even if attending on a different date. In order to use the group rate, we need to pay for the tickets all together, so please reply to this email if you are interested in attending for the special league price.

There are also several candidate forum opportunities listed below so make sure to scroll all the way down.

In league,
Teresa Potter and Diana Pecha
Co-Presidents

Kay Doughty - RIP



Long time League members were saddened to learn of the death of Kay Doughty, who passed away in February.

Kay was an active member of the League in the 1980's, serving on many committees as well as the board. She was League president 1986-1988. Those of us in the League at the time were always happy to have Kay on our committee as she was conscientious and reliable, with a quick smile and strong work ethic.

Kay was well known for her work in drug prevention and recovery, having been appointed chair of the Florida Substance Abuse Advisory Council by Governor Jeb Bush's Office of Drug Control in 1999.

Additionally, Kay's interest in the environment led to her appointment on the Community Advisory Committee for the Tampa Bay Regional Estuary Program, 1991-1993.

The League sends our condolences to her family.

For Kay's full obituary, please click [here](#).

Pat Hall
Nancy Granda

Primary Voting Dates and Deadlines

July 20: The deadline for registering to vote or changing parties

August 5: The deadline to request a vote-by-mail ballot in Pasco County

August 6: The deadline to request a vote-by-mail ballot in Hillsborough County

August 3-16: Early voting in **Hillsborough County** is August 3-16, 10 am to 6 pm.

August 8-15: Early voting in **Pasco County** is August 8-15, 10 am to 6 pm.

August 18: Vote-by-mail ballots due at SOE by 7:00 p.m.

August 18: **ELECTION DAY!**

Questions? In **Hillsborough**, call (813) 744-5900 or look at VoteHillsborough.gov.

In **Pasco**, look at PascoVotes.gov or call:
Dade City: 352-521-4302
Land O'Lakes: 813-929-2788
New Port Richey: 727-847-8162
Linea de asistencia en español 833-828-3224

The August ballot will include local, county, state, and federal races. Some, but not all, of these races are primaries; remember that Florida is a closed primary state.

ALL voters, regardless of party affiliation, will be able to cast a vote in non-partisan races (e.g. County Judge, School Board).

Visit the Local Candidates & Committees page of your Supervisor of Election's website to see local candidates who qualified, and the [Candidates and Races database](#) on the State of Florida's Division of Elections website to see who qualified with them. Sample ballots showing the races and candidates that will be on your individual Primary Election ballot will be available on your SOE's websites in July.

Don't screw up! Request your vote-by-mail ballot now.

VoteHillsborough.gov or PascoVotes.gov.

We are the League of Women Voters.

Redistricting Update

The mid-decade redistricting and the resulting new maps signed by Governor DeSantis on April 1 have raised questions among voters. They've also spawned lawsuits challenging the new maps. But even amid the current confusion, voters shouldn't be deterred from making their voices heard. In fact, this just makes it more important to get vote-by-mail ballots or vote early, in case of confusion. Also, check Vote411! Vote411 includes updated GIS maps, of course, which means that if a voter puts in their address, they will see their updated 'redistricted' ballot.

Vote411.org

Worth Clarifying: Primary Elections

Florida has closed primaries, which means that we must be registered with a political party to vote in that party's primary races. However, the Primary Election will also include nonpartisan contests that **everybody** votes on, whether affiliated with a party or not. There are also many 2026 ballots in Florida with Universal Primary races. **Universal**

Primary Contests (UPCs) occur when all candidates for a seat have the same party affiliation and the winner would be unopposed in the General Election.

There will be three different ballots - a Republican ballot, a Democratic ballot, and a nonpartisan ballot. And some ballots will include universal primary races and/or referendums.

- Nonpartisan judicial and School Board races will be on all ballots.
- In Hillsborough County, voters in State Senate District 16 (Hillsborough/Pinellas), State House District 62 (Hillsborough/Pinellas) and State House District 63 (Central Hillsborough) will have a Universal Primary race on their ballot.
- In Pasco County, County Commission District 4 will be decided on August 18th. However, it will not be a Universal Primary race because a write-in candidate also filed to run in addition to two Republicans, so only Republicans can vote in this race. Write-in candidates are often used to create a closed primary in races that would qualify to be universal. FYI: All County Commission seats in Pasco County are voted on county-wide.
- Voters living in Temple Terrace and some special taxing districts will also have a referendum on the primary ballot.

School Board Candidate Forum



ELECTION: AUGUST 18
Hillsborough & Pasco School Board
Virtual Candidate Forums

Pasco County School Board

- July 14 12pm – District 1 (County-wide)
- July 21 12pm – District 3 (County-wide)
- July 28 12pm – District 5 (County-wide)

Hillsborough County School Board

- July 16 12pm: District 2
- July 30 12pm: District 6 (County-wide)

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF HILLSBOROUGH AND PASCO COUNTIES

FAMILIES FOR STRONG
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dates subject to change: candidate confirmations are ongoing.

[Click here to register for Pasco School Board Candidate Forums.](#)

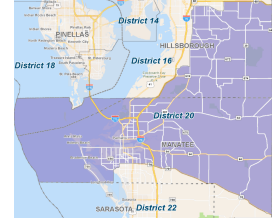
[Click here to register for Hillsborough School Board Candidate Forums.](#)

State Senate Candidate Forums

Tiger Bay, a non-partisan political forum, traditionally invites candidates to its monthly luncheons during election season. On July 17, candidates for the Florida Senate are expected to speak. Be there!
Click on the tiger for more information and registration.



The LWV of Manatee County is hosting a virtual forum for the State Senate District 20 Democratic Primary candidates on July 7th from 5:30pm - 6:30pm. **Candidates:** Gerald Baldi and John Houman. See map of District 20 here which covers part of Hillsborough. [Click here to register.](#)



Judicial Forum



JOIN US FOR A JOINT PRESENTATION!

THE NORTH TAMPA BAR ASSOCIATION • APABA TAMPA BAY • TAMPA HISPANIC BAR ASSOCIATION

THE 2026 JUDICIAL CANDIDATE FORUM

July 9, 2025, 11:45 A.M - 1:00 P.M.

- Carrollwood Country Club, 13903 Clubhouse Dr Tampa, FL 33618
- Buffet Lunch Included
- Free Parking

Hear from the Candidates!

1. What is the source of your value system?
2. Why do you want to be a judge?
3. What have you done over the years to prepare yourself specifically for judicial service?
4. What distinguishes you from the other candidates?
5. How do you describe your temperament and personality?
6. What would make you a competent judge?

Advance Registration Required

- NTBA, APABA-TB, and THBA members - \$35
- Non-members - \$45

GO TO
NORTHTAMPABAR.COM
OR
SCAN THE QR CODE
TO REGISTER



As an alternative to the above in-person event, you can still watch last month's Judicial Candidate Forum for Hillsborough Circuit Court judges on demand through [this link](#).

There was an issue with the recording of the June 18 forum for Pasco Circuit Court judges, but if it is recovered, we will share it.

Crossing i's and Dotting t's

Our signatures can change over time and the signatures on file are used to verify our identities on vote-by-mail ballots, provisional ballots, and petitions. Call the Supervisor of Election (SOE), go to VoteHillsborough.gov or PascoVotes.gov, or visit any SOE office or public library to get a **voter registration application** and update your signature so that you are **#ElectionReady** for 2026. Don't forget: you can turn voter registration forms in at any library!

Voter Registration and Returning Citizens

How many of us worked hard to get voting rights for former felons on the ballot in 2018 and to get Floridians to vote for that? And how happy were we when Amendment 4 that passed with two-thirds of the vote? And then we went through the roller coaster ride of returning citizens being automatically able to register, then having to pay fines and fees, then discovering there was no way for them to learn what they owed in fines and fees, and then the State being ordered to set up a system and then the State dragging its feet?

The good news is that the State put a system in place in 2025 and it's easy. Well, sort of.

The easiest way for returning citizens to find out what they owe is to complete a form requesting an advisory opinion. It is hard to find this on the State of Florida website, but it is easy to find at the [Florida Rights Restoration Coalition](#). Instructions are very clear and there are multiple ways to submit the form. The same page discusses where to find financial assistance for repayment of fines and fees.

The best news is that if the State of Florida can't determine within 90 days what is owed, the applicant can immediately register to vote!

The sad news is that it was so difficult until last year to register to vote that only about 10% of eligible returning citizens have done so. We have just over 90 days before the deadline to register for the Nov. general elections so get the word out **NOW!**

**Tampa School Zone Speed Camera
Installation Moving in Slo-Mo
by Emily Hinsdale, Transportation Chair**

Tampa School Zone Speed Camera Installation Moving Forward in Slo-mo

Will the City of Tampa ever get school zone speed cameras?

Since the Florida legislature passed a 2023 bill allowing local governments to enforce marked speed limits in school zones using automated speed cameras, Tampa has been slow to react.

Hillsborough County moved forward quickly to start its speed enforcement program, partnering with vendor RedSpeed to launch in August 2025 with 28 schools. In the first four months in operation, the speed cameras led to a 48% drop in speed violations.

Tampa's City Council hesitated, but eventually selected a vendor company, one which failed to get the program started. The Tampa Police Department went back to the drawing board and decided to partner with Hillsborough County to share their program. RedSpeed conducted a speed study at Tampa schools, demonstrating speed violations in the thousands each day.

Proponents of these cameras note that they provide consistent, unbiased, and safe speed enforcement in high-risk areas. Some advocates have suggested using the city's portion of the \$100 speeding penalties to install additional speed control infrastructure like crosswalks and speed bumps around schools.

Tampa City Council has already approved some cameras. On July 16, they will vote whether those cameras are to be installed solely in East and West Tampa or in 18 locations dispersed throughout the city.

While some City Councilmembers argued against the cameras, calling them a "money grab" or a surveillance risk, this vote is no longer whether to allow cameras, just on where to place them.

If approved, cameras would be located by Alexander Elementary, Benito Middle, Ferrell Middle Magnet, Lanier Elementary, Lawton Chiles Elementary, Liberty Middle School & Freedom High, Lockhart Elementary Magnet, Lomax Elementary Magnet, Mabry Elementary, MacFarlane Park Elementary Magnet, Mendenhall Elementary, Seminole Heights Elementary, Shaw Elementary, St. Lawrence Catholic, Tampa Bay Boulevard School, T.R. Robinson High, Turner-Bartels K-8, and Young Middle Magnet.

**Vetoed Florida E-bike Bill was a Dud
by *Emily Hinsdale, Transportation Chair***

Vetoed Florida E-bike Bill was a Dud

On June 26, Governor Ron DeSantis vetoed a bipartisan bill from the Florida legislature

designed to address e-bike and e-scooter safety concerns.

Here's why that's not necessarily a bad thing: Since its initial filing, this bill underwent substantial changes, diminishing sensible regulations down to little more than a law enforcement conundrum and a powerless "task force."

DeSantis objected to the bill's e-bike speed limit of 10mph on shared use pathways. Because the bill offers no guidelines as to how that speed limit is to be followed or enforced, it leans on local governments to create their own ideas (something they can already do, with or without this bill). How are e-bike riders supposed to know their speed as not all e-bikes include speedometers? How is law enforcement supposed to safely and consistently stop speeding violators?

Similarly, the bill's requirement to note e-bikes on crash reports lacks statewide guidelines. Each law enforcement agency in the state would have had to create its own system, negating any potential for shared statistics.

Local governments and their Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committees should absolutely be looking at ordinances to enforce e-bike and e-scooter safety. The state legislature should absolutely take this bill back to the drawing board to try again.

But this bill was not a step forward in e-bike safety. More like a back-pedal.

P.S. Are you shocked seeing young kids riding electric pedal-less dirt bikes around town? Guess what - those aren't e-bikes. Those are e-motorcycles and are already illegal on roads and sidewalks. This bill would not have changed enforcement of these vehicles.

We Voted

The annual HCLWV business meeting was held on June 13 at the Seminole Heights Library. Attendees voted on officers and the program for the coming year, while having an opportunity to see each other up close and in person. We had seven Past Presidents in attendance as well as five lifetime members (50 years or more!). See below for picture of all Presidents and one with 2026-2027 Officers, Board Members, and Chairpersons.





Presidents: (front) Maryellin Flynn Territo (1978), Michael McKinney (2005-2007), and Pat Hall (1988-1989)
(back) Diana Pecha (2025-2027), Shirley Arcuri (2014-2016), Teresa Potter (2022-2027), Betty Castor (1969-1971), Nancy Maggiacomo Granda (1984-1986) and Mickey Castor (2010-2013)



Front: Laurie Winkles, Diana Pecha, Teresa Potter
Back: Deana Turnipseed, Marissa Fenton, Ida Williams Campbell, Ami Marie Granger Welch, Johanne Castagan, Lauren Foley and Emily Hinsdale.



Pasco & Sun City Juneteenth Celebrations

League members Nadine Hutchins, Beverly Coe, Donna Earnest and Christine Bright participated in the 6th Annual Pasco Juneteenth Community Celebration in Port Richey on Saturday, June 20. This free event, sponsored by the **African American Club of Pasco Florida**, gave us a chance to share current information on voting, elections and important changes in Florida law, as well as helping people register to vote.



From left to right, Christine Bright and Donna Earnest



Beverly Coe (left) and Nadine Hutchins (right)

League members Lauren Foley & Mary Switzer participated in the Multi-Cultural Heritage Club Juneteenth Celebration in Sun City Center on Friday, June 19. They shared information on voting and elections with over 250 people, helped 9 people register to vote, helped 16 renew their Vote by Mail ballots and had two interested in joining the league!



Florida NOW Conference

2026 FL NOW State Conference: Feminists Fight Fascism in St. Petersburg, Florida - August 14th - 16th

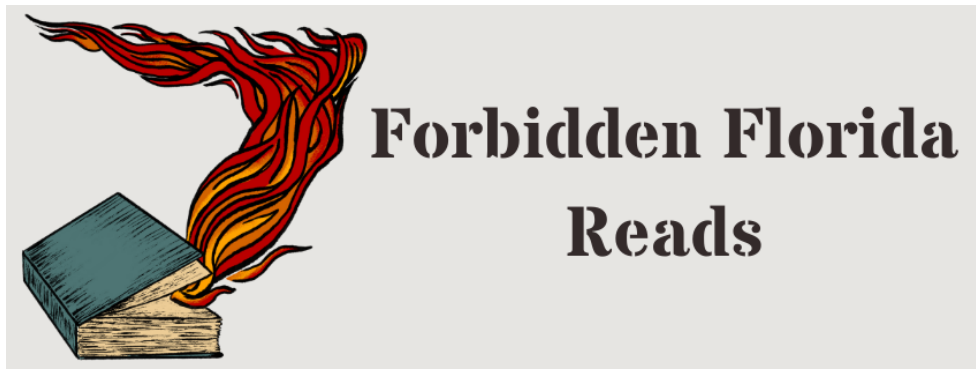
Join Florida NOW this August for our statewide conference, where feminists from across the state will gather to strategize, learn, and strengthen our collective work for gender justice. While it's still a few months away, now is the time to mark your calendar and start planning to be part of it.

30 years old and under, RSVP free.

Sign up [here!](#)

Looking Out for Other Women

The Tampa Bay Abortion Fund raised \$63,000 during its recent fundraiser, surpassing its \$60,000 goal. Thanks to Teresa Potter and others for their efforts and contributions!



This month's banned book is *Persepolis*, in honor of both Marjane Satrapi, who passed earlier this month, and everyone affected by the war with Iran. Find Izzy Miletic's review [here](#), along with the reasons it has been banned in Florida schools.



Ever Used a

Home Pregnancy Test?



Powerstories Theatre presents *Predictor*, the true story of Meg Crane, the graphic designer who invented the home pregnancy test. Performances will be at Stageworks from July 17-26. Meg Crane herself will be joining the audience on July 24 and 25th for a meet and greet and a talkback. Powerstories is excited about the conversations this funny and inspiring show will spark around the creative ways that women find to navigate a world that wants to keep us in the dark. You can learn more here: <https://powerstories.com/predictor/>

Powerstories is a nonprofit professional theater whose mission is to stage true stories of women and girls to open minds and hearts and inspire action worldwide.



A landfill in Central Florida wants permission to inject toxic landfill leachate - aka garbage juice - deep underground near the Floridan Aquifer, the source of drinking water for millions of Floridians. Leachate is created when rainwater filters through garbage, and can contain dangerous pollutants such as lead, pesticides, ammonia, PFAS ("forever chemicals"), and other harmful contaminants.

The Heart of Florida Landfill in Sumter County is exploring plans to dispose of leachate through a deep injection well. Supporters claim the waste would stay contained far below drinking water sources. But Florida's geology tells a different story.

The land beneath Central Florida is full of sinkholes, caves, underground channels, and other features that make it *impossible* to guarantee contaminated waste will never migrate into groundwater supplies.

This is not a hypothetical concern. Florida has experienced deep well injection failures before, and the Heart of Florida Landfill already has a history of environmental problems, including groundwater contamination violations and ongoing odor complaints from nearby communities.

The threat could soon grow even larger. This summer, Miami-Dade County is expected to begin shipping approximately 4,800 tons of garbage *per week* by rail to the Heart of Florida Landfill. More trash means more leachate, more pollution risks, and more pressure to dispose of that waste underground.

The Floridan Aquifer provides drinking water for millions of people across our state. We cannot afford to put this critical resource at risk.

[Take action today to tell state regulators: Protect Florida's drinking water and reject any proposal to inject landfill leachate underground!](#)

Add your voice now

The Sierra Club invites us to the July 16 annual joint meeting of The Tampa Bay Sierra Club, Tampa Bay Audubon, and The Suncoast Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society, hosted by The Suncoast Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society.

Our speaker is Meredith Budd, deputy director of the [Live Wildly Foundation](#)." Her topic will be "Live Wildly: Balancing Florida's Economy and Ecology for a Thriving Future."

The meeting, which includes a potluck dinner, will be held at the Tampa Garden Club. For more details and to sign up for the meeting and the potluck, go [here](#).

The Sierra Club **Suncoast Group**, which includes Pasco County, is seeking college students who want to gain real-world experience while helping protect Florida's environment and build more sustainable communities.

They are recruiting for three different internship tracks:

⚡ **Clean Energy Intern**

Help maintain our Solar Dashboard and support local clean energy initiatives. **ArcGIS experience required.**

📱 **Environmental Communications & Community Engagement Interns**

Create social media content, videos, photography, podcasts, and tell the stories behind local environmental action. Multiple positions available.

🎓 **Sierra Youth Team Development Intern**

Work with students, educators, and community organizations to inspire the next generation of environmental leaders.

Applications due July 15, 2026. Apply [here](#) today.



Café con Tampa holds gatherings for neighborhood and community leaders that are open to everyone and cover all topics. There is no meeting on July 3, but check www.facebook.com/cafecontampa for future community discussions.

Café con Tampa meets almost every Friday morning at the Portico in downtown Tampa.

Doors open at 7:30 and the program starts at 8:00. There is a simple buffet breakfast. Entry is \$12, but everyone is welcome regardless of ability to pay.

Upcoming Member Meetings

[Click here to sign up for upcoming Election Outreach Events.](#)

[Click here to sign up for one of these July 1st trainings:](#)

- July 1 - 9AM - 9:30 AM - Voter Services Training
- July 1 - 7PM - 7:30PM - Voter Services Training

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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Our mailing address is:

P.O. Box 18933, Tampa, FL 33679

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