Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy

President’s Message – September 2020

Only two months until Election Day. This will be one of the most consequential elections in history, made even more challenging with the Corona Virus Pandemic. The Tallahassee League is moving full steam ahead to increase voter registration and voter turnout. We have many projects underway to educate voters.

The Voter Services Committee will be distributing the printed LWV Voter Guides to areas in need, and are exploring using billboards to direct attention to the Vote411.org website. Barry Munroe is spearheading an effort to send postcards to returning citizens to remind them to register and vote. And we have purchased Vote411 yard signs to place around town.

The Local Government Committee will continue to partner with the Tallahassee Democrat newspaper to conduct the very successful Candidate Forums. There were over 36,000 views of the Primary Election Forums! The General Election forums will begin on September 8 to give voters ample time to learn about the candidates, because we are urging people to vote very early to avoid in-person safety concerns and potential long lines on Election Day. Vote-by-Mail ballots also need to be mailed very early due to potential post office delays.

Your board held a successful planning retreat to look ahead and prepare for more virtual activities and programs. We will continue the monthly Hot Topics programs, although done remotely via Zoom, at least until in-person events are safe again. The first will be on Wednesday, September 23 at 6:00 p.m. with a presentation on the proposed Children’s Services Council which will be on the November ballot. Registration details will go out soon.

The board will also explore how we can respond to one of the national League priorities of DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion). The first step is to understand more deeply the problems of institutional racism by reading and discussing the book White Fragility by Robin DiAngelo. The early founding of the League of Women Voters, for example, did not include women of color. We hope to have a subsequent workshop open to all members to delve more deeply into the subject. Stay tuned.

Sally Butzin, President LWVT

Centennial Corner

A Series on Local Superwomen

The Weekly Voter is pleased to introduce a new series of articles that we hope you will enjoy. In our Centennial Corner we have celebrated the 100th anniversary of the founding of the League and the passage
of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. It was there we outlined our plans for celebration and read stories of early suffragists and other relevant history.

Now we hope to bring Centennial Corner into the present with stories of local contemporary women who are in some way trailblazers, groundbreakers, glass ceiling shatterers, overachievers, or who are otherwise worthy of recognition. We have a few candidates in mind, but if you know of such a woman, please don’t hesitate to contact us at lwvtallahassee@gmail.com. We welcome all suggestions and nominations.

Linda Davis

We begin the series with an interview by Stuart Baker with Jessica Lowe-Minor, Vice President of the League of Women Voters of the United States:

Is it true that you are the youngest vice president in the history of the League of Women Voters of the United States? I have no idea! I hope not! But I do know that I'm the first millennial to serve in the role.

You have, of course, had extensive experience with the League, an organization with many volunteers considerably older. Has this been a positive or negative experience on balance? Working with veteran members of the League of Women Voters has been an amazing experience and something that has added enormous value to me personally. So many League members I've worked with have impressed me through their decades-long commitment to justice and their willingness to spend countless hours advocating for, and engaging in activities that support, a fair and inclusive democratic process. It's so inspiring and one of the major reasons why I've loved being a part of the League. I fully hope to be like many of today's League members "when I grow up," and there is NOTHING more impressive than an octogenarian registering voters, in my opinion!

You said once that the 2000 election had a strong impact on your consciousness as a senior in high school. Do you see it as still influencing your career goals? And what are your long-term career goals? The 2000 election definitely stirred my sense of indignation and has impacted me strongly as an adult. It taught me that systems are important and shouldn't be neglected. It also taught me that policy "loopholes" can be unfairly exploited to exclude vulnerable people. I think that both of those lessons have stuck with me and, even though I'm not always conscious of it, they've influenced the way I approach social justice -- with an eye towards repairing and preserving systems that benefit people (such as voting, education, libraries, healthcare, parks, etc.) and mitigating or eliminating policies that can be used as a pretext to exclude (like limitations on voter registration, reductions in early voting, library closures, funding cuts to social safety net programs, etc.). As for career goals, I want to continue to help create positive changes in our society, via whatever "job" form that may take. To be continued!

There is a long-standing feminist debate about the existence of the modern “super-woman,” one who manages to be a nurturing mother, handle a high-powered career, and have fulfilling leisure activities as well. Some insist that it is possible; others say it is not. On the surface, you would appear to have qualified for this amazing role. Is it true, or does something have to give? If you feel you are actually doing it, how do you manage? I think that women in general are pretty great, and I've been blessed to have a host of "super-women" (as well as men) in my life who have helped me along the way. Still, like many working parents in today's society, I've struggled with overwhelm and burnout, so I've become a lot better at asking for help and cutting myself a break now and then. Recently, my mantras have been, "done is better than perfect" and "good enough IS good enough!"
Yard Signs

Yes, we still have some **VOTE411 yard signs** left and want them to be displayed, no matter what area you live in.

If you want a sign, please send an e-mail to the coordinator, Peggy Allen ([margaretallen97@gmail.com](mailto:margaretallen97@gmail.com)), with your name, email address, and phone number. Peggy will send an email to you, letting you know where you can pick up the sign(s).

Please add your name, quadrant, date, and signature.

If you have any questions, please contact Margaret Boeth at [voterserviceslwvt@gmail.com](mailto:voterserviceslwvt@gmail.com) or 508-4800 (C) or text.

Coming Forums

**Just for your calendar. Details will come later:**
- Leon Commission 4 (Desloge and Welch), September 8
- Leon Commission at-large (Cummings and Otte), September 10
- State Senate (Ausley and Preston), September 15
- State House 7 (Kahn and Shoaf), September 17
- State House 9 (Tant and Kallinger), September 22
- City Commission 2 (Richardson and Schack), September 24
- Superintendent of Schools (Hanna and Hightower), September 29
- Amendment – Children’s Services Council, October 1
  - *A pro/con discussion on the Children’s Services Council referendum*
- Congressional District 5 (Lawson and Adler), October 6
- Circuit Judge 4 (Baker and Wall), October 8

New Members

Sabrina Rodriguez de Conte
Kathy Pilkenton
Sue Sturgeon

What’s Happening This Week

N.B.: Even if not so noted, many of these may be virtual meetings. Always check.

**Monday**, August 31.

9:30 a.m. [CRA Virtual Scoring Meeting For Greater Frenchtown Southside Event Applications](https://example.com). Virtual Meeting.

**Tuesday**, September 1.

6:00 p.m. [Tallahassee/Leon County Planning Commission Meeting](https://example.com). Virtual Meeting via
**Wednesday, September 2.**

12:00 p.m. [Architectural Review Board](#). Renaissance Center, 1st Floor Conference Room. 435 North Macomb Street.

1:00 p.m. [Tallahassee/Big Bend Police Benevolent Association Negotiations Session](#). Virtual Meeting.

2:00 p.m. [Scoring Meeting for 077-20-RT Fire Station 17 & Community Center](#). Virtual Meeting.

**Thursday, September 3.**

1:00 p.m. [Code Magistrate Public Hearing](#). Renaissance Center, 2nd Floor Conference Room. 435 North Macomb Street.

**Friday, September 4.**

10:00 a.m. [Tallahassee/International Association of Firefighters Negotiation Session](#). Virtual Meeting.

Or contact us at lwvtallahassee@gmail.com

850-309-3005