



***Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.***

**September 2022**

**Volume 16 Issue 3**

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## **CO-PRESIDENT MARY KAY ROSINSKI**

It's election season! And our League has been very busy helping our members and the community become informed voters. A huge thank you to those who worked on our online voter's guide, VOTE411.org. This is a "one-stop-shop" for election related, non-partisan materials. Find out what is on your ballot, check your voter registration, find your polling place and much more.



Don't miss our general meeting on September 19<sup>th</sup> (Manatee Recreation Center, 10 am). Cecile Scoon, the President of the LWV Florida, will be our speaker. She was instrumental in the lawsuits the League filed challenging Senate Bill 90 and other legislation that threatened our right to vote. Join us to hear the perspective of someone who was in the courtroom.

We have also been busy registering voters. Thanks to the many volunteers who have been working our voter registration tables in Sumter, Lake and Marion Counties. So far, we have held 13 voter registration events and we have more scheduled. We helped voters register and update their registration at the SOZO Kids Back to School Bash, local colleges, churches and community events. If you would like to find out how to become certified to register voters, contact us at our website, [lwftrifl.org](http://lwftrifl.org).

To help our community learn more about the candidates, our League held two forums before the primary election. Sumter County Commission candidates participated in a virtual forum on July 28<sup>th</sup>. Lake County School Board Candidates presented their

platforms and answered questions in a forum on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. We are working on additional forums, so keep and eye on our website for more information.

Thanks to all of you for helping the LWV Villages/Tri-County empower voters and defend democracy. Together, we are making a difference.



**September 19<sup>th</sup>**  
**10 a.m.**  
**The Manatee**  
**Recreation Center**  
**1512 Hillsborough Trail**  
**The Villages, FL 32163**

## **Cecile Scoon** **President – LWV Florida**

The League of Women Voters, Villages/Tri-county is hosting a meeting to present LWV Florida President, Cecile Scoon. Cecile is a civil rights lawyer in Panama City, Florida. As the LWVFL President, she was instrumental in the lawsuits the League filed challenging Senate Bill 90 and other legislation that threatened our right to vote. This meeting offers our community the opportunity to hear her story.

The Board invites all members to join us for lunch after the meeting. This is a great way to connect with each other, so we hope you can join us. We will take a number at the start of our meeting, so let us know then and join us!

*Please note the change in date from our regular meeting. We will be meeting the 3rd Monday for September only!*

**Please join us!**

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# NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY SEPTEMBER 20th

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

The LWV Villages/Tri-County has partnered with "All About the Ballots" to celebrate this event. We need volunteers to help with freebie give-away, food, voter registration (training required), and other tables.

Save-A-Lot parking lot: 332 W Ardice Ave, Eustis  
2:30 to 4:30  
4:30 to 6:30

Please contact Mary Kay Rosinski, Co-President if you can help.

619-742-2067 or [mknceta@yahoo.com](mailto:mknceta@yahoo.com)

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## Board Meeting Highlights

- We now have over 140 members. Ten years ago we had around 40. In the last two months we received 5 Contact Us forms from people who surfed the web, found our website, and reached out to learn how to join. We are a growing force in the Tri-County area.
- LWV branded tote bags are now available for \$15. They will be available at our General Membership Meetings. By purchasing one of these nifty bags, you will be financially supporting our many efforts to educate and register voters. (*See the Voter Services article.*)
- Speaking of which . . . we plan to educate voters about the referendum on funding an Independent Fire Control and Recue District in the Sumter County portion of The Villages. Information will be available on the website, in Vote 411 and appended to the Speakers Bureau presentation on the Florida Amendments.
- We hosted two well-attended candidate forums before the primary election. Our efforts to run Candidate Forums for state races have not been successful. Since the Tri-County area is so heavily Republican, these races are not competitive enough for candidates to see the benefits of participating. Therefore, the Board decided to focus future



efforts on the Primaries, where competition makes candidates eager to present their case to the public.

- The Board decided to promote seminars and other educational events, consistent with our mission, if they are run by our coalition partners (e.g., ACLU, NAACP, Southern Christian Leadership Foundation, All Voting is Local) or local governmental agencies.
- The Board will be presenting an amendment to our Bylaws at our Annual Meeting, which will make the Board responsible for preparing the budget. Currently, the budget is prepared by a separate Budget Committee. Since the Board is elected to plan League activities and the budget is merely one part of the planning, the current procedure it serves no purpose that we can determine.

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## Voter Services

It has been a very busy 2022 for Voter Services. Vote 411, Voter Registration Events and Candidate Forums and Meet and Greets have kept us on our toes.



**Vote411** was a resounding success for our League, as we had 83% participation in the Primary Election Voters' Guide by the County Commission and School Board candidates in the three counties that we serve, Lake, Marion and Sumter Counties. LWVUS is asking voters to call or write those candidates who have chosen to not participate and urge them to participate.

We thank the many members who make Vote411 possible. Much thanks to **Char Griffin** for the planning and execution of the input of all of the office names and descriptions, geographic information that makes it possible for the software to identify which candidates should be shown to each voter and the candidate information. Thank you to the following members who have researched and reported the candidate information and made the follow-up phone calls to non-responding candidates: **Gail Formanack, Alice Gardner, Joleen Gonzalez, Kathy Hansen, Jeannie Hamilton, and Beth Hicks**. Of course, we are not finished. We will be working on the guide for the November 8, 2022 General Election. We plan to publish it on Thursday, September 29.

**Voter Registration Events:** From January 1, 2022 to August 25, 2022, we registered 48 voters.

By Monday, September 5, we will have held 14 voter registration events and we have 3 more planned, before the November 8 General Election. At each event, we have collected Pledge Cards from those we register and from attendees who are already registered. The pledge is to vote in the next election and to understand that we will send them information. They give us their email addresses and phone numbers. We send emails and texts to them when Vote411 is published and urge them to vote in the upcoming election. We sent those messages to 77 registered voters before the Primary Election and will send the messages to at least 200 more registered voters before the General Election.

Plus, **Alice Gardner** and **Dina Goldman** used QR Codes, exclusively, to get the students at The College of Central Florida to register to vote on their cell phones. They were so successful that they set a record of registering 12 people in 2 hours! What a TEAM!! Thank you **Alice** and **Dina**!!

A heartfelt Thank you to the people who have made all of this possible, the volunteers who planned and staffed the events: **Mary Kay Rosinski** has set up nearly every event and generously provided her table, chairs and canopy.

The following have given of their time and skills to staff the voter registration events: **Bernadette Aley, Cecile Bouchard, Kathryn Dindia, Ellen Dugan, Gail Formanack, Alice Gardner, Dina Goldman, Joleen Gonzalez, Phil and Diane Grayber, Char Griffin, Jeannie Hamilton, Kathy Hansen, Sue Lanning, Shashi Marwah, Debbie Robinson, Mary Schulz, Cynthia Snavely, Vickie Southworth, Nancy Webster and Eve Young.**

**Candidate Forums and Meet and Greets:** **Mary Kay Rosinski** planned and **Gail Formanack** moderated a Candidate Forum for the Lake County Commission and School Board Primary Election. **Gail Formanack** and **Dina Goldman** planned a Meet and Greet of the Marion County General Election candidates. Check out the photos on our website. These events enhance our League's non-partisan credentials. Thank you **Mary Kay, Gail and Dina**!!

**Speakers' Bureau:** From January to June 2022, we have made 10 presentations to 414 attendees. We have 7 more scheduled before the November 8 General Election. Six of them are about the Amendments that will be on the November 8 ballot. A special shout out to **Jeannie Hamilton**, who contacts all of the hosts and gets the details of the engagements and sends Thank You's after, recruits the speakers and assistants, photocopies the handouts, maintains the equipment, keeps the Presentation lists up to date and occasionally acts as an Assistant to a Speaker. Thanks to the Speakers and Assistants who make this possible:  
**Bernadette Aley, Dorothy Duncan, Barb Fieldman, Gail Formanack, Char Griffin, Jeannie Hamilton, Beth Hicks, and Mary Schulz.**



### **RETURNING CITIZENS POST CARD CAMPAIGN**

A huge THANK YOU to the nineteen volunteers who wrote post cards encouraging Returning Citizens convicted of felonies, with the exception of murder and sexually related cases, to research their qualifications prior to registering to vote. The Florida legislature, after passage of Florida's Constitutional Amendment 4 in 2018, further required all returning citizens, before registering and voting, to make final restitution by completing payment of all outstanding fines and fees. Because of non-



systematic record keeping, this was confusing to many returning citizens. LWVFL provided the post cards and a partial number of stamps with the remaining stamps provided by volunteers writing the post cards. A huge thank you to members who supplied their own postage and to generous postage donations from Susan Lanning and Nancy & Mark Schwartz. This was our League's second year to participate and we again completed an impressive 1000 post cards!

Jeannie Hamilton  
Returning Citizens Post Card Campaign  
Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy

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## LEAGUE BRANDED TOTE BAGS

The League's work is *always* important but never as critical as during an election year! To broaden awareness to the general public of the LWV's ongoing work, the Board of Directors recently approved a new "promotional" item—a 14"x15"x5" canvas tote bag you can carry with pride to all your events and the grocery store. Our new bags will also be available for purchase at our monthly meetings.

While designed as a serviceable, promotional product, our new tote bag is also a League fundraiser.

Tote bag cost is \$15 payable by cash or with your check made payable to: **LWV Tri-County**. We ordered a limited quantity for our initial order, so call or email Jeannie Hamilton, 303-817-9988, [jeannie@jeannierealtor.com](mailto:jeannie@jeannierealtor.com) to purchase yours and schedule a pick up time.

Yours in League,  
Jeannie Hamilton

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## Welcome to our New Members

Randi Brown  
Terri Cain  
Louise Goldberg  
Blair Hoffman  
John Heimberg  
L. Kathleen Johnson



Helaine Kaufman (Laine)  
Cathy Nilsen  
Betty Nye  
Deborah Robinson  
Pat Sanderlin  
Anne Schalet (Timoner)  
Brenda Seliga  
Joan Sheppard  
Dagne Sollid  
Allison Towers  
Dr. Beverly Ward

*Phew...Busy Summer!!!*

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## Citizen Academies Available

### Marion County Sheriff's Office's Citizens Academy:

The free seven-week course will take place in the multipurpose room of the Sheriff's office, 3300 NW 10th Street, Ocala, from 9 to 11:30 am, Tuesday and Thursday, starting September 20, 2022. For information, visit [marionso.com/citizens-academy](http://marionso.com/citizens-academy) or contact Wendy Holland, MCSO volunteer coordinator, at [wholland@marionso.com](mailto:wholland@marionso.com), or 352-369-6761.



**Villages Resident Academy** will be held on Monday, October 17. To get more information about it and to register for it, go to <https://www.districtgov.org/ResidentAcademy.aspx> or call 352-753-4508.

**The Citizens Prosecutor Academy** (a program sponsored by the State Attorney for the Fifth Judicial Circuit to inform the public on the justice system) is currently being held in Marion County through the Master The Possibilities School, at 8415 SW 80<sup>th</sup> Street, Ocala, FL 34481 (near On Top of The World), from Tuesday, September 13 through Tuesday, October 18, each Tuesday for six weeks, from 10 am to noon. If you want to sign up for that program, contact Caren Francis (352) 861-9751.

The Academy is planned for a location in Lake County, in the Fall of 2022. For information about that program, contact Bridget Kiefer at the State Attorney's Office at 352-671-5914.

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# MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**September Date September 19** Cecile Scoon, LWVFL President (Please note date change for Sept. only)

**October 24** Chief Edmund Cain, The Villages Fire Department

**November 21** - Carolyn Ingham, Villages Enrichment Academy

**December 12** - David Houck SOZO Kids

**January 23** - Lou Sasmor - What Flavor of Government Do You Want?

**February 27**, Wesley Wilcox, Marion County SOE

**March 23** - Char Griffin I Don't Think We are in Kansas Anymore.

**April 24** Martha Taylor, President of the NAACP TriCity

**May 22** - Jason McHugh Wildwood City Manager, Wildwood Master Plan



## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

. You can expect to have an email reminder from member chair Gail Formanack

([formanag@gmail.com](mailto:formanag@gmail.com)) prior to your anniversary

date. Please pay your dues locally rather than joining directly with LWVUS.

Effective April 1, 2022, members may now renew their membership online and pay with a credit card. The link to the membership renewal page is <https://www.lwvtrifl.org/renew.html> You may also navigate to this from the main top menu “Become a Member.” New members may register, current members may renew, and you can update your directory information if you have moved, have a new phone number, etc. Of course, you may still send a check through the mail to our treasurer, Bernadette Aley, 1106 Monterry Lane, The Villages, FL 32159. Please fill out the member interest survey when joining or renewing. We would like to get you involved in an area of League work that interests you.

**As of April 1, local dues have been increased by \$2.00 for**

**individual (\$62) and household memberships (\$87).** The amount retained by our local organization will increase from \$13.50 to \$15.50 (individual) and \$15.00 to \$17.00 (household). The Susan B. Anthony membership level includes a \$40.00 additional donation retained in the general fund so will remain at the \$100.00 level. This increase will cover the fees incurred when paying by credit card.

If you have forgotten the password for members only for our website, or have any other membership questions, please [contact Gail Formanack](#).

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## **Editor Musings**

Welcome back to all who traveled during this summer. Hang on, an election is coming and your league will need lots of hands to accomplish our goals. Be on the lookout for information on what **YOU** can do to empower voters and defend democracy.

Yours in the League,  
Beth

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