



## January 2025 Newsletter

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### **JANUARY 2025 MEETING: Canvassing Boards. Protecting Florida Elections**



**Speaker: Paul Militello, Sumter County Judge**

**Thursday, January 9 at 2 PM**

Fruitland Park Library  
601 W Berckman Street  
Fruitland Park

Sumter County Judge Paul Militello will be our guest speaker, Thursday, January 9 at 2 pm.

As one of the 3 members of the Sumter County Canvassing Board, Judge Militello will tell us why Canvassing Boards are vitally important to fair elections and will explain how the Board monitors and certifies election results. This is your opportunity to learn more about the voting procedures in Florida.

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### **\* \* \* IMPORTANT: Changes Impacting You \* \* \***

There has been an article in every newsletter since September informing you about the upcoming change to dues collection. That new process, where dues collection will be handled by LWVUS, begins in February.

We do not have the details to share with you at this time. As soon as we know more, we will send you an email.

We do know that your renewal notification will be sent from

Please add this email address to your Address Book, so the emails telling you it's time to renew do not end up in your spam/junk folder. This is also the email address LWVUS may use to request verification of your membership information. Please respond to their request.

If you don't like change (and who besides a wet baby does), you may want to consider paying next year's dues before February. Everything you need to know about the current process is on the [Renewal](#) page of our website.

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## YOUR VOTES ARE IN: Merger Proposal Was Adopted



Thanks to the 47 members who voted on the Board's proposal to merge LWVTRI, the 501c4 organization in which you are a member, into the LWVTRI Education Fund, a 501c3.

You unanimously voted to merge the two organizations.

The Board is filing the required paperwork with the Florida Secretary of State and the IRS. Once the merger is approved, we will notify you that we are operating under our new name: the League of Women Voters of The Villages / Tri-County Florida.

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## CO-PRESIDENT COLUMN: Legislative Delegation Meetings



Legislative delegation meetings are scheduled in each Florida county prior to the beginning of the legislative session. They provide an opportunity for citizens to connect with their representatives, build a relationship and share issues and priorities prior to the beginning of the legislative session.

In even numbered years, when there are statewide elections, the legislature convenes in January. In odd numbered years, the legislative session starts in March. In 2025 the Legislature convenes March 4 so counties are holding their Legislative Delegation Meetings in December 2024 and January 2025.

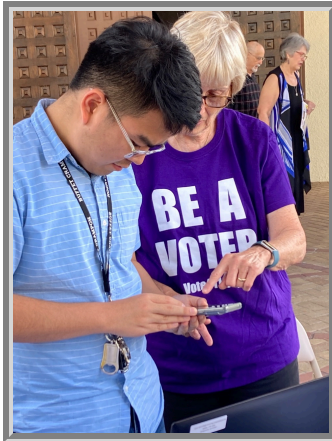
Lake County's meeting was in December, but there is still time to attend Marion's (Wednesday, January 8) and Sumter's (Wednesday, January 29) meetings. If you are interested, further details are on LWVTRI's website [calendar](#).

< [READ MORE](#) >

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## Democracy in 2025

You can help us inform voters by



- becoming a member of the **Speaker Bureau** as a speaker, assistant, or scheduler. Check out [Book a Speaker](#) on our website for the list of topics we offer.
- working **Voter Registration Events** as a Certified League Voter Registrar or helping voters register to vote online, check the status of their registration or request a vote-by-mail ballot. We also need someone to schedule these events by contacting the list of hosts we have from previous years to determine when we might participate in their 2025 events.
- addressing **postcards** to tell former felons how they can get help to determine if they can register to vote. This can be done at home or with a group of friends.

If you want to participate in any of these opportunities, please contact Carol Van Noy, [denny.carol@gmail.com](mailto:denny.carol@gmail.com). She will provide training and mentoring. You will have the satisfaction of knowing that you are creating a community of responsible citizens.

< [LEARN MORE](#) >

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## GOOD NEWS: We Have Received Two Grants!!

In November, we applied to The League of Women Voters of The US (LWVUS) for two grants. One of the grants is to help returning citizens, former felons, register to vote. In Florida, that means giving them information about who will help them determine if they have paid all of their fees, so they are eligible to register. The other grant is to work with youth to register and vote.

Just as we were creating this newsletter, we were informed that LWVUS granted us \$1,000 to do the work with former felons and LWVUS granted us \$750 to work with youth to register and vote. What an honor to be selected to receive both grants!!

As a result, we will need volunteers to address the postcards, with that information, to the returning citizens. The grant money will pay for the postcards and the postage.

We will also need volunteers to attend events where youth will be involved, to help them value and act on their right to vote.

If you want to participate in the important work of post carding and/or youth interaction, please contact Carol Van Noy, [denny.carol@gmail.com](mailto:denny.carol@gmail.com) Thank you in advance!!

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## LWV of Florida's Voting Rights Action Team



League to participate in the Voting Rights Action Team. This team shares information about their local Leagues' efforts regarding returning citizen postcard events, voter registration and voter information drives. As a result, local Leagues can benefit from the best practices of others.

The action team also works to alert League members about legislation and court cases relevant to voting in Florida, as well as related work by sister organizations.

This is a great way to both serve the League and increase your knowledge about challenges to voting rights in Florida.

Meetings are by Zoom on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 6 pm to 7 pm. The first Zoom call will be January 28, 2025.

If you wish to volunteer or learn more, please contact [Char Griffin](#).

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## DO NOT MISS: Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition



### VOICES & VOTES: DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA

Leesburg Public Library  
100 E. Main Street  
Leesburg, FL

November 16 through January 11

Gather a group of friends and see this Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibition: [Museum on Main Street: on Democracy in America](#).

< [LEARN MORE](#) >

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## BOARD BRIEFS

The Board made plans to attend Legislative Delegation Meetings for Marion and Sumter Counties in January to ask legislators to help close the Write-in Loophole, approved By-laws for the newly combined 501c3, discussed grant applications and planned Speakers Bureau training.

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## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

### Let's Welcome Our Newest Member

Dee Melvin  
Carolyn Pasquale

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## FUTURE MEETINGS

General meetings are held in the Fruitland Park Library on the 2nd Thursday of the months between September and May, except for the Holiday Luncheon in December.

Meeting details can be found on the [Calendar](#) page of our website.

**February 13**

#### **Protecting Voting Rights in Florida**

Speaker: Sam Coodley  
Campaign Manager of *All Voting is Local*

**March 13**

#### **Program Planning**

Discussion: LWVTRI's program for the next fiscal year

**April 10**

#### **Social Security: Eligibility & Long Term Viability**

Speaker: Bernadette Aley  
Retired District Director of Social Security Administration

**May 8**

#### **Annual Meeting**

Business Meeting: The only business meeting of the year will include elections of officers, approval of budget, and adoption of program.

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