



October 2026 Newsletter

OCTOBER 2026 MEETING



SPEAKER: Genai Witter
Florida State Director of VoteRiders

Thursday, October 8th at 2 PM

Palm Villa Room
Fruitland Park Library
604 W Berckman Street
Fruitland Park

VoteRiders is the country's leading nonpartisan organization focused on the critical issue of voter ID.

The mission of VoteRiders is to eliminate ID barriers to the ballot box so every eligible voter can cast a ballot that counts.

NOTE: Parking in front of the library may be limited. Overflow parking is available across the street at the **Heritage Community Church**, 509 W Berckman St, Fruitland Park, FL. Follow signs.

CO-PRESIDENT COLUMN: Why did you join the League?



especially when you get the notice that it's almost time to pay your dues for the upcoming year. Many of us joined to become more educated citizens. The LWVUS website says: *"People join the League because they want to contribute to the creation of an electorate that is well-informed about election processes, candidates, and issues."*



Our current membership report shows we have 85 members. We are grateful that our membership continues to increase but...we have to ask, beyond your membership dues which contribute to our financial stability, what are you as a member doing to contribute to an informed electorate?

The majority of us are Villagers and are super busy. We don't know how we had time to work! The LWVTRI Board is comprised of eight members. Six of us are involved in the Speaker's Bureau - either as Speakers or Assistants. We need more volunteers to spread out the workload.

Many of our members are teachers. Can you spare a few hours a month to give a talk? All of the equipment, PowerPoints, and handouts are provided. Don't like to talk in front of a crowd? You could be an assistant: help set-up, count the attendees, time the talk and write down any questions the speaker can't answer, then send a short report to the Speaker's Bureau chair. If you did it once a month it may involve two to three hours of time depending on where we are giving the talk.

The Board members are also filling in as needed on our other activities. We need more members to step forward. Please see the Vice-President of Voter Services Column to see how you could help both as an active volunteer and your day-to-day activities. To be all we could be, we need you. Please consider becoming an active member. We sincerely thank all those who have already stepped forward. Please remember: ***Many hands make light work.***

Sandy Christian

Bernadette Aley

LWV MEMBER ORIENTATION



An Orientation for new members as well as others interested in learning about The League for Women's Voters of The Villages / Tri-County Florida will be held immediately following the October 8th meeting.

Those interested in learning more about the League might also be interested in attending our meeting beginning at 2pm with a speaker on Vote Riders, a nonpartisan organization dedicated to educating the public and providing voter assistance in overcoming ID barriers to voting.

what we do. For additional information, please contact Tina Getz, Membership Director, at 719-331-6212 or tinagetz27@gmail.com.

VOTER SERVICES: Volunteers Urgently Needed



The Co-President's article addresses the Speaker's Bureau and need for more speakers and assistants. We also urgently need volunteers to register and educate voters, encourage voting and help protect elections. September was a busy month: we gave the presentation on the amendments to 9 groups and registered and educated voters at local colleges, Goodwill stores and community events. We have registered and educated hundreds of people in Marion County but only a fraction of that in Sumter and Lake counties.

We would love to be able to expand our efforts in Lake and Sumter counties, but our outreach has been limited due to an insufficient number of volunteers.

Here are some ways **you can make a difference**:

- **Recommend LWV presentations** to groups you belong to
- Volunteer at a **voter registration** event
- Help **deliver voter guides** to organizations in the Tri-County area
- Serve on a **Voter Services committee** to research and plan ways to expand our outreach to voters in the Tri-County area
- Serve as a **poll monitor** to safeguard against election interference. [You would be trained](#) to assist voters who encounter problems, observe and report any issues at the polls.

Help us continue to expand our outreach leading up to the election. Volunteering for as little as two or three hours will make a difference. We could do so much more with additional volunteers from our membership!

For more information or to volunteer, contact Vickie Southworth at 352-661-5648, southworth_family@hotmail.com.

CANVASSING BOARD MONITORING

The LWVFL is partnering with *All Voting is Local* with opportunities for members to engage in Canvassing Board monitoring within your county for the November election.

NEED TRANSPORTATION TO THE POLLS?

SPREAD THE WORD: The League of Women Voters and Lyft have partnered to provide access to the polls on Election Day. Lyft will offer free and discounted rides for the upcoming midterm elections on November 3.

You can follow this link for additional information: <https://www.lyft.com/blog/posts/2026-voting-access-program>

IMPORTANT: Preload the code – **VOTE26** in the Lyft app before Tuesday, November 3rd

Lake, Sumter and Marion Supervisors of Elections on Voter Fraud



In February, 2026, our members Deirdre Burke, Jane Hepting, and Lynn Miller each interviewed their Supervisors of Elections on election security. The full content of the three interviews can be found on the **Vote** page of our website (<lwvtrifl.org>) under [Election Integrity](#). Following is a recap of what the Supervisors had to say about voter fraud in Lake, Marion, and Sumter Counties.

Please note that election fraud can occur in many areas of the election process such as fund-raising, illegally gathering signatures on petitions, and so on. This examination of voter fraud focuses on deliberate falsification on registration forms, illegal casting of ballots, and attempting to vote more than once. The three Supervisors of Elections identified a total of four arrests of this kind of voter fraud in recent years as well as types of unintentional voting errors.

Marion County Supervisor of Elections Wesley Wilcox and Lake County Supervisor of Elections Alan Hays said that noncitizens don't try to register or vote because it is illegal to do so, and a conviction is a felony which will prevent them from the possibility of becoming citizens. Trained poll workers catch fraudulent voters by the signatures of mail-in ballots, and voters at the polls are identified as legal registered voters by state-approved picture ID and signature before being given a ballot.

[< Read More >](#)

the date for a Community Event on an Article V Convention, discussed plans to expand voter registration events and distribute

paper Voter Guides, finalized activities for honoring local Supervisor of Elections Offices on Election Hero Day, and unanimously passed a motion to increase the meeting budget by \$380 because a new Florida law now requires the Fruitland Park Library to charge for room rental.

The minutes are available on the [Members Only](#) webpage which is password protected. If you are a member and have forgotten the password, contact the [webmaster](#).

MAKING IT HAPPEN

Congratulations to our newly certified voter registration volunteers **Rebecca Johnston-Garvin** and **Sue Banner**. They answered the call and have already made several voter registration and education events possible.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Let's Welcome Our Newest Members

Dave Fountaine
Diane Ruggiero

UPCOMING MEETINGS

General meetings are held in the Fruitland Park Library on the 2nd Thursday of the months between September and May at 2 PM.

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

November 12

Sumter County, District 2 Commissioner

Speaker: Andrew Bilardello

December 10

Holiday Party

Speaker: Lisa French will present Mary McLeod Bethune

January 14

LWVFL Lobby Corp

Speaker: Trish Neely will share her insights about working with Florida Legislators

March 11

TBA

April 8

Implementation of Florida's SAVE Act

Speaker: TBA

May 13

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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