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**YOUR BOARD MEMBERS**

*Officers:*

Jane Spruill, *President*  
Sallie Brown, *1<sup>st</sup> Vice Pres.*  
Annelise Reunert, *2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Pres.*  
Jo Matthews, *Treasurer*  
Karon McGrath, *Secretary*

*Directors:*

Vivian Faircloth  
Cheryl Howard  
Shirley Lewis-Brown  
Paula Montgomery  
Charlyle Parrish  
Ellen Roston  
Enid Sisskin  
Patricia Spencer  
Betsy Werre  
Mary Louise Winter

*Off-Board Action Team Leaders*

Janet deLorge, *Naturalization*  
Mary Gutierrez, *Solar/EV Initiative*  
Cathy Scott, *Membership*

*Nominating Committee*

Carolyn Kolb, *Chair*  
Elizabeth King      Elizabeth Major

**Contact Us**

[www.lwvpba.org](http://www.lwvpba.org)  
LWVPBA [facebook page](#)  
- [www.lwvfl.org](http://www.lwvfl.org)  
[lwvpba@gmail.com](mailto:lwvpba@gmail.com)  
Phone: (850)937-7769

LWV - [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)  
LWV Florida - [www.lwvfl.org](http://www.lwvfl.org)

## League Zoom Meeting “Food Insecurity and Poverty”



**Nikki Fried**, Florida Commissioner  
of Agriculture and  
**DeDe Flounlaker**, Director of Manna  
Food Bank.

**April 17, 10:15 Coffee 10:30 Program**  
Partner: Manna Food Bank

Register [here](#) for a link to all events

**N**icole “Nikki” Fried, Florida’s 12th Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services, is the first woman elected to this Cabinet position. As commissioner, She oversees a \$1.8 billion department with nearly 4,000 employees, has a \$137 billion economic impact, and is responsible for Florida’s food production and safety, consumer protection and licensing, as well as the state’s waters, forests, energy and more.

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services was established in 1868 when the Office of Commissioner of Immigration was created. The mission, structure and name of the office have evolved over time. In 1969, the Florida Legislature reorganized the department and established the Division of Consumer Services and the Division of Forestry. They renamed the department to include its new responsibilities: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

**D**eDe Flounlaker, executive director of Manna Food Pantries, learned at an early age from her parents to take care of family and take care of neighbors. Manna is a local grassroots organization fighting hunger in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. Groceries are provided free of charge to individuals and families in need. Manna receives no government funding and has no national affiliation. Most of the funding comes from individuals, foundations, faith-based organizations, corporations and businesses. It is nonsectarian, community focused and volunteer supported. Manna believes every person has a right to live free of hunger and to be treated with respect and dignity.

*Statement of League Position on Meeting Basic Human Needs is found in Impact on Issues, page 82 and [here](#).*



## 71<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting via Zoom May 15, 2021 10:30 am - Noon

**Speakers:** Mayor Grover C. Robinson IV, City of Pensacola and Lawrence Powell, Mayor’s liaison to the homeless.

You are cordially invited to participate in our Annual Meeting to elect the nominees for the Board of Directors and Officers, approve the budget, and select the program that we will work on in the coming year. While only League members may vote, non-members are encouraged to attend as well. Register on the new website events page [here](#).



Jane Spruill

## President's Message

### *Remaining Nonpartisan in Hyper-partisan Times*

VIRGINIA KASE, CEO of LWVUS  
2/10/2021

*The League of Women Voters of the United States is proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public.*



Virginia Kase

So many issues today are framed in partisan terms that it can feel impossible to communicate at all without being accused of taking a side. "If you believe this, then you must be a progressive." "If you oppose that, then you align with conservatives." Being painted into ideological corners because of a stance our organization takes is not a new phenomenon, but it continues to be one that undermines a vibrant

democracy: discussion, discourse, and listening to other points of view are what makes democracy work.

More than 100 years ago, the League of Women Voters of the U.S. was founded to be a nonpartisan voice for American women who wanted free, fair, and open elections, above all else. Our founders believed that voters must always have the facts, no matter how difficult those facts could be to accept, especially when it challenges one's deeply held beliefs about a candidate or political party. Our founders were attacked for taking positions rooted in fact back then, and today, not much has changed. League leaders continue to face this challenge and often stand accused of being partisan for our efforts to advance democracy.

#### ISSUES ARE NOT PARTISAN

The League's advocacy work is issued based, and we arrive at our positions based on careful study and input from our members in communities across the country. We never derive our positions from politicians, and even when candidates or parties support the same issue, we never endorse them. Issues may evolve over the years, but our allegiance will always be first and foremost to the voters. If a party changes their position on an issue, that doesn't mean the League has to change our position to remain neutral. And one politician taking a similar position to the League on any one issue does not make the issue or the League partisan.

However, in this hyper-partisan environment, political connections and assumption are made that simply aren't accurate. Supporting the democratic processes of registering eligible voters and casting and counting ballots is seen by some as subverting one political party, even though these are sacred tools of our democracy. Likewise, empowering voters who previously have been left out of the process and supporting the anti-racism movement does not mean we are in alliance with one ideological segment of American government; rather, it means we are doing what we were founded to do: stand up for what is right.

Wanting every eligible voter to have equal access to the ballot box is not partisan. Wanting a robust democracy in which everyone has an equal voice and equal representation is not

partisan. Wanting to see more elected officials that reflect the diverse makeup of our country is not partisan - it is American.

No party has a claim on any particular issue. Sometimes a candidate or political party agrees with our position-they may even champion them-but that doesn't make the issue or the League partisan. We have seen an evolution of popular support and public opinion shift on issues over time, and the League has reevaluated and shifted priorities-but we have never compromised our values.

#### NONPARTISAN DOES NOT MEAN APOLITICAL

In the hundred years of the League's existence, we have endured challenges to our democratic principles, policies, and practices. We witnessed in live video the violation and prevention of rights to American citizens due to racial and structural inequities, and the growing anti-racism movement responding to it. We've observed the pandemic obstacles faced and overcome by our election processes, resulting in the secure, effective elections across the country.

League members are not a monolith. We represent opinions and positions that can be found across the American political spectrum. What brings us together is our commitment to voter empowerment-especially empowering women voters-and defending democracy. Standing up for these values is not a partisan narrative but a way to advance inclusion.

As we do this, we must ask ourselves and others within our election and democratic systems if we are walking the talk and prioritizing diversity, equity and inclusion within our own organizations. Are we living our values, and are those values aligned with the ideals that we have as a country?

This self-reflection may be painful. It's difficult to acknowledge that actions taken in the past with the best of intentions may have been hurtful or undermined the values we claim to honor. It will require us to be open, transparent, and willing to admit when we are wrong.

#### DEMOCRACY IS A CIVIL RIGHTS ISSUE

Webster's definition of democracy:

- a: government by the people, especially: rule of the majority
- b: a government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections.

Our mission to 'empower voters and defend democracy' has not changed in our 100 years. What has changed is the need to defend democracy, especially in the face of voter suppression. There is a wealth of misinformation out there that is aimed to divide us as a nation and undermine our democracy. We have to stand up to this attack on our democratic ideals, regardless of what some may say.

While it may be a challenge, especially at the state and local level, to avoid the appearance of partisanship when publicly addressing racial injustice in this heightened climate, we must. We may be accused of being partisan in those moments, but we must stand on the side of justice. It is our moral obligation to demand a more just and equitable world for people of color in our communities.

We will continue to uphold our nonpartisan values for fairness, justice, and equity because they form the foundation of a representative democracy. If we don't strive to dismantle and improve the systems and structures that exclude individuals from their democratic rights to vote and and the confidence to participate."

**Continued on page 4....**Virginia Kase



## New Website Unveiled

Mary Louise Winter, IT, 850-449-3141 winterml@icloud.com

The Communications Committee is excited to announce the unveiling of the new LWVPBA website. While members can still access the site using the same web address, lwvpba.org, its "look and feel" has changed. Here are a few features to explore:

- Home Page: We've added a revolving "carousel" that contains quick links to information such as a Meetings & Events Calendar, info on our Community Partner of the Month, and LWV Breaking News to name just a few. Tap on any part of the carousel to bring it forward and then tap again to open it.
- Search the Site: In the upper right corner of each page, you'll find a search box to help you easily find the information you need.
- Media Buttons: Also, at the top right of each page, you'll find handy buttons to the Voter, our Facebook page, and our YouTube Channel. For those of you who are not "Facebookers", you can watch videos of our meetings and events on the LWVPBA YouTube Channel 24 hours after they have ended.
- Committees Page: We've added information about our various advocacy committees, what they're working on, and when they meet.

Of course, the site will continue to evolve as we participate in new events and tackle new projects. However, for it to be truly effective, we'll need your input! Take time to explore the site and then please contact Vivian Faircloth or Mary Louise Winter at lwvpba@gmail.com if there is something you can't find or information that you'd like us to include.



## FINDING IT HARD TO KEEP TRACK OF ZOOM LINKS?

Having trouble keeping track of your "zoom" links? We have all done it- time for the meeting, where did the link go???? Here are a couple of practical solutions:

### TECH TIP!

1. Go to "Events" on [www.lwvpba.org](http://www.lwvpba.org) and register on the meeting you plan to attend.
2. You will get an email confirmation of your registration that contains the Zoom link information.

You can "copy" the link and "paste" it into the event on your calendar or create an email folder or mailbox for event registrations. When you receive the event confirmation, save it to that folder. It's quick and easy, and the email won't get lost in that pile of incoming mail!

Hope that helps!!!

## Pensacola Tree Ordinance

Mary Gutierrez, Natural Resources  
Letter to Pensacola City Council

On behalf of the Pensacola Bay Area League of Women Voters Natural Resources Committee, I would like to commend and thank you for your recent approval of modifications to the existing tree ordinance.

While we applaud the following changes, specifically, the addition of longleaf pine trees bringing the list of protected species to 27 and the change of diameter requirements for certain tree species, we have concerns over a few of the changes. One change is the hiring of a qualified arborist. Mayor Robinson has stated that he would consider contracting with the County for use of their arborist. We don't believe this is a good move; we want to ensure that all landscaping/construction permits are fully vetted and not allowed to be accidentally overlooked. We support the hiring of a qualified arborist dedicated to the needs of the city.

Although we support signage indicating the removal of one heritage tree as opposed to the removal of two or more, we would like to see stricter requirements that do not allow for the removal of heritage trees unless they are dead or damaged and pose an immediate threat. The current ordinance language in 25-1, Removal Criteria states, "No authorization to remove a protected tree shall be granted where there has been a failure to take reasonable measures to design and locate proposed improvements so that protected tree removal is minimized." "Existing healthy trees shall be preserved to the greatest extent practical to sustain an age diverse urban forest and to minimize tree canopy cover losses."

We understand this might require a change to existing state legislation, but the protection of trees should be strictly enforced and remain the responsibility of local municipalities.

Finally, our other concern is the lack of public comments on the tree ordinance changes. We believe in a government process that is transparent and inclusive. This process does not appear to have supported this.

Moving forward, we would like to see further language/action implemented into the tree ordinance. This includes increased fines associated with the removal of trees that represent the adverse impacts associated with the removal of trees. In addition, the planting of trees to "offset" tree removal should use reasonably sized replacements.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with comments or questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Enid Sisskin, PhD  
Chair, Natural Resource Committee  
League of Women Voters of the Pensacola Bay Area





Dorothy Tamary

### New Member in the Spotlight

**D**orothy Tamary was born and spent her youth in Starkville, MS. She moved to Pensacola in 1967 and taught in the Science department at Escambia High School for thirty-one years. Following her retirement from the school system, Dorothy began a second career

assisting her husband, Bubba, in his real estate company where she managed the rental department. He passed away three years ago.

Dorothy has two children, a son and daughter and four grandchildren. Dorothy's son, Tony, lives here and works with the sheriff's department at the Perdido/Big Lagoon precinct. Her daughter and husband live in Colorado Springs.

Dorothy is a member of Saint Andrew's Antiochian Orthodox Church. She holds a leadership position in the Women's group.

In retirement, Dorothy likes to read, sew and cook. She is currently busy training a new puppy.

Dorothy is interested in the League activities, specifically Education, Natural Resources, Naturalization, Poverty, Social Media and perhaps serving as an observer in governmental meetings. ♦

Continued from page 2 ... Virginia Kase

participate, we will never be able to achieve a "democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge

Whether you identify politically as a Republican, Democrat, Independent, Libertarian, conservative, liberal, moderate, progressive or another political perspective, you have a place in this democracy and a place within the League, as long as you are committed to our belief in an inclusive democracy. While we may disagree on how we accomplish it, if you value democracy, then you must also value human rights, social justice, and equity.

### WE CAN BRIDGE THE PARTISAN DIVIDE

In 2020, we marked the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which afforded women in the United States the right to vote. However, even then, women of color were largely excluded from the movement that brought about the amendment. It wasn't until the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act that people of color could fully exercise their right to vote and our country began to reflect the values of all its people. We've made strides in the past 100 years, but we have so much more work to do, especially when it comes to fairness, justice, and equity for all.

The League will continue to fight for the nonpartisan, anti-racism issues and policies we have worked to advance for a century. We will work to elevate more diverse voices from within our membership and our communities. With our partners, the League will strive to create a stronger, more inclusive, just, and equitable democracy for American voters—a place where everyone has a voice.

As we move forward, we remain open to conversations about our history and the ways we can improve our democracy. Let's do this work together and make the next 100 years a century of real diversity, inclusion, and equity in American elections and democracy.

**Help protect and defend our democracy**

*On Lobby Day, The David King Defender of Democracy Award was awarded to Poll Workers who risked their lives to work in the polls and election protection.*



### Community Spotlight

- WUWF broadcasts the EcoMinute each afternoon.
- C.W. Weiss Elementary Community Partnership School serves as a community resource to infuse much needed resources into the community.

### Waffles & Wisdom

May 1, 2021 10:00 am - 12:00 pm



**W**hat is the League's mission? Where do my dues payment go? Who runs this organization?

How can I become more involved? How do we decide on what issue we work on each League year? Is this a grassroots organization or top down? Would you like a refresher on what your membership means? Join us - and bring a friend.

The Membership Committee, chaired by Betsy Werre, will host the virtual coffee entitled "Waffles & Wisdom" on Saturday May 1, 10:00 am.



## Calendar



Register for all League events [here](#).

### April

- 6 **Tuesday, 5:30 pm Board Meeting**, Zoom meeting. Members welcome. Link on [www.lwvpba.org](http://www.lwvpba.org)
- 12 **Monday, 4:00 pm, Membership Committee**, Zoom Contact Betsy Werre, [rbwerr@att.net](mailto:rbwerr@att.net) for information.
- 13 **Tuesday, 5:30 pm, Juvenile Justice/Education Committees** Zoom. Contact Paula Montgomery, [montpns@aol.com](mailto:montpns@aol.com) or Shirley Lewis-Brown at [shirleylewis\\_brown@hotmail.com](mailto:shirleylewis_brown@hotmail.com)
- 15 **Thursday, 11:30 am, Voter Services**, Zoom Contact Charyle Parrish, [ccparrish@usa.net](mailto:ccparrish@usa.net)

- 17 **Saturday, 10:15 Coffee am, 10:30 am General Meeting**, Zoom, **“Food Insecurity and Poverty”** Nikki Fried, Florida Commissioner of Agriculture and DeDe Flounlaker, Director of Manna Food Bank. Register [here](#) or Join Facebook Live [here](#). Click [here](#) to watch recorded meetings.

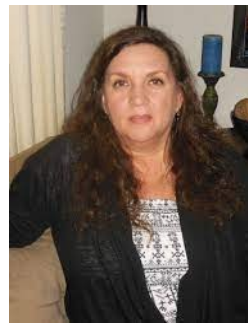
- 19 **Monday, noon, Natural Resources Committee**, Zoom. Contact Enid Sisskin at [esisskin@gmail.com](mailto:esisskin@gmail.com) for information.
- 20 **Tuesday, 6 pm, Women’s Issues**, Zoom, contact Annelise Reunert at [akr492@hotmail.com](mailto:akr492@hotmail.com) or Cheryl Howard at [cheryl.howard2@outlook.com](mailto:cheryl.howard2@outlook.com)
- 28 **Wednesday, 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm, Gun Safety** on Zoom, contact Dianna Montoya at [dianna.montoya@gmail.com](mailto:dianna.montoya@gmail.com) for information.

### May

- Monday, 4:00 pm Membership Committee**, Zoom, contact Betsy Werre, [rbwerre@att.net](mailto:rbwerre@att.net) For information.

- 4 **Tuesday, 5:30 pm Board Meeting**, Zoom meeting. Members welcome. Contact Mary Louise at [winterml@icloud.com](mailto:winterml@icloud.com) for link.

- 15 **Saturday, 10:30 am - Noon, Virtual 71<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting, Speakers:** Mayor Grover C. Robinson IV, City of Pensacola and Lawrence Powell, Mayor’s liaison to the homeless. Election of officers and board of directors, bylaws change, selection of 2021-22 local Program plus adoption of the budget will take place. The Board invites you to celebrate our successful year.  
Register [here](#) or Join Facebook Live [here](#). Click [here](#) to watch recorded meetings.



### Mary Gutierrez Leaguer in the Spotlight

Although a long-time resident of the Gulf Coast, Mary considers herself at home anywhere she lands. She is an environmental scientist, ordained minister, and published poet. She is the Founder and Director of Earth Ethics, Inc. and Earth Action, Inc. She has spent the last several decades fighting for environmental and social justice issues locally, nationally, and globally. She has traveled internationally to work with other countries on these issues but has worked on them locally as well. Always engaged in community events, she believes education is the foundation for significant change. She also believes that we will never move forward until we change our relationship with nature and recognize that we are connected and not separate from her. A radical animal advocate, 2020 marked her 45th anniversary of being a vegetarian. If she has free time, she enjoys writing, reading, gardening, walking, communing with nature, and traveling.

Mary has been a member of the League since 2001 and has served as Co-President twice during this time. She has also served as Chair and Co-Chair of the Natural Resources Committee. Currently she serves as the chair for the Clean Energy and Transportation Committee for LWVPBA and chair for the State Nominating Committee. She represents and supports the League through her active engagement with the state Natural Resource and Solar/EV committees. She was recently appointed to serve on the Environmental Justice committee for the LWVF.

*The League is proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public.*

*LWV is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy. It is a fundamental value of the organization and belongs alongside our hallmark of nonpartisanship.*

Join the League of Women Voters Today!

It's easy! Just send your check to:

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ♦ P.O. Box 2023, Pensacola, FL 32513 or PayPal [here](#).

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_\_\_ New Mbr? Yes/No

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Other (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Add Family Member(s): \_\_\_\_\_

DUES: \$60.00 \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Mbrs @ \$30 \_\_\_\_\_ Contribution \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

Dues are FREE for a student enrolled in a certificate or degree program.

I'm renewing my membership. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in the following committees (Circle all interests)			
Education	Natural Resources	Juvenile Justice	Voter Service
Communications	Membership	Gun Safety	Women's Issues
I am also interested in the following areas:			
Speaker's Bureau	Website	Observer - Governmental Meetings	Social Media
Legislative Action	Naturalization	Newsletter	Voter Registration
Fund-raising	Poverty	Healthcare	Publicity

Membership dues and gifts to the League of Women Voters are not deductible as charitable contributions for tax purposes. (Tax deductible contributions require a separate check written to the LWV Florida Education Fund and should be sent to our local treasurer.) **The League year runs from June 1 through May 31.**



P. O. Box 2023  
Pensacola, FL 32513

Register at [www.lwvpba.org](http://www.lwvpba.org) for the Annual Meeting