A blue and white sign

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**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF**

**CITRUS COUNTY FLORIDA**

**Vicky Iozzia is the Editor of this newsletter.**

**Our mailing address is LWVCC. P. O. Box 1903, Lecanto, FL 34460**

**Our website is lwvcitrus.org**

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Our September 11, 2024 meeting, at 10:00 am, features candidates for the US House of Representatives, State Senator, and Mosquito Control Board Vicky Iozzia will give a presentation on Disinformation. for the. It will be at the Coastal Region Library in Crystal River.

Our October 9, 2024 meeting, at 10:00 am, features Supervisor of Elections Mo Baird is giving presentation on Presidential Election Security. Vicky Iozzia will give a presentation on the Amendments on the 2024 ballot. It will be at the Coastal Region Library in Crystal River.

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Please visit our Facebook page and "like" us!  
<https://www.facebook.com/leagueofwomenvotersofcitruscounty>

A flag and a tall tower

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September, 2024

A calendar with a date and time

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**HEAR YE, HEAR YE! FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO READ THE NEWSLETTER AND ATTEND OUR MEETINGS, THERE WILL BE TWO QUESTIONS ASKED ABOUT THE CONTENT OF THE NEWSLETTER. IF YOU KNOW THE ANSWER AND ARE CALLED ON, YOU WILL WIN A PRIZE! STUDY FOR THE NEWSLETTER QUIZ!**

**Contents:**

August meeting, Judges Page 4

September meeting, Mo Baird Page 5

Join us! Page 6

Vicky Iozzia: Pages 7 to 8

In the News Pages 9 to 15

Devora Stager from Pine Ridge Neighbors Pages 16 to 18

Peg Primeau, Reproductive Health Page 19 to 21

Rosemary Nilles Page 22

Linda Abels, Membership Chair Page 23

Jan Hall MARK YOUR CALENDAR! Pages 24

Mo Baird, Voting dates Page 25

From the Department of Health Page 26 to 27

From the Florida LWV Pres and VP Page 28 to 30

**A close-up of a document

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A poster of a person waving

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**A person and person flying with an umbrella

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**If you are interested in joining the League of Women Voters of Citrus County,**

**Fill out the form below and mail it to us at**

**LWVCC, P. O. Box 1903, Lecanto, FL 34460**

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Email address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone (home)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone (cell)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Individual $65\_\_\_\_\_\_

Household $90

Student Free

Susan B. Anthony $105\*

Household $150\*

\*Includes $40 donation

Credit card name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Credit card number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date, month and year\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**![A person smiling at the camera

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**Vicky Iozzia, 1st President,Speakers** **Bureau Chair,**  **Newsletter Editor, Webmaster**

Since the League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization and I am the President, I am not permitted to endorse political candidates. Therefore, this is not an endorsement.

Michelle Obama spoke of having a pain in the pit of her stomach over what one of the candidates did as President. I too have felt that pain more than I would like to acknowledge.

What I am feeling is not partisanship. I am very afraid for what one candidate is putting in place right now.

There has been one attempt to subvert that peaceful transfer of power almost four years ago. Even though Joe Biden won the 2020 election, there are still people who say (I can’t say think) that Biden stole the election. Think about what would have happened if Mike Pence had agreed to allow the eighty-four fake electors across seven states (many of whom are now facing charges) who the falsely claimed that Trump had won to stop the truthful count of electors.

According to the Associated Press, right now there is another attempt in progress. There are people being put in positions of authority who will refuse to certify the results of elections.

I have no doubt that in Citrus County, with Mo Baird certifying the elections, that the truth will be reported. However, that may not be so in other counties throughout the country.

Michelle Obama, in her speech, said “Do something.” I try to do that as President of the League of Women Voters of Citrus County. We try to educate the public and our members. Our Meet and Greet meetings have been very successful.

I am concerned that the enthusiasm we have shared at our meetings will fizzle out after the general election. No matter who wins, please don’t dump us. Please keep coming to our meetings, join if you haven’t yet, and have discourse with us.

No matter what happens, we will all be needed to work to improve the country. The very least you should do is be well informed about what is happening. Either we participate and have our opinions heard and acted upon, or we keep quiet and other people’s opinions heard and implemented. Personally, I want my input into the process.

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If you are interested in working on a project with the Board, please contact Vicky or Jan. There are many projects that we can participate in if we have the right people to do them. Contact Vicky at [vickyiozzia@gmail.com](mailto:vickyiozzia@gmail.com), Jan at janhalldesigns@yahoo.com

The Board welcomes and thanks our newest member, Jeanne Messersmith. She is now our Secretary. (Thank you, Peg Primeau, for doing two jobs until we found a secretary.) Welcome to the team, and we look forward to working with you! Jeanne has a keen interest in voting, and she is an excellent writer!

**A person in a blue shirt

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**Jeanne Messersmith, Secretary**

**IN THE NEWS:**

**The following article is from WLRN PBS. It is about Levon Bracy, who spoke at our February 2024 LWV of Citrus County meeting. For me, this cuts to the chase of what has happened to voter registration in Florida.**

**How some states are making it harder to register voters**

**Dr. Lavon**

**Bracy**

LaVon Bracy has been registering Florida voters ever since Lyndon Johnson signed the 1965 Voting Rights Act, because she wanted, she said, to give others the voice she was denied as a Black student in a largely white high school. In an average year, she said, the nonprofit [Faith in Florida](https://www.faithinflorida.org/), where she serves as democracy director, used to add 12,000 new voters to the state’s rolls.

That ended last year, when Gov. Ron DeSantis signed legislation that imposed tough new rules on voter registration drives in the name of stopping fraud — and made voter registration groups that break the rules liable for fines as high as $250,000.

These days, Faith in Florida canvassers no longer help would-be voters fill out registration forms. Instead, they hand out slips of paper with a QR code that links to the state’s online registration website. And it’s not just small-time civic groups that are affected: The Florida chapter of the League of Women Voters has scaled back its trademark voter registration drives, too.

“These draconian laws and rules are like taking a sledgehammer to hit a flea,” said Cecile Scoon, a lawyer and the president of the Florida league.

The political right has long sought to winnow voter rolls in the name of stopping fraud, including [a stream of challenges](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/03/us/politics/trump-voter-rolls.html) this year. As Democrats prepare for a sprint to capitalize on the excitement of a new presidential ticket by signing up new voters, they are finding entirely new barriers in Florida and some other states to the sorts of voter registration drives that have been a campaign staple for both parties.

The Florida law imposes new regulations, with criminal penalties for violations, on groups that sign up new voters and deliver the collected applications to election officials. For example, it allows fines of up to $2,500 if a registration form delivered to election officials contains a mistake. If a registration drive allows people with certain felony convictions to sign up new voters or handle registration applications, the fine could rise to $50,000.

The Florida League of Women Voters and other groups sued in federal court to block the law last year, and a trial was held this spring. A ruling is expected soon.

Laws similar to Florida’s have been passed recently by a number of Republican-controlled state legislatures, although none of the states are battleground states in this year’s election, so the restrictions on voter registrations are unlikely to affect the presidential election.

Kansas civic groups have curtailed their voter registration work for three years since the State Legislature there made “false representation” of an election official a crime.

“In 2020, even with the pandemic, we had registered nearly 10,000 Kansans to vote,” said Davis Hammet, the president of Loud Light, created in 2015 to mobilize the state’s young voters. “Now, we haven’t been able to register anyone.”

This year, Tennessee and Alabama banned the use of registration forms that are pre-filled with voters’ names and other details to make registering easier. Alabama also banned giving anyone cash or a gift for registering voters, as did Missouri in 2022. (In Missouri, a state court will hear arguments next month on whether to lift an injunction that has kept the law from taking effect there.)

“If the League of Women Voters pays people for parking or travel to get to a voter registration site, or gives them a free T-shirt or free lunch, are they being paid?” asked Denise Lieberman, the general counsel of the Missouri Voter Protection Coalition, who is representing the league and the N.A.A.C.P. in a suit against the law. “It’s unclear.”

State Senator Sandy Crawford, the Missouri Republican who sponsored the legislation, did not respond to requests for comment.

House Speaker Mike Johnson spoke to reporters in May about a Republican proposal to require voters in federal elections to show proof of citizenship. Credit.

Suspicion from the right of voter registration groups has a long history. When an advocacy group for the poor known as ACORN submitted fraudulent registration forms to officials in some states in 2008, Republicans built it [into a major campaign issue](https://www.factcheck.org/2008/10/acorn-accusations/). ACORN shut down in 2010.

In 2014, Brian Kemp, a Republican who was then the Georgia secretary of state, opened an inquiry into voter registration by the New Georgia Project, a creation of the liberal state legislator Stacey Abrams, and claims that there was evidence of “substantial illegal activities” by the group. The inquiry found a few erroneous applications among the many thousands the group had collected.

In Florida, officials say the rules there are narrowly tailored to address abuses by voter registration canvassers and groups that hire them. And abuses do happen: [In an April statement](https://www.democracydocket.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/139-2024-04-29-FL-secretary-of-states-closing-argument.pdf) to a federal district court, the Florida secretary of state, Cord Byrd, cited more than 300 instances of misconduct by voter-registration groups, some of which led to prosecutions.

The rules are needed, state officials argue, because groups that collect registration applications can abuse the sign-up process by creating applications with false names or addresses, submitting applications for processing after legal deadlines, or even by selling applicants’ personal information.

That sort of behavior is largely limited to companies that make money by canvassing new voters for political campaigns or advocacy groups.

Cynthia Slater, president of the Daytona Beach, Fla., branch of the N.A.A.C.P., speaks to attendees during the Voters Education 2024 Community Forum, addressing the Florida Legislature’s new rules on voter registration in May.

The state says voter-registration organizations still have many ways to help sign up voters, from handing out postage-paid registration applications with instructions on filling them out to letting people sign up on an iPad linked to the state voter registration website.

Leaders of civic groups say those methods are far less effective than when volunteers personally help people fill out registration forms and deliver them to an election office.

“When you’re trying to encourage people to register to vote, the process needs to be as simple as possible,” Ms. Bracy of Faith in Florida said. “And that’s just not the case in the state of Florida.”

Many conservatives remain deeply skeptical of voter-registration efforts.

“Liberal activists would have you believe every sensible safeguard to securing elections amounts to a restriction on the fundamental right to vote,” said Jason Snead, the executive director of the Honest Elections Project, one of several advocacy groups created by the conservative activist Leonard Leo.

Mr. Snead said: “Limits on third-party voter registration aren’t voting restrictions, they’re regulations to ensure groups that insert themselves between voters and elections meet minimum standards.”

Another conservative advocate on voting issues and president of the Public Interest Legal Foundation, J. Christian Adams, argued that some groups actually disenfranchise voters by turning in applications that are error-ridden or are submitted too late for election officials to add the applicants to the rolls.

Miles Rapoport, a former Connecticut secretary of state, said laws restricting voter registration efforts fit a “pernicious and discouraging” pattern in Republican-controlled legislatures of seeking to curb access to the ballot box by potential Democratic voters.

Even so, he said he was skeptical that the laws would have a great impact in an age when most people can sign up to vote online, or even at the polling place on Election Day. In particular, he said, the looming presidential election should motivate partisans on both sides to find a way around obstacles to registering. It is not certain what effect the Florida law is having, because it is hard to know whether people who did not register through a group like the League of Women Voters might have found a different avenue.

[According to the Florida Department of State](https://dos.fl.gov/elections/data-statistics/voter-registration-statistics/voter-registration-reports/voter-registration-method-and-location/), third-party voter registration groups signed up between 16,600 and 63,200 new voters each year from 2018 to 2022. In 2023, after the Florida law’s enactment, the total dropped below 5,900. At the end of May, halfway through the 2024 presidential election season, third-party groups had enrolled 5,583 new registrants.

The impact of those reduced registrations did not fall evenly, according to a report by Daniel A. Smith, a University of Florida political scientist, filed in the suit challenging the Florida law. State-supplied data showed that third-party groups enrolled about 1.5 percent of all white registered voters between 2012 and 2023, he said. But they registered roughly 10 percent of Black voters, 9 percent of Hispanic voters, and some 8 percent of voters who were members of other minority groups.

Registrations also have slowed markedly at Florida colleges and universities, where more than a million students are enrolled.

“You have to tell every volunteer that if they screw up, there may be a $50,000 fine,” said Connor Effrain, the president of the University of Florida College Democrats. “The consequences are that there are a lot fewer people going around the campus registering people. People are a lot more intimidated."

*This article originally appeared in*[*The New York Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/01/24/us/24nat-florida-universities-sociology.html)*. © 2024 The New York Times*

**From Time magazine, June 13, 2024**

Philadelphia Experiences Biggest Drop in Gun Violence Among Major U.S. Cities

Philadelphia has experienced the biggest drop in gun violence among major U.S. cities so far in 2024, according to a new report from a Washington D.C.-based think tank.

The [Center for American Progress](https://www.americanprogress.org/article/early-2024-data-show-promising-signs-of-another-historic-decline-in-gun-violence/) (CAP) released Tuesday its analysis of [Gun Violence Archive](https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/about) (GVA) data, which is an online archive of gun violence incidents gathered from more than 7,500 law enforcement, media, government and commercial sources each day. CAP analyzed “gun homicides and gun violence victimizations” data from 2019, 2021, 2023, and 2024 from Jan. 1 to April 30 (which CAP referred to as “year to date,” or “YTD”). CAP defined “gun violence victimizations” as all firearm-related injuries and deaths.

“Philadelphia has seen the most significant decline in population-adjusted gun violence victimizations YTD of the 50 most populous U.S. cities,” CAP said in its analysis. “As of the end of April 2024, Philadelphia experienced almost 16 fewer gun victimizations per 100,000 residents.”

CAP found that gun violence has dropped in most large U.S. cities. In addition to Philadelphia, Detroit; Washington, D.C.; Baltimore; Milwaukee; and Columbus, Ohio, saw at least 10 fewer victimizations per 100,000 residents YTD.

“Cities that are seeing the greatest public safety gains—such as Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Boston, which all have lower YTD rates of gun victimizations in 2024 compared with this same time in 2019—have committed to gun violence reduction strategies coordinated by their local offices of violence prevention and made significant investments in more holistic and long-term approaches to improving public safety,” CAP said in its analysis.

Philadelphia, for instance, [formed an interagency task force](https://phlcouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/100-Shooting-Review-complete.pdf) after a 2020 increase in gun violence. The task force studied local gun violence data and looked at evidence-based practices the city could implement, CAP said. Using this work, the task force recommended supporting vulnerable community members, investing in [community violence intervention models](https://www.americanprogress.org/series/only-in-america-the-front-lines-of-the-gun-violence-crisis/), and bolstering data tracking and gun violence reporting to better foster case resolution.

**Read More:**[*Gun Injuries to Children Have Soared. So Have Their Impacts*](https://time.com/6332323/gun-injuries-in-children-have-doubled-so-have-their-impacts/)

In general, gun homicides in the U.S. are down by 13.1%, and gun violence victimizations are down by 12.5%, compared to 2023. CAP pointed out that 2021 recorded the highest annual rate of gun violence since the early 1990s, but gun homicides in 2024 so far are down by 16.4%. CAP also said that since the beginning of 2022, gun homicides have been dropping nationally, and that there are no signs of that trend slowing down.

Even still, gun homicide rates are 16% higher than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic, according to CAP. As of April 30, 2024, the GVA recorded 5,043 total gun homicides; at the same time in 2019, the GVA recorded 4,333 total gun homicides, CAP said.



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| **Is second chance hiring an untapped resource for your success?** |

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| As we visit businesses across Citrus County, we frequently hear about the challenge of filling job openings with reliable, skilled, and loyal employees. Sometimes companies may have found potential hires, only to discover that a company policy prevents them from hiring individuals with a felony background.  Does this resonate with your experience as a business owner or hiring director?  **Second Chance Hiring** is the practice of providing employment opportunities to individuals who have gone through the prison or jail system and are ready to reenter the job market as productive citizens and community members. Businesses that have embraced this approach often report positive experiences, finding that these employees bring dedication, gratitude, and a strong work ethic to their roles.  While Second Chance Hiring may not be suitable for every business, it could be the solution you’ve been seeking for your workforce needs.  The Citrus County Chamber of Commerce is considering hosting a no-cost, one-day workshop featuring **John Koufos**, a nationally recognized criminal justice advocate who has helped thousands of people with criminal records secure employment. This workshop will provide valuable insights on the benefits of Second Chance Hiring, legal considerations, incentive opportunities, and strategies for successful workplace integration. |

**From League of Women Voters of Florida August 2024 Legal Updates**

**Florida News**

[*Attorney Sentenced, Disbarred for Voting in Both Ohio and Florida*](https://jhigmrdab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001zVRQmMOePN7NOaIrTDqY06q9OaOij5fnIsSJ3olJA40naBbZoiy5OyT25BNNtueu8RrUN0pI8Ai_dVLLYO1f_Wq0p3UUr0b_jtdUomkRFriNAM2IR8AJP008D1pbKiw3UBokFHJxPwrs2k2YM6fAjMywRZYqK6QZQbye3c4NzR5gZ-gWdepuiT-MbhUzOva62S_aVsiq15xFWEZBoMyNzN0GCWp6ewH1sm4m4gyyquuRREauQ6XTcssfNIvTmZzPsQUSDHIHa4aYFrkkeTlE6oVzT25xYdWLh-fGha12VhK7jhR-BHs1vYwN_OVkh4dYQAm5cS_g2o0tw1rkxnHLHJCD8vJ5cX2e-_u18iRVy_kbmIz9GtkNnw==&c=sFn_SAeMulmebgdReQrq1uz-SP7wFe5uFFNrN91GvCskgGt6lJMqrQ==&ch=lglYcek4bhidWTDCJV_DsKXVKpgtj8urAiGbVHWEgsznmv1XOskTgw==)

A Florida lawyer was disbarred on July 25 after being convicted of two felony counts of voter fraud in Ohio. The lawyer voted in both Ohio and Florida in the 2020 presidential election and the 2022 general election. He received an 18-month sentence for each count, to run consecutively. His crime was detected by the ERIC system.

**A person with her arms crossed

Description automatically generatedOur League members are multi-talented. Below is an article hot off the presses about our Treasurer, Devora Stager!**

**A person holding a dog

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**A page of a magazine with pictures of flowers

Description automatically generatedA white paper with black text

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A person sitting outside holding a flag

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**A close-up of a sign

Description automatically generatedA group of people sitting in chairs in a room

Description automatically generated Peg Primeau, 2nd President, Reproductive Rights Chair A person in purple shirt and hat speaking at a podium

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A close up of a sign

Description automatically generated**A close-up of a paper

Description automatically generatedYES on 4 Update**

Peggy Primeau

Reproductive Health & Justice

*Is Amendment 4 popular?*

Definitely. The “Amendment to Limit Government Interference with Abortion” has wide support among all kinds of Floridians. BUT, to get the amendment into the Constitution, **60%** of November voters must say YES ON 4.

*We still have 9 weeks to educate voters before Election Day, right?*

Not really!! People may receive their Vote-By-Mail ballots as soon as **5 weeks** (Oct. 1)! Early voting starts in **8 weeks** (Oct. 21).

*How should I explain Amendment 4 to friends and neighbors?*

* Amendment 4 is nonpartisan: Get government out of private healthcare decisions
* Amendment 4 is the only way to end the extreme abortion ban. The 6-week window is impossibly brief, and “exceptions” are not real.
* Amendment 4 is about compassionate healthcare. Every pregnancy is unique, and each person’s life circumstances are different.

*How can I help?*

Check out the **YES on 4** campaign at floridiansprotectingfreedom.com . You can access Events, Action choices, Training, Updates, Voter materials, and, yes, Tee Shirts. The League of Women Voters fully supports the campaign, but FPF runs it, and we are going with the pros.

*Will there be an Event in Citrus County?*

You bet. **Mark your calendars for Sept. 21**, Super Saturday, and look for details in your email.

**A close-up of a ballot

Description automatically generatedA poster with a group of women

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**A close-up of a person smiling

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**Rosemary Nilles, LWVCC Education Chair, 1st Vice President**

A poster with text and images of people

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**Linda Abels, Membership Chair**

Welcome to the Fall in Citrus County.  A big Thank You to all our members that attended the various Candidate Meet and Greets ! I think they were great and the turnout was beyond expectations.  Isn't it great to be a member of an organization that wants all of us to be informed voters.  
  
Currently, membership in our local LWV of Citrus County (LWVCC) is managed by our local league.  As a member of the LWVCC you are also a member of the LWV of Florida and the LWV US. Part of the dues that you pay to the local league, goes to both the Florida and the US League to help them as they strive to educate the public on various topics of interest to us all. How you renew your membership or join the League will change next year.  The LWVUS is in the process of redefining the membership renewal process, so all leagues throughout the US will handle membership the same way.  As the new way of doing this filters its way down to us, I will let you know.  There is nothing to be concerned about, we will ensure that there is a smooth transition when it comes time to renew your membership.  Nothing else about our local league is changing, we will continue to work toward having interesting and informative meetings.    
  
Happy September!

**A person in a purple shirt

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A calendar with a picture of a holiday theme

Description automatically generated with medium confidence **Jan Hall, 2nd Vice President, Events, Media**



**2024 CANDIDATE DATES TO REMEMBER**

# ELECTIONS

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| --- | --- |
| Primary Election | August 20, 2024 |
| General Election | November 5, 2024 |

# REGISTRATION BOOK CLOSINGS  F.S. 97.055

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| Primary Election | July 22, 2024 |
| General Election    **EARLY VOTING**  **F.S. 101.657** | October 7, 2024 |
| Primary Election | August 9, 2024 to August 17, 2024 |
| General Election | October 21, 2024 to November 2, 2024 |

***Primary Election dates listed are tentative and subject to change by the Florida Legislature.***

**VoteCitrus.gov**  **352-564-7120**

**Citrus County Supervisor of Elections ~ PO Box 1870 ~ Lecanto, Florida 34460**

**From the Department of Health**

A poster for a recovery event

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A group of kids posing for a photo

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**From the League of Women Voters of Florida**

**co-Presidents**

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| |  | | --- | | Greetings League members,  As we gear up for the general election and primary already in progress, it is important for us to remember to take care of ourselves. If you are like Cecile and me, and I suspect most of you are, you get carried away with the hard yet important work ahead and sometimes forget to do basic things like eat. I know I have been sitting at my computer working and realize hours have passed and I missed lunch or haven’t hydrated adequately.  I’m fortunate having **Lucy**to remind me to get up and walk around (my pup has a small bladder and needs to be let out every 2 hours or so), but she usually alerts me while I’m in the middle of something I just must finish, so I come right back to work. | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | A dog lying on a couch  Description automatically generated | A black background with a black square  Description automatically generated with medium confidence |   I was recently reminded by my doctor that it is important to care for yourself first. No worries, I am in good health for being a transplantee, and my labs are great, but I need to hydrate more and remember to eat regularly. And those regular meals need to be nutritious, not a bag of chips or piece of cheese. Taking some time away from the computer also gives you a new perspective when you return. I see things I may have missed when proofing that email or letter. Or I find better words to use to make my intent precise.  **At the League, our busiest times are right before presidential elections. Voting and elections are our main focus, and they are never more important than in the 3-4 months leading up to November. Now is the time to remind ourselves to think “ME”. Remember, “I am important.”, “I will get this done, even if I stop for a few minutes to eat properly”, “My League family will help me”, “I have a team to help.” Together, we will do our League work in the best manner we can.**  So, get plenty of sleep, eat well, drink lots of fluids, and get out the vote! | |

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| |  | | --- | | Debbie Chandler, Esq.  Co-President | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | A black background with a black square  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | A person wearing a black jacket  Description automatically generated |   Dear League members,  Earlier this week, I landed in Boston to celebrate my 65th birthday with one of my oldest friends. We see signs of the fight for liberty everywhere. The Boston Harbor, the site of the first “Tea Party,” is filled with yachts. Statues of men who fought and fell to stop the tyranny of taxation without representation abound. They knew that no vote meant no freedom.  Today, there is a rekindling of that blazing fire for the freedom to vote in Americans across our great nation. **We see the growing understanding in our neighbors that every vote does matter and that we should do all that we can to share our passion for civic engagement.** |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Two women smiling at the camera  Description automatically generated | A black background with a black square  Description automatically generated with medium confidence |   Today, we are not burning tea in the Boston Harbor. We are lighting the fire of civic engagement in the hearts and minds of every citizen. Last night I spoke about the need for poll watchers and shared about the threat of mass voter challenges with Win With Black Women, WWBW, a group of 5000+ motivated Black women (a subset of the 40,000 Black Women recently on a call) who hungrily took my information and asked for more. I received several emails from some attendees asking for more information and LWVFL will provide it.  I suggested several steps to accomplish their goals. First, use Vote411.org. so they can inform themselves of all matters that relate to their ballots. Second, consider joining the League so that they can join hands with women and men who have developed the expertise in registering people to vote and protecting the vote. Third, ask their Supervisor of Elections for the names of African Americans in their area that had VBM ballots in the last election, but did not request them for this election and then call or text those people to let them know that they must vote in person for the primary and that they must request their VBM ballot now for the general. These ladies were so grateful for that information.  **We all have our connections in our towns, places of worship, book clubs, and walking groups. How can you spread the word about civic engagement?  Think creatively of the best ways to share your voting knowledge so that others can not only protect the vote but to expand it to many people young and old who used to think that voting did not matter.**  As we connect with our larger communities, remember those who dumped the English tea into the water. Devise ways that work in your circle to help spread agency in civic matters. Debbie and I and the state office will be preparing a how-to-be a “Super Voter” kit that we will send to the 5000 Black Women of WWBW. That is one of my connections. We each have our own. Think hard and be creative. Activate these connections, educate them, and give them something about voting, to talk about! Here is the link to request funds for an event for Amendment 4, and offer to give a Speakers Bureau PowerPoint.**From my 65-year-old cancer survivor perspective, life is precious, freedom is precious! Join in, join me, join your league sisters and brothers work your connections, and reach out to empower voters and protect our precious democracy!** | |

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