

*A force for progress on the Emerald Coast since 1962!*

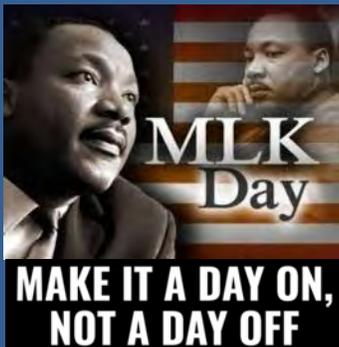
**Jan / Feb 2020**

"The very nature of privilege is that it's invisible to those who have it."

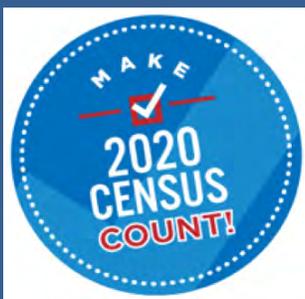
*Zoe Fenson,  
American Journalist*

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?"

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
American Icon*



Check page 2 for volunteer opportunities in Okaloosa and Walton Counties.



## League's Mission:

*The League is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.*

## WELCOME TO 2020!

I hope everyone enjoyed their holiday as much as I did, but now it's back to reality. Let's get started.

- We have a **secure web domain** now: <https://lwvowc.org>. Please update your bookmarks. We are also rebuilding the site, so stayed tuned for our new look.
- It's time to **renew your membership**: <https://lwvowc.org/JoinUs.html>.

## TIME TO JOIN LEAGUE OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Change is inevitable, but *progress* is not. Are you ready to join League and become a voice for progress on the Emerald Coast?

Our community needs leaders like you to ensure it remains a strong, safe and vibrant place to live—and now is the perfect time to join! The League of Women Voters is the organization where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement. Add your voice to over 100,000 League members and supporters across the country by becoming a member today.

Join or renew online **today** at <https://lwvowc.org/JoinUs.html>, or mail your check to LWVOWC Treasurer, c/o

## CENSUS 2020 IS NOW UNDERWAY

It's that time of the decade again, and League invites you to join us and learn why it's important to ensure a complete count. (Hint: Follow the money!) This time around you can respond by phone, internet or US mail. If you don't, expect a visit from a census worker!

We're holding two informational events to inform you and allay concerns:

## GET READY TO VOTE ON 17 MARCH

Residents of Cinco Bayou, Destin, Mary Esther and Valparaiso: get ready to vote for local municipal officers.

Registered Republicans & Democrats: Get ready to choose your presidential candidate.

Deadline to register to vote or change party affiliation: 18 Feb.

**Please do so no later than 30 Jan!**

- The 2020 Census has begun. Get details below.
- Florida's Presidential Preference Primary is on 17 March, along with municipal elections for Cinco Bayou, Destin, Mary Esther and Valparaiso.

Buckle up—it's gonna be a bumpy ride!

114 Meadow Woods Ln, Niceville FL 32578. Here are your membership options:

- *Individual* – \$60. The basic membership covers State and National League membership fees for one person.
- *Additional Household Member* – \$30. Covers an additional member in the same household as a dues-paying individual member.
- *Student* – \$30. Discount rate!
- *Susan B. Anthony* – \$125. For those who want to provide extra support to their Local League. It includes one basic and one additional household member, if applicable, plus a little left over to support local League operations.

**Okaloosa County:** From **6–7:30 pm on Tuesday, 21 Jan**, in Niceville City Council Chambers (208 Partin Dr N).

**Walton County:** From **6:30–8:00 pm on Tuesday, 28 Jan**, at Coastal Branch Library (437 Greenway Trail, Santa Rosa Beach).

See you there. RSVP: [info@lwvowc.org](mailto:info@lwvowc.org).

Early Voting in Walton County: 7–14 March, Mon-Sat: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm and Sun: 1:00 pm - 9:00 pm.

Early Voting dates/times in Okaloosa County: TBA.

The 2020 Okaloosa County Municipal Election E-Voter will be published in February, so watch the website.

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES IN OUR COMMUNITY**

**Crestview: American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO)**, Region 1603, needs youth soccer coaches, referees and other support. Player age ranges from 4–19. Volunteers help provide a quality soccer experience and help grow the sport in Baker, Crestview and the surrounding communities. For more info call 850-783-0650 or email [ayso1603@gmail.com](mailto:ayso1603@gmail.com).

**Fort Walton Beach: Jobs4U** (728A Edge St) needs qualified board members to serve a few hours a month for 6 months to 1 year. Jobs4U provides job search prep, resume assistance, OJT and placement for folks with unique needs. The board comprises active volunteers who want to help their community by sharing their expertise. For more info email [tj@jobs4u.org](mailto:tj@jobs4u.org).

**Laurel Hill: Argyle Volunteer Fire Department** is looking for people from the local community to join it as firefighters, medical responders, drivers and other support staff. Training is provided. They also need volunteers to help with fund raisers, community events, etc. Requirements: 18yrs or older, no felony convictions, valid Florida driver's license and living within the general Laurel Hill area. Call 850-892-9730 or 850-892-4702.

**Niceville: Plew Elementary School** (220 Pine Ave) needs compassionate people to mentor its students. Volunteers spend 30 minutes once a week with the same student and help them grow! For more info, email [heather.mcclaren@okaloosaschools.com](mailto:heather.mcclaren@okaloosaschools.com).

**Okaloosa County:** United Way of the Emerald Coast needs **Reading Pals** mentors for 4-year-olds in Pre-K centers. Volunteers must be at least age

18 and must commit to two 30-minute mentorship sessions per week for the 25 weeks in the school year (or as needed for substitute readers). Other volunteers are needed to help with book drives, event planning and general support. Volunteer at <https://tinyurl.com/u4blzz8>.

**Okaloosa County: Hope Squad**, a peer-to-peer suicide prevention program, is being introduced in the Okaloosa County School District this year. Hope Squad will train student, adviser and parent volunteers to help create awareness about suicide and bullying, and to intervene before it's too late. For more info or to volunteer, contact [united4goodcause@gmail.com](mailto:united4goodcause@gmail.com).

**Santa Rosa Beach:** Join Topsail Hill Preserve State Park at 9:00 am for **Beach Cleanup** on 15, 16, 17, 18 or 20 April. Help keep the beach safe for flora and fauna and minimize the impact of marine debris in the Gulf. Requirements: age 18+ (13+ with an adult), and bring your own hat, sunscreen and water bottle. Gloves and trash bags will be provided. To volunteer call 850-267-8330 and provide your name, email address, phone number and number of people coming.

**Santa Rosa Beach:** The Preschool at Point Washington (1255 N County Hwy 395) needs volunteers through 21 April to support the **Recycle Runway** project, which teaches students how to reduce, reuse and recycle, and helps them understand how their actions affect their community. Students will learn how to protect the environment around them, which is so important in our beach community. Requirements: Age 14+. For info call 850-231-5439 or email [preschool@pwumc.org](mailto:preschool@pwumc.org).

**HAPPY 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY TO THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**

League turns 100 on 12 Feb. Since gaining their suffrage, women have powered—and continue to power—the vote. A hundred years ago, women didn't have representation in government. With the ratification of the 19th Amendment, women and their allies won the biggest growth in our democracy in the last century. We celebrate this great accomplishment, but the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment did not break down voting barriers for all women. Even today, our work is not done.

Many Americans still don't have their voices heard in choosing our representatives. Politicians have robbed voters of their power by manipulating access to the polls and gerrymandering districts at all levels of government. As the 2020 decennial Census approaches, the prospect of an inaccurate or incomplete count threatens to deprive even more people of their rightful share in American democracy. help us make democracy work for everyone. Join today: <https://lwvowc.org/JoinUs.html>.

**Calendar****2020 Legislative Session**

The 2020 session convenes on 14 Jan. Over 3K bills have been filed. Less than 10% pass, but League will be watching the issues closely. Check the website for legislative updates and Action Alerts.

**MLK Day Walk & Ceremony**

18 Jan, 9–11:00 am  
Garden Park, Main St & Ferdon Blvd, Crestview  
Join us for a walk up Main St from Garden Park to Veterans Memorial at Courthouse Terrace, where a brief ceremony will honor Dr. King.

**MLK Day Parade & Rally**

20 Jan, 10:00–noon  
Civic Auditorium, 107 Miracle Strip Pkwy SW, FWB  
Gather at the Civic Center on Hwy 98 for the parade to Chester Pruitt Park. Then stay for the rally there.

**US Census 2020**

**Okaloosa County:** 21 Jan, 6–7:30 pm, Niceville City Council Chambers, 208 Partin Dr N  
**Walton County:** 28 Jan, 6:30–8:00 pm, Coastal Branch Library, 437 Greenway Trail, Santa Rosa Beach  
Join League to learn all about the decennial census, how it will affect our community and Florida, how you can help ensure a complete count, and why it *matters!*

**LWVF Lobby Days 2020**

4–5 Feb  
Tallahassee FL  
Join League for a day of briefings, training and caucuses with fellow Leaguers from across the state!

**LWV 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

12 Feb: Celebrate League's 100 year legacy!

**Sisters Across the Straits**

3–7 March in Cuba  
<https://tinyurl.com/qwn3ecx>

**LWVF Leadership 2020**

17–18 April 2020  
Orlando FL