AZ Courts Under Attack

“If we can’t keep special interests out of courts, where is the public interest safe?”
…………………Senator John McCain

Judicial Merit Selection and Retention
works in Arizona’s large counties. Learn:

- What merit selection is and how it works to guarantee qualified judges
- How the balance of power is threatened each year
- Who opposes merit selection and why

- Why residents in Yavapai County should care how judges are selected
- What each of us needs to do to assure the continuance of and expansion of impartial courts in Arizona.

Presented by Sandra Goodwin, LWVCYC First Vice President

Free Meeting, Open to the Public

Date: Saturday, May 8, 2010
Social Time: 9:00 – 9:30 A. M.
Meeting: 9:30 – 11:30 A. M.
Location: Las Fuentes Resort Village, Lower Level, 1035 Scott Drive, Prescott

RSVP: LWVCYC@hotmail.com by Wednesday, May 5, 2010
“If we can’t keep special interests out of courts, where is the public interest safe?”

Senator John McCain

Join us on May 8 to hear Sandra Goodwin present COURTS UNDER ATTACK, which addresses the legislature’s annual attempts to revamp the system of merit selection of judges. The LWVAZ participated in the birth of this system beginning in the early 70s and is a constant force and active lobbyist for continuing its being used in Maricopa and Pima Counties, and expanding it to Yavapai and Pinal when these two counties reach the 250,000 population mark.

Sandra served on the three member team that conducted Chief Justice Ruth McGregor’s and Justice Andrew Hurwitz’s performance evaluations in 2007-08. She was chair of the Impartial Courts portfolio for LWVAZ, and was instrumental in receiving a grant from LWVUS which funded a HORIZON program, Guaranteeing Impartial Courts. She has also developed a teacher’s manual to accompany the program for distribution in the schools.

You will learn:

- What merit selection is and how it works to guarantee qualified judges
- How the balance of power is threatened each year
- Who opposes merit selection and why
- Why residents in Yavapai County should care how judges are selected
- What each of us needs to do to assure the continuance of and expansion of impartial courts in Arizona.

We will also be showing the HORIZON program Guaranteeing Impartial Courts that was produced with a grant secured from LWVUS to LWVAZ, culminating Sandra’s work as LWVAZ Judicial Chair in 2009. This will include a follow up interview with former Supreme Court Chief Justice Ruth McGregor.

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Law Day - May 1, 2010

As we begin the second decade of the twenty-first century, the law is changing dramatically as it seeks to shape and adapt to new conditions. Economic markets are becoming global, transactions require cultural adaptation and understanding, populations are more mobile, and communication technologies such as the Internet bridge distances and time zones to form new communities around the world. In such a world, all of us must renew our commitment to the enduring principles of law, become knowledgeable about other legal systems, recognize the need to adapt our practices, and acquire new cultural understandings. In a global era, matters such as human rights, criminal justice, intellectual property, business transactions, dispute resolution, human migration, and environmental regulation become not just international issues—between nations—but shared concerns.

Law Day 2010 provides us with an opportunity to renew our commitment to, understand and appreciate the emerging challenges, and enduring traditions of law in the 21st century.

Sandra Goodwin
Your New Officers:

President: Vicky McLane
1st Vice President: Sandra Goodwin
2nd Vice President: Alice Harris
Secretary: Vivian Perry
Treasurer: Terri Farneti
Director: Nancy Shugrue

Lynn Constabile, County Election Director and Karen McCracken, County Registrar of Voters presented

Recent Developments in Election Law and Practice

and answered many questions.

LWV Women's Issues Report - 2010

Women made little progress under this legislature but were affected adversely from the fall-out associated with budget cuts to various agencies, i.e., cuts to emergency services and domestic violence shelter funds that will affect 1,100 families needing emergency assistance and 1,600 victims of domestic violence; cuts to in-home assistance for 700 older Arizonans that allow them to remain in their homes instead of living in nursing homes. Furthermore, elimination of full-day kindergarten; reduction in TANF (temporary support for single parents) cash assistance, and cuts in funding for Child Care and Kids Care will impact most severely on single mothers.

In addition, anti-abortion measures--such as SB1304 (which dictates reporting requirements for medical personnel assisting in abortions or treating a woman for complications from abortion), will further erode the privacy generally associated with medical treatment or procedures.

Marge Mead, LWVAZ

3
Independents, You CAN Vote in Primaries

by Linda Valdez - Jan. 12, 2010 12:00 AM, The Arizona Republic

Independents make up nearly a third of all registered voters in Arizona. Too bad they don't know their own strength.

After I suggested in print recently that independents could have a moderating effect on the Legislature by voting in the primary, I got calls telling me independents are barred from primaries.

No, they aren't. "Independents can vote in the primaries," says Secretary of State Ken Bennett.

[Independent voters may ask for either a Republican, Democratic, or Green Party ballot in the Primary. The Libertarian Party has restricted its primary to Libertarian registered voters.]

"They should be informed of that," says Steve Lynn, Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission chairman.

A registered independent, Lynn says the lack of understanding among independents about their voting rights is a significant problem.

Since July, both the Republican and Democratic parties lost voters, according to October figures from Bennett's office. Those who register as no party preference - independents - rose by 17,992. Independents make up 915,981 of the state's 3.1 million registered voters. Republicans are at 1.13 million; Democrats number 1.04 million. It looks to me like disgust with a system in which ardor for ideology - or a Grover Norquist no-tax pledge - is seen as virtuous. Lynn points out that some independents opt out of the Republican or Democratic parties because they feel neither goes far enough right or left. They might not want to engage in either primary.

But in many districts, registration is so lopsided that the race is decided in the primary. For independents, Lynn says, "it's not as effective or wise to wait until the general election to vote."

If voters sit out the primary by choice, that's fine. But if independents stay away because they think they are prohibited, that's disenfranchisement of a growing number of voters.

Lynn says he is the kind of independent voter who vacillates between the options offered by the two parties, depending on the issue. This rational approach probably reflects the attitude of many independents. It could result in more centrist candidates.

Arizona needs moderates in the Legislature as badly as it needs new revenue to get through this economic crisis. Unfortunately, moderates do not fare well in primaries, which are dominated by party extremists. That's where independents could make a difference.

Lynn says the League of Women Voters has indicated an interest in helping educate independent voters about their rights. And it isn't just voters who need to learn that independents are only barred from presidential primaries. Lynn says independents have been turned away by poll workers.

Raising awareness before the August state primary is a huge undertaking. Bennett says federal money might be available for voter education.

But public money is scarce. Arizona could use a few civic-minded sponsors with deep pockets and an understanding that engaging voters isn't about parties. It's about people. As in: We, the people.
Bonnie Saunders and John Loredo Special To The Arizona Daily Star | Posted: Friday, April 2, 2010

Bonnie Saunders is the President of the nonpartisan Arizona League of Women Voters.
John Loredo, a political consultant, is the former Democratic leader of the Arizona House.

It’s been a dozen years since Arizona voters passed the landmark Citizens Clean Elections Act, allowing candidates to seek office without depending on corporate brass, labor unions and deep-pocketed special interests. Clean Elections has given community leaders, teachers and small business folk the chance to run for office and govern answerable not to Big Money, but to Arizona’s voters.

Clean Elections is working as advertised. So it should come as no surprise that developers, bankers and the like are trying to pull off a power grab this November. Their goal? To fool Arizonans into gutting Clean Elections and returning our state to the “good old days” when controlling politics was as simple as controlling the money given to candidates.

Turning back the clock would rob Arizonans of the right to have their voice heard on election day and in the halls of power. That’s why SCR 1009, the resolution that would put Clean Elections on the 2010 ballot under a different, contorted name, must fail, either by legislative vote or on Nov. 2 at the polls.

Before Clean Elections, statewide and legislative candidates begged for campaign cash from a small pool of power players: CEOs, union heads, lobbyists, residents of the state’s priciest ZIP codes, and out-of-state operatives. If officeholders proved insufficiently loyal to their agendas, away went the money. In came new candidates all too happy to bend to the will of these interests.

It’s a ruthlessly efficient system, if you have the money to sit atop it.

Clean Elections changed that one $5 bill at a time. Candidates able to demonstrate community support by collecting a set number of $5 qualifying contributions are allotted funds to run competitive campaigns. As a result, corporate Arizona lost sway and voters have been in the driver’s seat.

Not a single dollar of Clean Elections funds comes from Arizona’s cash-strapped general fund. It’s funded by voluntary contributions or through surcharges on criminal penalties and violations like traffic tickets. In fact, Clean Elections has donated $20 million to the general fund in the last two years.

Clean Elections has helped elect a different breed of leader. After a majority of the Arizona Corporation Commission won “running clean,” the ACC passed a law requiring that 15 percent of all power produced in Arizona come from renewable energy sources by 2025. Who hates that idea? The power companies. Is it any surprise they’re now helping fund the campaign to kill Clean Elections?

They’re joined in this effort by a “who’s who” of Big Money: The Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Arizona Homebuilders and Qwest. They’re hoping we’ve forgotten about AZScam, when newscasts featured grainy video of legislators taking bags of cash in exchange for their votes. No doubt it galls them that, in polling done annually by the Clean Elections Commission, citizen support for the new system remains steady at 77 percent.

Clean Elections is a new way, a historic path chosen by Arizona’s voters. It represents progress and political equality. No wonder inside political power players and lobbyists want so badly to kill it.

For more information, go to www.savecleanelections.com today.
School districts making drastic cuts

More slashing in store if Proposition 100 fails

By Paula Rhoden, The Daily Courier, 4/23/2010 (condensed from original)

Local school districts are making drastic cuts to their 2010-11 school year budgets. A decrease in money from the state, the elimination of state-paid all-day kindergarten and increases in state retirement contributions and health insurance premiums have school officials tightening their belts for the second year in a row.

How tightly school districts pull that belt will depend on whether Arizona voters approve Proposition 100 on May 18. Prop. 100 asks voters to approve a temporary three-year one-cent sales tax, with two-thirds of the revenue for primary and secondary education and one-third for health and human services and public safety.

According to Joint Legislative Budget Committee information, Prop. 100 would increase sales tax revenues by $918 million the first year; $968 million the second year; and $1.06 billion the third year. Using those amounts, education would receive about $605 million the first year; $638 million the second year; and $699 million the third year.

School officials already identified staff and program cuts they must make no matter the result of the May 18 election. If voters do not approve the initiative, school officials already have identified deeper cuts they will have to make to staff and programs.

Prescott School District

RIFed: 31 certified and 55 classified employees with one year of service

If Prop. 100 fails, PUSD must cut $5.7 million from its overall budget.

- High School: 39 teachers and 19 classified employees in music, art and drama, physical education, world geography and library positions.
- Middle and elementary: art, music and physical education programs.

Humboldt School District

RIFed: 16 teaching positions including one counselor, one librarian, one first-grade teacher, two English language learner teachers, four music/band teachers and seven kindergarten teachers. Also two reading coaches, one middle school counselor, one high school in-school suspension position, one middle school Spanish teacher, and one middle school family and consumer science teacher. Also close the current district office and move to Bradshaw Mountain High School East Campus; K-6 reconfiguration, special education savings; library restructuring, eliminating one day per week of elementary music; half-day kindergarten.; and English Language Learner staff cuts

If the one-cent sales tax fails: possible additional staff cuts; staff salary reductions; furlough days; health insurance changes/co-pays; additional program reductions; shortening the school year five days; co-curricular/extra-curricular changes; and school closures.

Chino Valley School District

RIFed: 60 employees during the past three years and went to 4 day week, half-day kindergarten, cuts to textbooks and classroom equipment and maintenance of buildings, combined two-and-a-half positions into one.

If the temporary sales tax is not approved: reduction of $781 per student in the base support level and elimination of the unrestricted capital fund, cuts in administrative support services, but there just are not a significant amount of cuts left to preclude a reduction in classroom services and an increase in class size.
Change is Coming!
County Board of Supervisors Membership Will Go to 5

ARS § 11-211 provides that boards of supervisors in Arizona counties will consist of 3 or 5 members. Until the 2009 legislative session, counties having 200,000 population or more were required to have 5 supervisors with elections to take place during an election in which the US president is selected. Those below 200,000 would have 3 supervisors unless an expansion to 5 members was approved by the voters at general election in which the US president was elected. ARS § 1-215(31) defines “population”, unless otherwise specifically defined, as “... the population according to the most recent decennial census.”

During the 2009 legislative session, the threshold population number was reduced to 175,000 meaning that counties whose population exceeded that number according to the 2010 decennial census would be required to redistrict and to elect five supervisors at the 2012 general election.

At that time, Republicans in Pinal County were seeking ways to expand the Board as soon as possible in order to create more open slots for Republicans. They were able to convince the legislature to add a provision in session law providing that any county that had exceeded 175,000 population according to the 2000 decennial census would have to elect 2 new supervisors at the general election following the effective date of the legislation which would have been the 2010 general election. Since only Pinal County fit into that population category, they were the only ones affected.

The session law required in affected county to use its 5 existing community college districts as a stop-gap until new districts could be formed based on the 2010 decennial census data. For this and other reasons, the law was successfully challenged in Pinal County so its board remains at 3 members until redistricting based on the 2010 decennial census and elections during the 2012 general election.

Under the statute as currently drafted, Yavapai County will go to a five member board in 2012 unless the 2010 decennial census showed its population to be less than 175,000, a most unlikely occurrence.

Dave Hunt

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Don’t Forget to Vote in the May 18 Election
(Temporary Sales Tax: which provides that 2/3 will go towards education, and 1/3 to health and human services and public safety)

If you haven’t received an early ballot but want one Call 771-3248
To vote early in person (by May 14) Go to County Office at 1015 Fair St.
To find out your poll site call or go to https://voter.agsos.gov/VoterView/Home.do
May 18 Polls open 6 AM to 7 PM
Arizona Legislature buckling to feds on health care spending
Arizona Capitol Times » Blog Archive » 4/21/10

The Arizona Legislature has taken the first step to repeal cuts to health care programs in order to comply with the federal health care law and avoid losing nearly $8 billion in federal funding.

The House Health and Human Services Committee approved a strike-everything amendment to S1043 in a special hearing this morning that restores a children’s health insurance program and undoes a rollback in eligibility for the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System, the state’s Medicaid program.

The bill would authorize the state to accept additional federal stimulus money to pay for the programs, which would allow 310,000 people to continue coverage under AHCCCS and another 47,000 children to receive coverage under KidsCare.

The AHCCCS eligibility reduction and the elimination of KidsCare were both part of the budget for the upcoming year, which lawmakers approved last month.

Lawmakers are trying to reverse both decisions because the cuts ran afoul of the federal health care law that was signed into law earlier in March. Under that law, changes to state programs would disqualify states from receiving federal health care money. That meant Arizona would forfeit $7.8 billion.

Republicans said they had no choice but to restore the health care spending, even though the state can’t sustain the spending long term.

“The federal government has created a scenario where we are obligated to restore KidsCare,” said Rep. Nancy Barto, a Phoenix Republican and chairman of the committee.

Democrats, meanwhile, were ecstatic that the KidsCare program was being reinstated.

“I have never been more excited, more enthusiastic to vote yes on a bill in this committee,” said Rep. Ed Ableser, a Tempe Democrat.

The committee approved the bill unanimously by an 8-0 vote. After a constitutional check by the Rules Committee, it will be cleared for a vote on the House floor.

The bill would restore the state programs, but only if Congress approves an extension of federal stimulus aid that helps states pay for health care costs. Arizona is expected to receive about $400 million from that extension, which will pay for both KidsCare and the expanded AHCCCS enrollment until the end of fiscal 2011.

The U.S. Senate has approved the extension of the funding for an additional six months, beginning in January 2011, but the U.S. House of Representatives has yet to take up the matter.

That chamber is expected to extend the state aid in May, and President Obama has said he will sign it.
New Members
We welcome two new members, Rose Grech and Elvira Bailey.

Elvira was born in Bogota, Colombia, and came to New York City to study Business Administration. She received a B.S. from Mary Mount Manhattan College in 1975 while working at NASA-American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

After moving to California in 1980, Elvira went back to school while working for Santa Rosa Junior College. She received a BS with a major in Spanish from Sonoma State University, and a Masters degree in Latin American Literature and Culture from San Francisco State University.

Elvira and her husband Dean C. Bailey, a retired engineer from Hewlett Packard, moved to Prescott in 1998. Elvira enjoys doing volunteer work, attends some classes offered by the Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Yavapai College, and likes to participate in social activities with her friends and relatives.

Elvira lives at 1725 N. Gilmer Heights, Prescott, AZ 86305, 776-4383, elvirabailey@msn.com.

We will have a biography of Rose Grech in a later edition of the VOTER. Please add her information to the new Membership Book: Rose Grech, 655 N. Apache Drive, Dewey, AZ 86327, 775-2026, Oopskaba@aol.com.

Correction: Kathie and Howard Rieder’s ZIP is 86304. Please send other corrections or additions to harri@cableone.net AND nshugrue@yahoo.com.

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

It does not support or oppose any political candidate or party.

LWV Member to Run for Legislature
Lindsay Bell, a former Prescott councilwoman from 1995-99, is running for the state House of Representatives from District 1. Current HR member Lucy Mason is stepping down due to term limits.

Lindsay is running as a Democrat and applied to run as a Clean Elections candidate. She has been a resident of Arizona for more than 40 years, has served on non-profit and government boards locally, regionally and statewide, and has participated in numerous committees and planning efforts to analyze and develop public policy, including serving as a member of the last three General Plan committees for the City of Prescott.

Bell attended Arizona State University, earning two degrees, a bachelor’s degree in sociology and a master’s degree in public administration. She retired in 2008 after more than 35 years working in the non-profit sector, primarily in the administration of publicly financed programs.

She currently serves as the volunteer, part-time executive director for Territorial Transit, a Prescott-based transportation company that is working with other agencies in the Central Yavapai region to establish a regional public transit system.
Calendar of Events 2010

Sunday, May 2
New Board Retreat
Sandra and Earl Goodwin’s home

SATURDAY, MAY 8
PUBLIC MEETING: Impartial Courts 9:00 – 11:30 A.M., Las Fuentes Resort Village, Lower Level
AZ Special Election - Temporary Sales Tax
LWVAZ State Council meeting
10:00 AM, Surprise, AZ.

Saturday, May 22
Board Meeting: 5:30, Step One, PV
CANDIDATE FORUM, YAVAPAI COLLEGE,
CANDIDATES FOR AZ LEGISLATURE

Tuesday, May 18
AZ Special Election - Temporary Sales Tax

Saturday, May 22
LWVAZ State Council meeting
10:00 AM, Surprise, AZ.

Wednesday, May 30
WEEK OF JULY 19-23

Wednesday, July 28
AZ Primary Election

Wednesday, Aug. 25
Board Meeting: 5:30 Step One, PV
PUBLIC MEETING - LAS FUENTES

SATURDAY, SEPT. 11
Board Meeting: 5:30, Step One, PV
PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, Sept. 29
PROS AND CONS OF BALLOT ISSUES

SATURDAY OCT. 10
Board Meeting: 5:30, Step One, PV

Wednesday, Oct. 27
AZ General Election

November 02
PUBLIC MEETING

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13
Board Meeting: 5:30, Step One, PV
MEET AND GREET WITH NON-PROFITS

Wednesday, Nov. 24?
Board Meeting: 5:30, Step One, PV

WED. OR THU., DEC. 01 OR 02
Board Meeting: 5:30, Step One, PV

Wednesday, December 29

WANTED:
VOTER SERVICE CHAIR
No experience necessary
Will train
No pay, lots of pats on the back!
Contact Sandra Goodwin
632-8490 or esgoodwin@comm speed.net
LWVUS Immigration Position

The League of Women Voters believes that immigration policies should promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; and be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises. Provision should also be made for qualified persons to enter the U.S. on student visas. All persons should receive fair treatment under the law.

The League supports federal immigration law that provides an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry of immigrants into the U.S.

To complement these goals the League supports federal policies to improve economies, education, job opportunities, and living conditions in nations with large emigrating populations.

In transition to a reformed system, the League supports provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status.

The League supports federal payments to impacted communities to address the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.

Criteria for Legal Admission to the U.S.
The League supports the following criteria for legal admission of persons into the United States:

- Family reunification of spouses or minor children with authorized immigrants or citizens;
- Flight from persecution or response to humanitarian crises in home countries;
- Economic, business and employment needs in the U.S.;
- Education and training needs of the U.S.;
- Educational program opportunities; and
- Lack of a history of serious criminal activity.

Administration and Enforcement

The League supports due process for all persons, including the right to a fair hearing, right to counsel, right of appeal and right to humane treatment.

The League supports:

- Improved technology to facilitate employer verification of employee status;
- Verification documents, such as status cards and work permits, with secure identifiers;
- Significant fines and penalties for employers who hire unauthorized workers;
- Improved technology for sharing information among federal agencies;
- More effective tracking of individuals who enter the United States; and
- Increased personnel at borders.

The League also supports programs allowing foreign workers to enter and leave the U.S. to meet seasonal or sporadic labor needs.

Unauthorized Immigrants Already in the U.S.

In achieving overall policy goals, the League supports a system for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status, including citizenship, by paying taxes, learning English, studying civics and meeting other relevant criteria. While policy reforms, including a path to legal status, remain unachieved, the League does not support deporting unauthorized immigrants who have no history of criminal activity.
Reminder – Members are always welcome to attend Board meetings. Regular meeting times will be on the calendar.

To request placement of an item on the Board agenda and/or to receive the Board agenda packet, contact the LWVCYC President a week in advance.

LWV MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION
2010-2011

Name: ___________________________________________
Address: ___________________________________________
City/Zip: ___________________________________________
Phone: __________________________ Fax:_________________
Email: ___________________________________________________________________

Please check type of membership:
____________________ $55/Yr Individual Membership
____________________ $82.50/Yr Household Membership
$_______ Contribution to League (not tax deductible)
$_______ Contribution to Education Fund (tax deductible)

Please make donations to LWVAZ Education Fund by separate check, to preserve tax deductibility. This supports our Webpage and Voter Service activities. Thank you!

Dues cover membership through June 30, 2011.

Both new and renewal members, please include this form with your check. Thank you!

New: ________  Renewal: _______

Membership in the LWV is open to any person who subscribes to the purposes and policies of the LWVUS. These dues cover payment for local ($16.80), state ($9), and national ($29.20) memberships.

OR
Be a "Friend" of LWVCYC:
________$50/Yr Individual  or  ________$75/Yr Household

Please mail this form and all checks to:

LWVCYC
PO Box 11538  Prescott, AZ 86304-1538

IMPORTANT WEBSITE REFERENCES
League of Women Voters
WEBSITES
LWVUS Website
www.lwv.org
LWVAZ Website
www.lwvaz.org
LWVCYC Website
http://centralyavapai.az.lwvnet.org/

We recommend that you check these out monthly, or more often. Lots of good information! Bookmark them to save on typing, or go to lwvaz.org, where there are links to click on.