Voting Rights & Referendums

Are voting rights in jeopardy?

Voting rights and the referendum on the November ballot are “star” topics for:
Scott Mascher, Yavapai County Sheriff & Phil Bourdon, Yavapai County Administrator, discussing the proposed jail tax
Terri Farneti, President of the LWVCYC
Jonathan Alanis, Arizona Advocacy Outreach/Development Coordinator
Shayna Stevens, President/Executive Director Arizona Students’ Association

Saturday, October 4, 9:00-11:30 a.m.
League of Women Voters of Central Yavapai County
Las Fuentes Resort Village
1035 Scott Drive, Prescott

A nonpartisan membership organization, the League of Women Voters neither supports nor opposes political parties or candidates, but encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.
Happy Fall!

First of all, thank you to everyone who attended the September meeting! All the volunteers who helped greet everyone, brought breakfast goodies, set up the room...it just felt good walking into the room. We hope you found it educational and thought-provoking. Look for a League position on current campaign finance laws in the works to be finalized in 2015.

National Voter Registration Day is September 23rd and we are psyched to participate – as we should – we are the League of Women Voters. We will be registering voters at Yavapai College, Prescott College and the Prescott Public Library. Many thanks to the members who have volunteered to register voters that day.

Our October 4th meeting will be very informative covering the topic of Voting Rights and Referendums. Ellie has a great line up of speakers – and I will be covering the Pros & Cons of the Ballot Initiatives. We will have copies of the 2014 LWV Voter Guides for everyone. Please invite your friends and neighbors as the information shared at this meeting will educate us all on what will be on the ballot on November 4th. County Elections will bring the new voting machine for everyone to check out, too. This version allows the citizen using the electronic machine to get a copy of their ballot to check before submitting, so people will feel more confident that their vote counted!

The November meeting will be another blockbuster on the Impact of the Affordable Care Act – so please plan on November 1st to attend.

Again, I want to thank our Board members for their time and effort to make this another successful year for our League. I couldn’t do this without them! As always, we appreciate input from our members – you are welcome to attend board meetings - held the Tuesday before the General meeting.

Bill and George supporting civil discourse!
**Speakers at Our October 4 Meeting**

**Sheriff Scott Mascher** was appointed in June 2011 after 25 years of working his way up in various communities and positions in the Sheriff’s office, retiring, and returning as Chief Deputy. He was elected as Sheriff in November 2012. He was involved in the planning, design, construction and opening of the 650 bed jail complex in Camp Verde. He has been involved in both Law Enforcement and Detention Services Divisions. Mascher was President of the Arizona Sheriffs Association in 2012. He is a former Academy Commander to the Northern Arizona Regional Training Academy, responsible for providing basic training for 20 law enforcement agencies throughout the state. He is on the Board of Directors for Silent Witness and the Trauma Intervention Program.

**Phil Bourdon** was named **Yavapai County Administrator** in February 2013, after serving six months as Interim Administrator. He grew up in California, studied civil engineering at Cal State Fullerton, and then worked at the CA Dept of Transportation before coming to the Prescott area to take a job with a Prescott Valley engineering firm. He began at the county as a hydrologist in 1996 and worked his way up through Public Works Director and then County Engineer, before his current appointment. He is responsible for several county departments – public works, development services, facilities, flood control and fleet management, supervising those directors and their 230 employees.

**Jonathan Alanis** is Outreach/Development Coordinator at **Arizona Advocacy Network**, a nonpartisan nonprofit organization which has been working on election integrity since 2002. It works to keep the administration of elections transparent and officeholders accountable to all voters, not donors. Alanis graduated from ASU with a Bachelors degree in Political Science and a Bachelor's degree in Transborder Chicano/s & Latina/o Studies and previously worked as a Field Organizer with Voto Latino.

**Shayna Stevens, President/ Executive Director, Arizona Students’ Association** previously served as an intern, Board Director, and NAU campus organizer, working to keep the student voice united among the three AZ universities. ASA was started in 1974 when students across the state worked to have student representation on the Arizona Board of Regents, and initially was funded by Regents, since student governments were not able to use their money for advocacy purposes. HB 2169 (2013) made it illegal to fund independent student organizations using the university system. As a result, ASA has been working to diversify their revenue while ensuring to still represent the interests of all university and community college students.
America is now in the middle of a highly partisan battle over voting rights. On one side are politicians passing laws and executive actions that would make it harder for some citizens to vote. On the other side are groups of voters and advocates pushing back—in the legislature, at the ballot box, and especially in the courts.

Voter suppression efforts fall disproportionately on poor and minority voters who tend to be left leaning in their voting patterns. Some reports have estimated the impact as falling 40% on Democratic voters as opposed to 13% impact on Republican voters.

Some states have required voters to show government-issued photo identification, often of a type that as many as one in ten voters do not have. Other states have cut back on early voting. Two states reversed earlier reforms and again disenfranchised millions who have past criminal convictions but are now taxpaying members of the community. Still others have made it much more difficult for citizens to register to vote, a prerequisite for voting. Additional efforts included proof of citizenship laws; making it harder for students to register and vote; reducing access to absentee ballots or trying to aggressively purge the voter rolls. Arizona’s own HB 2305 sought to purge voters signed up for the permanent early voting list (PEVL).

While some claim the changes are necessary to prevent voter fraud and to make elections more fair, in actuality, voter fraud—votes knowingly cast by ineligible individuals—is exceedingly rare.

The voter suppression advocates got a real boost for their efforts when a 2013 Supreme Court decision ruled 5-4 to overturn a key section of the Voting Rights Act. The 1965 law had required that lawmakers in states with a history of discriminating against minority voters get federal permission before changing voting rules. 15 states, including Arizona, had been subject to this requirement before it was struck down by the Supreme Court on the basis that “our country has changed”, and that blanket federal protection wasn’t needed to stop discrimination. In the aftermath of the ruling, 8 of the 15 states have passed or implemented voting restrictions, compared to 3 of 35 states not covered by the law who have passed voting restrictions.

In a backlash both to the Supreme Court ruling and to the voter suppression efforts of the last few years, legislators from both sides of the aisle have introduced and supported bills that expand access to registration and voting. However, there were also at least 83 voting restriction bills introduced in 29 states in 2014, and three states passed 5 voting restriction bills during their 2014 session.

In Arizona in June 2013, after protracted litigation, the US Supreme Court invalidated the proof of citizenship measure as it applied to voters using the federal voter registration form, but left in place the requirement on state forms. This resulted in a two ballot process which only affects about 2000 voters statewide, but cost several hundred thousand dollars to implement. (only 21 voters cast a "federal-only" ballot.) An aggressive voting rights restriction bill passed in the waning hours of the 2012 session was repealed by the legislature to avoid voter referendum, but provisions may surface again in another legislative session.

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**Some Lesser-Known Facts About The Aug. 26 Primary** by Mary Jo Pitzl

- Voter turnout was only 27 percent
- Some voters tuned out. A total of 61,565 voters didn't vote for governor, meaning 7 percent of those who turned out gave the much-ballyhooed race a big yawn.
- The Republican brand was in demand, thanks to a competitive primary ballot. The canvass showed 62.3 percent of the ballots cast were in the GOP primary, far above the 34.6 percent Republicans claim in voter registration. That means a lot of independents picked the Republican ballot. The GOP is now considering closing party primaries to independent voters.
NEEDED: Volunteers for FALL FEST IN THE PARK

October 11 - 9am to 5pm All times are available

October 12 - 9am to 3pm All times are available

Please email Dale Domzalski domzalski@cableone.net or phone 928-237-9093

September 6 General Meeting total attendance was 52: 24 members - 3 speakers - 25 guests

September 13 Farmers Market went very well. Joyce and Bill Haas stepped up to man the table. Five voters registered. Thank you Joyce and Bill.

The YCCA Expo on September 13 and 14 was a fun event. Dale Domzalski, Vivian and Norm Perry, Terri Farneti, Julia Watson, Sandra and Earl Goodwin were on hand to register voters and discuss LWVCYC. The small Program Schedules handouts enable us to promote our community education efforts. Also, the Expo was a good opportunity to get the Voter Guide into the community. 10 voters registered.

Vivian Perry at YCCA Expo.

NON SEQUITUR

Since you think corporations are people, maybe you can get one of them to take out the trash!

The other dissenting opinion
Don’t fall for candidates’ distortions

Candidates have a responsibility to use facts in an accurate and honest way, not only for moral and ethical reasons, but also because by misleading people, it creates a false foundation for the future.

Legislators claimed it was their right to cut public school funding even though the public passed a referendum to fund schools. Now the courts have ruled they must honor the law, but they’ve given the money away in tax cuts, private prison contracts and “incentives” for corporations that don’t need them.

Arizona’s schools have fallen to the bottom of all states in education funding after $2 billion in budget cuts, yet many candidates are still trying to claim the paltry budget is because of a “D” ranking and that we can ignore the state constitution and fund private schools through a loophole (pre- “donations”). Arizona went from 17th in school funding to 48th in recent years. Low teacher pay, large classes and a dearth of books and materials make a difference in the quality of education. To say otherwise is ludicrous!

The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) has wholly hijacked the state agenda for corporate interests, which has had a devastating effect on the middle class and the poor. Neglected and abused children have died for lack of investigatory funds (this has finally been addressed) and unemployment and under-employment have become nagging problems, among other issues.

Arizona’s elected officials have done damage that may keep this state from rising out of its economic rut for a very long time. The very least they should give us is the truth. Here are some of the worst false statements and misguided beliefs I’ve heard from candidates this season:

Government doesn’t create jobs.

Despite an effort by some to privatize everything for greedy profiteers, government remains one of the largest and best employers at the national, state and local levels. All those police officers, firefighters, town workers, county workers, school workers, postal workers, highway workers, forestry workers, park rangers, Department of Motor Vehicle and Veteran’s Administration workers, Social Security, EPA, etc., etc., etc., etc., are government employees. It’s simply a ridiculous statement.

It’s not government’s role to oversee water quality.

If it’s not government’s role to protect its citizens’ health, safety and welfare, then what is its purpose? To serve corporations at any cost? Dewey-Humboldt is facing a crisis in the arsenic contamination of its water, yet several town candidates were convinced they shouldn’t fix it – a private water company should be in charge. Meanwhile, property values could plummet and homeowners lose their investment. Federal funding is available for cleanup, but they reject that option – though residents pay federal taxes. Darwin principle at work? You decide.

Cutting corporate taxes will attract more jobs to Arizona and revive the economy.

Among attractors for corporate relocation, tax incentives are not as important as they once were, according to a recent Forbes magazine article. The trend is toward multiple reasons to choose a location. Corporations want an educated workforce, real estate opportunities, lower operating costs, transportation access, good schools, reliable government support, political stability, quality of life and low business interruption risk. Arizona should be a strong contender, but because of its politics, it’s not.

Proposing legislation that encourages racial profiling of Hispanics and which allows discrimination toward gay people is enough to drive off business that’s already here. Good, educated workers tend to be multi-cultural. Because it is the butt of jokes on national TV shows for its backwards behavior, has a reputation for poor schools and gets negative publicity for the redneck antics of Sheriff Joe (a civil rights lawsuit magnet). It is far less tempting option than other states with poorer climates and more business interruption from weather events. Arizona appears to be an unprofessionally run state, and that scares off corporations.

Also, “lower energy costs” were ranked as an important aspect of relocation in a recent survey of corporations.

by Forbes magazine, yet ALEC’s agenda to protect the fossil fuel industry has caused Arizona’s Corporation Commission to decide to punish solar energy users with a tax. Arizona could be a world leader in low-cost solar energy, but chooses to ride the dinosaur of old technology instead. Decisions like that cost jobs.

The real “job creators” are the small business operators, but there’s little effort to incentivize them. Startups coming to New York get support from a regional small business office and low-cost subsidized office space. Add in state tax incentives, easily obtained SBA loans and cross-fertilization of ideas in several high tech and biotech incubators at state and local colleges, and dozens of new businesses have started and thrived. Some became enormous firms, creating thousands of jobs. The state should focus on helping to create better-paying, long-term jobs that keep young talent from moving away.

Central American immigrant children will bring Ebola to Arizona.

Let’s pretend that someone really believes this. Kids who traveled thousands of miles by road and foot would have to somehow fly over to Africa, contract Ebola, then cross the border and spread it here. It’s vicious hate talk meant to scare people into giving their vote to a rabid immigration opponent. My only comment is: how low can you go?

Toni Denis is a freelance journalist, a five-year Prescott resident and chairwoman of the Democratic Women of the Prescott Area.
1. The Resolution:

Be it resolved we, the representatives of local and state Leagues assembled at the 2014 LWVUS Convention, call upon the LWVUS Board to quickly appoint the committees to review our campaign finance position and to study the process of amending the Constitution, in order to arrive at a comprehensive national action program that will support the aspirations and content of our position and mobilize our members. We call upon those committees, as well as the newly-formed committee on redistricting, to move quickly, deliberately and collaboratively to produce results that will allow the League, unified and strong, to participate fully in local, state and national efforts to reclaim our democracy.

2. Background information on the Resolution:

We applaud the LWVUS Board for introducing this ambitious program and accelerated timetable for the coming biennium. The need to educate our members and prepare to take strong action is great. The LWVUS explanation for its proposed three-part program provides the background information for our resolution.

3. The LWV position on which the Resolution is based:

The primary LWV position on which the Resolution is based is our national position on Campaign Finance Reform. Other relevant LWV positions include those on Citizens’ Right to Know/Citizen Participation, on Individual Liberties, and on Apportionment.

4. Rationale, including pros and cons, for proposing this resolution at this time:

Making democracy work is the League of Women Voters’ calling. As we end our first 100 years and gear up for the next 100, let us realize that none of our stated goals—in voter rights, the environment, climate change, women’s health, immigration—are possible without clear and immediate reforms in the way our political system is working and, in particular, reforms in the impact of money on the process.

Our position on campaign finance has proved flexible in the past, but the sustained assault by the Supreme Court on the very principles on which that position was based makes it imperative that we review and either reaffirm, in detail, those principles or revise and expand them to address legal loopholes and technological realities.

It has been almost forty years since the Supreme Court ruled, in *Buckley v. Valeo*, that spending money to promote candidates is protected speech under the First Amendment and, therefore, may not be regulated, the idea that “money = speech.” LWVUS statements are clear that the League does not believe that 1976 decision, and others that flowed from it, were correct. The composition of the Court has changed during these four decades, but the position of the Court has not, and recent decisions demonstrate that this ruling has become, as far as the Court is concerned, a matter of settled law.

We urge the study committees to provide the framework to enable the LWV to support in this biennium amendments to address the Supreme Court’s equating of money and First Amendment free speech rights in our electoral politics, and the Court’s rejection of the legislative process in regulating campaign expenditures and contributions.

Finally, we agree with the need for a national position on Congressional redistricting. The existing position on Apportionment is clearly inadequate to address the pervasive problems of gerrymandered districts that allow elected officials to choose their voters rather than the other way around. Many state
Leagues have already adopted more detailed redistricting positions, but it is important for the League to be in a position to advocate for remedies at the Congressional level and to provide a model for similar changes where needed at the state level.

This Resolution is intended to communicate a sense of urgency to the Convention delegates and the LWVUS Board. Against this sense of urgency, we must place the deliberative and thorough tradition of study before action that gives the League a degree of credibility unmatched among civic organizations. Therefore, our resolution calls for all three newly-formed committees to work quickly, deliberately and collaboratively so that their work, taken together, can lead to a strong and coordinated action plan for the League at all levels.

5. Evidence that the issue is a current legislative priority:

Legislation confronting disclosure loopholes is pending in Congress and is advocated by the League, and the idea of public funding for elections is gaining a foothold in the public mind. The flood of money into elections is beginning to raise public awareness of the problem. There are currently before the 113th Congress more than a dozen proposed Constitutional amendments addressing various aspects of the Supreme Court’s rulings on campaign finance. Two of them, with over 20 co-sponsors each, would simply allow both Congress and the states to limit contributions and expenditures in support of or opposition to candidates.

6. Evidence that the issue in the proposed resolution is time sensitive and requires federal governmental action:

Although the Supreme Court has been narrowing the scope of legal action affecting campaign finance abuses at an ever-increasing rate, federal action by Congress and the executive branch remains possible on this narrowed playing field, and is certainly both urgent and necessary. The voices of the people in our representative democracy are being crushed by the amplified voices of super-rich individuals and deep-pocketed corporations and special interests hiding behind imputed first amendment and privacy rights and loosely enforced or unenforced IRS, SEC and FEC regulation.

If the League and like-minded citizens cannot prevail in their efforts to limit the influence of money in our political system, our other work will be in vain. Every day, more money is inserted into our political system at every level—from town councilor and school board to President, and in every branch—legislative, executive and even judicial. No part of our democracy is now immune from the impact of money.

The public’s sense that corruption has become legitimate and ‘is the cost of doing business’ has become endemic.

For those reasons, our resolution urges the LWVUS Board, and the committees it will appoint, to act quickly and thoroughly both to renew our position on campaign finance reform to reflect the current reality and to provide and promote a framework for Leagues to take action and to engage the public on this pivotal issue.

Submitted by

Becky Shannon, Chair, LWV of Massachusetts Campaign Finance Project Anne Borg and Marilyn Peterson, Co-Presidents, LWV of Massachusetts LWV of Massachusetts Board of Directors Boston, Massachusetts
By Dave Levinthal 18 hours ago

In 2007, when the Charles Koch Foundation considered giving millions of dollars to Florida State University’s economics department, the offer came with strings attached.

First, the curriculum it funded must align with the libertarian, deregulatory economic philosophy of Charles Koch, the billionaire industrialist and Republican political bankroller.

Second, the Charles Koch Foundation would at least partially control which faculty members Florida State University hired.

And third, Bruce Benson, a prominent libertarian economic theorist and Florida State University economics department chairman, must stay on another three years as department chairman — even though he told his wife he’d step down in 2009 after one three-year term.

The Charles Koch Foundation expressed a willingness to give Florida State an extra $105,000 to keep Benson — a self-described “libertarian anarchist” who asserts that every government function he’s studied “can be, has been, or is being produced better by the private sector” — in place.

“As we all know, there are no free lunches. Everything comes with costs,” Benson at the time wrote to economics department colleagues in an internal memorandum. “They want to expose students to what they believe are vital concepts about the benefits of the market and the dangers of government failure, and they want to support and mentor students who share their views. Therefore, they are trying to convince us to hire faculty who will provide that exposure and mentoring.”

Benson concluded, “If we are not willing to hire such faculty, they are not willing to fund us.”

Such details are contained in 16 pages of previously unpublished emails and memos obtained by the Center for Public Integrity.

Related: Inside the Koch brothers’ campus crusade
There’s more to this story. Click here to read the rest at the Center for Public Integrity.
This story is part of Consider the Source. Seeking to ‘out’ shadowy political organizations flourishing in the wake of the Supreme Court’s Citizens United ruling. Click here to read more stories in this investigation.

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- Charles Koch’s long history of education funding

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Please renew your membership, if you have not already done so!

Reminder – Members are always welcome to attend Board meetings. 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
2014-2015
Membership in the LWV is open to any person 18 and over who subscribes to the purposes and policies of the LWVUS. Dues for 2013-2014 cover payment for local ($16.00), state ($13), and national ($31.00) memberships.

Name: ________________________________
Address: ______________________________
City/Zip: ______________________________
Phone: __________________ Fax: __________________
Email: ________________________________

Note type of membership, and make check to “LWVCYC”:
______ $60/Yr Individual Membership
______ $90/Yr Household Membership

Plus suggested donation:
$_______ Contribution to League (not tax deductible)

$_______*Contribution to Education Fund (tax deductible)

*Donations to the LWVAZ Education Fund must be made by separate check, to preserve tax deductibility. This supports our Webpage and Voter Service activities. Thank you!

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

New: ________ Renewal: ________

OR

Be a “Friend” of LWVCYC:
______ $50/Yr Individual or ________ $75/Yr Household
(open to businesses and individuals)

Please mail this form and all checks to:

LWVCYC
PO Box 11538 Prescott, AZ 86304-1538

IMPORTANT WEBSITE REFERENCES
LWVUS Website  www.lwv.org
LWVAZ Website  www.lwvaz.org
LWVCYC Website  LWVCYC.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. Or Google LWVCYC!

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<th>Day</th>
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| Wed     | Sept 18   | 5      | Thursday Meet-Up
Happy Hour/Eagles Nest                                                          |
| Tues    | Sept 23   |        | Voter Registration
Nat’l Voter Reg Day                                                              |
| Tues.   | Sept.30   | 8-9:30 | Board Meeting                                                                      |
| Sat.    | Oct. 4    | 9-11:30| General Meeting
Voting Rights and Ballot Initiatives                                                 |
| Mon     | Oct 6     |        | Deadline to register to vote in General Election                                     |
| Sat-Sun | Oct 11-12 | ?      | Fall Fest in the Park
Court House Plaza                                                                    |
| Thu     | Oct 16    | 10     | Thursday Meet-Up
Coffee Hour/Starbucks on 69                                                        |
| Tues.   | Oct 28    | 8-9:30 | Board Meeting                                                                      |
| Sat.    | Nov. 1    | 9-11:30| General Meeting
Affordable Health Care Act – What’s been the impact of ACA in Yavapai County?     |
| Tues.   | Nov 4     |        | General Election                                                                   |
| Thu     | Nov 20    | 5      | Thursday Meet-Up
Happy Hour/Eagles Nest                                                              |
| Thu     | Nov 27    |        | Thanksgiving                                                                       |
| Tues.   | Dec. 2    | 8-9:30 | Board Meeting                                                                      |
| Sat.    | Dec. 6    | ?      | Holiday Brunch
Brunch and fun!                                                                      |
| Thu     | Dec 25    |        | Christmas                                                                          |
| Fri.    | Jan. 2    | 8-9:30 | Board Meeting                                                                      |
| Sat.    | Jan. 3    | 9-11:30| General Meeting
The Core Curriculum: The Good, The Bad, or the Ugly                               |
| Thu     | Jan 15    | 5      | Thursday Meet-Up
Happy Hour/Eagles Nest                                                              |
| Tues.   | Feb. 3    | 8-9:30 | Board Meeting                                                                      |
| Sat.    | Feb. 7    | 9-11:30| General Meeting
Local and State Program Planning, LWV Studies Review                              |
| Thu     | Feb 19    | 10     | Thursday Meet-Up
Coffee Hour/Starbucks on 69                                                         |
| Tues.   | Mar 3     | 8-9:30 | Board Meeting                                                                      |
| Sat.    | Mar 7     | 9-11:30| General Meeting
Water – Is there enugh in the Yavapai Highland? What can we do about it? What is being done? |
| Thu     | Mar 19    | 5      | Thursday Meet-Up
Happy Hour/Eagles Nest                                                              |
| Tues.   | Mar. 31   | 8-9:30 | Board Meeting                                                                      |
| Sat.    | Apr. 4    | 9-11:30| General Meeting
Legislative Update                                                                  |
| Thu     | Apr 16    | 10     | Thursday Meet-Up
Coffee Hour/Starbucks on 69                                                         |
| Tues.   | Apr 24    | 8-9:30 | Board Meeting                                                                      |
| Sat.    | May 2     | 9-11:30| Annual Meeting
Election of Officers, Program, Lunch, Speaker                                        |
| Thu     | May 21    | 5      | Thursday Meet-Up
Happy Hour/Eagles Nest                                                              |
| Sat     | June 6    | 10-4   | Board Retreat
?                                                                                   |
| Thu     | June 18   | 10     | Thursday Meet-Up
Coffee Hour/Starbucks on 69                                                         |
| Thu     | July 16   | 5      | Thursday Meet-Up
Happy Hour/Eagles Nest                                                              |
A nonpartisan membership organization, the League of Women Voters neither supports nor opposes political parties or candidates, but encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.