



# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® of METROPOLITAN PHOENIX

## October 2016 Calendar & Comments

### [Elections 2016:](#)

**LWVMetroPhoenix.org** has lots of new links and pages.\_

Ballot & Issues: <http://lwvmetrophoenix.org/Issues1.html>

Includes pages on Props, Who's Running, LWV Voter Guide, & Elections for Schools, Maricopa County, and General information.

### **Attention!**

If you live in Tempe or know someone who does, it's possible that you have received incorrect polling place information from materials distributed via Tempe school districts. More [information at this link](#).

### **Maricopa Community Colleges Governing Board Forum**

Oct. 18 at 6 p.m. Sponsored by Valley Interfaith, & including Distr. 18 & 26 candidates Dayspring United Methodist Church, 1365 E. Elliot Rd., Tempe

### **Presidential Debate**

October 19, 6 pm, held at University of Nevada [LWV Debate-Watching Kit](#)

### **Citizens Clean Elections Candidate Debates**

[See schedule here; click date for more.](#)

### **Corporation Commission Candidate Forum**

Friday, Oct. 28 (8:30 am coffee, 9 -11am program)

Universalist Unitarian Church, 17540 N Ave of the Arts, Surprise, AZ

Sponsored by AAUW; LWV of NWMC, and NOW

**Moderator:** Anne Schneider

[Click here to build your personalized ballot with AZcentral](#)

[Click Here for Clean Elections Candidate Compass](#)

Compare your positions on issues with those of the Corporation Commission & Legislative candidates. Easy!

[Click here](#) for a list of

**EVERYONE**  
running for a County office.

## **Ballot harvesting**

If someone helps out someone else by bringing their early ballot to a polling place to be dropped off, that action is now a Class 6 felony--as per a new state law, HB2023. LWV is critical of the law, as is Az Advocacy Network. Samantha Pstross wrote a guest column that appeared in the *Arizona Capitol Times*. [Read article here.](#)

## **Volunteer with the Election Protection Program**

The Arizona Advocacy Network (AzAN) Election Protection program needs volunteers to observe at problematic polling locations documenting any issues that arise--especially voter intimidation--3-hour shifts and training is provided. Check out the opportunity to [VOLUNTEER HERE.](#)

## **Maricopa County Elections sponsors Community Network Meetings**



Perhaps a "Just One Thing" you can do for LWVMP is attend a monthly Community Network Meeting. The County Elections Department sponsors these meetings for representative from community organizations to learn about and discussion election-related issues, and they are usually well-attended. [See this link for more information.](#)

While LWVMP has had a representative attend regularly in the past, we have no one right now and are **asking for a volunteer**. *Please contact Care Lengel if interested.*

The group meets for one hour each month to discuss that month's topic. Topics for the year are scheduled in January. They might include such things as preparation for, previews of, or analysis of the various elections run by the County. This may sound dry, but it can actually be quite interesting, as you can imagine from the MC election-related issues in the news this year!

The meetings are held at the County Election Tabulation Center (MCTEC), 510 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Phoenix. For members who are unable to attend, the presentations and summaries are emailed to them.

Meetings are led by the County's federal compliance officer, Mary Fontes, and are on a Wednesday. The next meeting is scheduled for December 7, 10:00 am.

## Democracy in Action

Your League dues supports education and advocacy at all levels of League!

**The League of Women Voters of Arizona has agreed to be the Lead Plaintiff in litigation** handled by the Torres Law Group against enactment of SB1516, HB 2296 and HB 2286. These bills "enable unlimited expenditures on election contests with no disclosure of donors; allow unlimited contributions to candidate campaigns funneled through political parties; and remove enforcement authority from the Citizen's Clean Elections Commission." There are other issues not specific to dark money, as well.

### **Arizona Commission for Election Accountability (AzCEA)**

This Commission was formed after the problems with the Presidential Preference election in March, 2016. LWVAZ is one of the community groups represented on the Advisory Committee for this AzAN project. The mission is to work with County elections officials and others to provide solutions to the problems that plague election systems in AZ. Take a look at the website ([HERE](#)), where **there is a survey under "your ideas" that you are invited to take about improving elections.**

The Commission was successful in getting a polling place on ASU's campus for the General Election ([read more](#)). It will be run by ASU's student government in conjunction with Maricopa County. Maricopa County election officials were unwilling to implement other inexpensive changes that could have been put in place without legislation to make voting more accessible (e.g. secure ballot boxes, curbside ballot drop off and others).

A particular concern of AzCEA is that there will be almost 90 new polling places since 2014 and very little education to let people know. So, there's a high chance people will show up to the wrong location on Election Day. Many voters may be also unaware of the Early Voting Locations. [HERE](#) is a list for Maricopa County. Voters can go to any of them, although the hours at each location are different.

**The League joined Project Vote and Common Cause on a brief** in the case of *A. Phillip Randolph Inst. v. Husted* in 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit Appeals Court. In Ohio: Purging voters from the rolls because they didn't vote in previous elections creates confusion for voters and is in direct violation of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) and the Help America Vote Act (HAVA).

**Update:** Appeals Court agreed that the fact that a registered voter did not vote for 2 years could not legally trigger a process for potential removal from the voter rolls.

### **LWVUS Files Amicus Brief in *Juliana et al v. United States***

"In 2015, twenty-one youth from across the United States, age 8 to 19, filed a landmark constitutional climate change lawsuit against the federal government in the U.S. District

Court for the District of Oregon. Also acting as a Plaintiff is world-renowned climate scientist Dr. James E. Hansen, serving as guardian for future generations and his granddaughter. Their complaint asserts that, in causing climate change, the federal government has violated the youngest generation's constitutional rights to life, liberty, property, as well as failed to protect essential public trust resources."

**Update:** Oral arguments related to motion to dismiss were heard in September, and the judge will make a decision (which will lead to trial or appeal) within 60 days.

## Local League News

### Book Group Chooses Next Book:

*Saving Capitalism: For the Many, Not the Few*

Author is leading political economist Robert Reich.

Focused toward the layperson, an easy-to-read 200+ pages.



### Discussion:

Thursday, January 26, 2017, 11:30 am

Marge Thornton's home, 400 E. Alameda, Tempe, 480-966-6053

Bring a lunch!

Questions: Karen Michael, 480-802-0588

From Amazon: America was once celebrated for and defined by its large and prosperous middle class. Now, this middle class is shrinking, a new oligarchy is rising, and the country faces its greatest wealth disparity in eighty years. Why is the economic system that made America strong suddenly failing us, and how can it be fixed?

One reviewer says: Reich provides a simple, laymen explanation of the building blocks of the "free" market – property, monopoly, contract, bankruptcy and enforcement – and how those elements are, in fact, determined by the government. As Reich himself says repeatedly throughout the book, it's not a conflict between "government" on one hand and the "free market" on the other hand. The government, through laws, regulations and judicial proceedings, actually creates the market. It's not even a matter of the size of the government – "big government" vs. "small government". It's a matter of who controls the government and in whose interests these laws, regulations and judicial proceedings work – the majority of the people/society as a whole? Or a rich and influential few? Furthermore, Reich destroys the notion that those rich and influential few deserve the power and wealth that they control because they have "earned it".

## Fundraising or Radio, Anyone?

Although she is new to Phoenix, Nancy Bell is a long-time League member experienced in fundraising. She has provided an initial proposal for raising funds for LWVMP, the overlapping goals of which are:

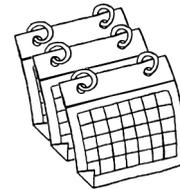
- To enhance the fine image of LWV in the Phoenix area
- To increase funding for LWV in the Phoenix area
- To increase membership

One of the projects that has been quite successful in increasing visibility and income for other Leagues Nancy has been involved with is the production of a radio program for 5-8 minutes once a week, in which LWV members interviewed someone on an issue of importance to the community.

To begin discussion of this and other plans, a Committee is being formed--of course! If you are interested in fundraising or radio, please contact Care Lengel or another Board member.

## Calendar and Website

The Calendar is constantly updated. Find the latest at [lwvmetrophoenix.org/calendar](http://lwvmetrophoenix.org/calendar)



## Highlights

**Phoenix Women's Commission Economic Forum: A unique opportunity for women to network, learn, & celebrate the success of other women in our community.**

Wed. Oct. 28, 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 pm

South Mountain Community College, 7050 South 24th Street Phoenix, AZ FREE

Keynote speaker is **LWVMP President Care Lengel**, who will speak on Civic

Engagement. Rivko Knox will be part of a panel discussion. Breakout sessions, etc.

**Movie Screening: *Newtown*, a "gut punch" movie advocating for gun control**

Wednesday, November 2nd

Glendale and Mesa Information: <http://newtownfilm.com/>

**LWVMP Holiday Lunch -- SAVE THE DATE! Time TBA**

Wednesday, December 14th, at the Terraces, 16th St. and Glendale (approx.)

Join LWVMP for another Holiday luncheon and party with plenty of great food & fun. **Speaker:** Sarah Porter, Director of Kyle Center for Water Policy, ASU Morrison Institute.

## Voting Rights Summit -- SAVE THIS DATE, TOO!

Hosted by LWV Northwest Maricopa County and ASU

Jan. 7, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

ASU New College West, 4701 W. Thunderbird Road, Glendale, AZ

## LWVMP Community Team Meetings – All may attend anywhere!



### East Valley

Thursday, October 20, at 11:30 a.m.

Marge Thornton's, 400 E. Alameda, Tempe

(bring brown bag lunch)

Dark money in AZ. Possible speaker. Also, a continuing project during the year is the reading and discussion of John Paul Stevens' book, *Six Amendments, How and Why We Should Change the Constitution*.

(Amending the US Constitution is a national LWV issue--see Position Spotlight in this newsletter below.)

Of interest in the above discussions: LWVMP Website--"Campaign Finance and What is Dark Money?", particularly "Citizen's United Changed Almost Everything" by Dr. Anne Schneider.

### Scottsdale Team Meeting

Thursday, November 10, 9:30 am

The home of Judy Levine, 8155 E. Del Caverna Drive, Scottsdale

We will be 1. Discussing the issue of dark money; 2. Beginning discussion on Parts 1 and 2 of the LWVAZ Election Reform positions update study.

### Phoenix Community Team Meeting

Wednesday, November 9, 9:30 am refreshments, 10 am program

The Terraces, 16th St. between Glendale Ave. and Northern (turn west on Morten: 7550 N. 16th St.)

Consensus meeting to discuss what's needed in election reform and to update the LWVAZ position covering election reform and government.

## **New LWV Positions, 2016**

In 2016, the National League (LWVUS) adopted 4 positions after in-depth study by state Leagues across the country, or by consensus at the 2016 Convention. All 4 are at: <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/new-and-updated-lwvus-positions-adopted-2016>

### **Spotlight on Constitutional Amendments**

Following the January 29-31 meeting, the League of Women Voters board announced a new position outlining considerations for evaluating constitutional amendment proposals. State Leagues can use this new position, as well as the [new position calling for safeguards to govern the constitutional convention process](#), to address the ongoing debates in many legislatures regarding constitutional conventions, in particular as they related to the Balanced Budget amendment.

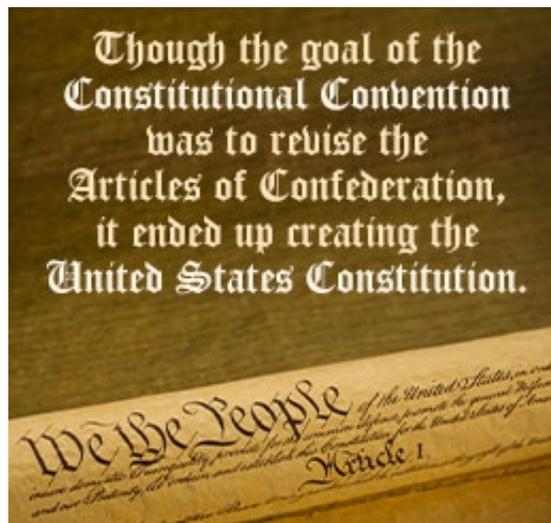
#### **Considerations for Evaluating Constitutional Amendment Proposals**

Adopted January 2016

The League will only support a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution if it advances and conforms to an LWVUS position.

In addition, the League believes the following should be considered in identifying an appropriate and well-crafted constitutional amendment:

- a) Whether the public policy objective addresses matters of such acute and abiding importance that the fundamental charter of our nation must be changed. Amendments are changes to a document that provides stability to our system and should be undertaken to address extreme problems or long-term needs.
- b) Whether the amendment as written would be effective in achieving its policy objective. Amendments that may be unenforceable, miss the objective, or have unintended consequences may not achieve the policy objective.
- c) Whether the amendment would either make our political system more democratic or protect individual rights. Most adopted amendments have sought to make our system more representative or to protect the rights of minorities.
- d) Whether the public policy objective can be achieved by a legislative or political approach that is less difficult than a constitutional amendment. In order to expend resources wisely, it is important to consider whether legislation or political action is more likely to succeed than an amendment.
- e) Whether the public policy objective is more suited to a constitutional and general approach than to a statutory and detailed approach. It is important to consider whether the goal can best be achieved by an overall value statement, which will be interpreted by the courts, or with specific statutory detail to resolve important issues and reduce ambiguity.



## **Position on Constitutional Conventions under Article V of the U.S. Constitution**

Adopted January 2016

The League is concerned that there are many unresolved questions about the powers and processes of an Article V Constitutional Convention. The League believes such a convention should be called only if the following conditions are in place:

- a) The Constitutional Convention must be transparent and not conducted in secret. The public has a right to know what is being debated and voted on;
- b) Representation at the Constitutional Convention must be based on population rather than one state, one vote, and delegates should be elected rather than appointed. The delegates represent citizens, should be elected by them, and must be distributed by U.S. population;
- c) Voting at the Constitutional Convention must be by delegate, not by state. Delegates from one state can have varying views and should be able to express them by individual votes;
- d) The Constitutional Convention must be limited to a specific topic. It is important to guard against a “runaway convention” which considers multiple issues or topics that were not initiated by the states;
- e) Only state resolutions on a single topic count when determining if a Constitutional Convention should be called. Counting state requests by topic ensures that there is sufficient interest in a particular subject to call a Convention and enhances citizen interest and participation in the process; and
- f) The validity of state calls for an Article V Constitutional Convention must be determined by the most recent action of the state. If a state has enacted a rescission of its call, that rescission must be respected by Congress.

## Spotlight on Money in Politics

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should:

- Enhance political equality for all citizens;
- Ensure maximum participation by citizens in the political process;
- Protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns;
- Provide voters sufficient information about candidates and campaign issues to make informed choices;
- Ensure transparency and the public's right to know who is using money to influence elections;
- Enable candidates to compete equitably for public office;
- Ensure that candidates have sufficient funds to communicate their messages to the public; and
- Combat corruption and undue influence in government.

The League believes that political corruption includes the following:

- A candidate or officeholder agrees to vote or work in favor of a donor's interests in exchange for a campaign contribution;
- An officeholder or staff gives greater access to donors;
- An officeholder votes or works to support policies that reflect the preferences of individuals or organizations in order to attract contributions from them;
- A candidate or office holder seeks political contributions implying that there will be retribution unless a donation is given; and
- The results of the political process consistently favor the interests of significant campaign contributors.

In order to achieve the goals for campaign finance regulation, the League supports:

- Public financing of elections, either voluntary or mandatory, in which candidates must abide by reasonable spending limits;
- Enhanced enforcement of campaign finance laws that includes changes to ensure that regulatory agencies are properly funded, staffed, and structured to avoid partisan deadlock in the decision-making process;
- Abolishing Super PACs and abolishing spending coordinated or directed by candidates (other than a candidate's own campaign committee); and
- Restrictions on direct donations and bundling by lobbyists, which may include monetary limits as well as other regulations.

Until full public financing of elections is enacted, limits on election spending are needed in order to meet the League's goals for protecting democratic processes. Among the different entities that spend money to influence elections, the League supports the following comparative limits:

- Higher spending limits for political parties, genuinely non-partisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote organizations and activities, and candidates spending money raised from contributors;
- Mid-level spending limits for individual citizens (including wealthy individuals), Political Action Committees (with funds contributed by individuals associated with the sponsoring organization, such as employees, stockholders, members and volunteers), and candidates spending their own money;
- Lower spending limits for trade associations, labor unions and non-profit organizations from their general treasury funds;
- Severely restricted spending by for-profit organizations spending from their corporate treasury funds; and
- No limits on spending by bona fide newspapers, television, and other media, including the Internet, except to address partisan abuse or use of the media to evade campaign finance regulations.

