

Post Election Perspective November 2016
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Some historic election, huh?! Some say this election has been historic because of how it ended, but it's also historic because of how much it raised civic engagement. Many, many new voters did get registered and did vote!

Now the election phase is resolved; a new president-elect is preparing to take office and is making adjustments to campaign promises. That is the way of every U.S. election. Analysts are saying that both political parties are restructuring, and everyone acknowledges that this surly election was a surprise.

As the pundits and polls were proven wrong on November 8, one half of our nation began celebrating the potential in a complete control of the executive and legislative branches of government and looking forward to control of the judiciary as well. The other half of our nation suffered sudden grief, anxious of a promised rollback of progress and worried about changes within our nation's borders, throughout North America, and with other nations of our world.

New voters are all in shock too. So many new voters, young or mature, conservative or progressive, believe that this one election is the beginning or the end of the world. They cheer or march in protest; they chant or post in panic. They villainize relatives or friends because of how they voted. Since both candidates painted their opposition as the ruination of our nation, inexperienced voters still think so.

New voters don't know yet is that no single election or candidate is the guardian or destruction of these United States. But our leaders and experienced voters do. We know that as the divisiveness of each election subsides, the next phase of our democratic elections is a coming together, a reunion of what we share in ideals, a refocusing on what brings us together as a nation. While we may disagree, there is a return to civility and shared procedures. Then, once again, our county begins to talk.

This is what I would ask League of Women Voters members to address today. As part of our voter services, League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Phoenix can help newer voters understand that civic engagement is more than just voting. It's continuing to be involved in civic improvement.

Leaguers know our nation, our state, our county, our cities, our school districts are all still here, working for all people. Leaguers have learned that local, state, and national government will always need improvement. Leaguers remember and remind others that as citizens of this democracy, that's our responsibility. As president of the LWV and a refugee from Hitler's Germany Lotte Sharfman first framed in the 1950's and so many others have quoted since, "Democracy is not a spectator sport!" It's 100% participatory!

Since 1920, when women were granted the right to vote by the 19th Amendment, the League of Women Voters has helps newly eligible women get registered, get informed, vote, and keep working to improve government! And LWV remains.

LWV remains nonpartisan but political. We support or oppose no party or candidate ever, but local, state and national League groups study issues, and when membership agrees, advocate on those positions.

LWV remains, helping educate voters about getting ready to vote, about the issues, and about our democratic process. The issues our local LWVMP and LWVAZ are currently studying and taking action on

include money in politics, government finance, voters' rights, and election procedures as well as local development, water resources, and immigration.

But right now, please join me in offering the long perspective to our community. Today as yesterday, this month as last month, and the coming years as in years past, as long as citizens continue to participate in our democracy, our nation remains. It will change, grow, and face challenges, but it will abide.

Today, please write a letter, post on social media, tell friends and family, or pass this on to other organizations. Please find ways to help newly registered voters and others in our society to understand that democracy isn't a goal but a process. As long as we continue to participate, to engage in civil, civic debate, no one election or elected official is the beginning or the end of our united United States.