



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® of METROPOLITAN

March 2017 - Calendar & Comments

League Resources

Website: <http://lwvmetrophoenix.org/index.html>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lwvmetrophoenix/>
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/lwvazmp/>
Member page: lwvmetrophoenix.org/members_only.html

Annual Events

LWV Metro Phoenix Annual Meeting

Saturday, April 8, 2017

9:00 am to noon

Beatitudes Campus Agelink Hall
1610 W. Glendale Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85021

Speaker: Maricopa County Recorder Adrian Fontes

The LWVMP Annual Meeting is a business meeting, with the plus of an interesting speaker! We also discuss and approve the LWVMP budget and any Bylaws changes, elect officers for the coming year, and discuss and possibly amend the 2017-18 Program (our education/advocacy focus).

Interested in lunch at the Beatitudes after the meeting?
Buckwald's Arizona Grill is an option. Please make a reservation: 602-910-2795.
<http://www.beatitudescampus.org/independent-living/dining/>

Also coming up in Surprise, Arizona:

2017 LWVAZ CONVENTION

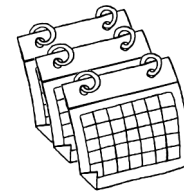
April 29: 8:30 am to after dinner

April 30: 8:30 am to 1:30 pm

There is a registration fee, and a cost for meals. Online information coming soon!

Calendar

The Calendar is constantly updated. Find the latest at lwvmetrophoenix.org/calendar



Highlights



Book Group Current Selection:

Thomas Friedman's *Thank You for Being Late: An Optimist's Guide to Thriving in the Age of Accelerations*

Discussion: Thursday, April 27, 2017, 11:30 am

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

Bring a lunch! Questions: Contact Karen Michael at 480-802-0588

Thank You for Being Late explores the consequences and interconnectedness of the exponential changes that are occurring in climate, technology, and the market. What happens when changes outpaces our ability to adapt to them?

From the *NY Times*: "(Dr.) Thomas L. Friedman is a self-confessed 'explanatory journalist', whose goal is to be a 'translator from English to English'. And he is extremely good at it. This book's title comes from an offhand comment to a friend whose tardiness allowed a few welcome minutes of contemplation."

LWVMP Community Team Meetings – All may attend anywhere!

East Valley

Thursday, March 16, at 11:30 a.m.

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

(bring brown bag lunch)

The East Valley will discuss the final 2 chapter of John Paul Stevens' book, *Six Amendments, How and Why We Should Change the Constitution*. Discussion will be on Chapter 5, the death penalty, and Chapter 6, the second amendment--primarily concerning gun control. In April we will discuss conclusions from Reading Stevens' book and also discuss the questionable wisdom of a constitutional convention.



Scottsdale Team Meeting

Thursday, March 9, 9:30 am

The home of Judy Levine, 8155 E. Del Caverna Drive, Scottsdale (off of Via Linda)

The Scottsdale team continues its study of the proposed Desert Discovery Center, planned for the McDowell preserve. Our March speaker will be Council member Kathy Littlefield, who is opposed to the project. Our study will continue through the summer. This is a very controversial subject in Scottsdale.

Phoenix Community Team Meeting

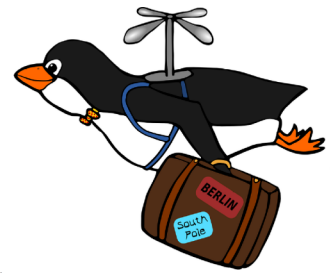
Wednesday, March 8, 9:30 am refreshments, 10 am program

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

*For additional parking, try the office building just slightly NW of the Terraces, the parking lot across the street, or on the NW corner of 16th Street and Morten, which is a very short walk from the Terraces per se.

Speaker: Jan Nichols, on "The Black \$\$ Hole of Charter Schools". Jan is a native Arizonan, born in Winslow, with a B.S. in Political Science/English, and an M.A. in Education. She taught 28 years in the public school system in Cottonwood, Glendale Union and Phoenix Union; she is actively following education bills and is a member of AEA-Retired.. Come and learn!

Out and About



Legislative Advocacy

Rivko Knox has been down at the State Legislature almost daily, providing testimony on various noxious bills introduced to curtail or eliminate voters' or citizens' rights. If you have NOT been receiving her updates, or Action Alerts, please contact office@karlandalice.name.

Meet/Greet

Rivko and League member Eileen Millington visited the offices of Senators McCain and Flake, and were successful in having a respectful visit with office staff.

"We walked in with LWV T-shirts and/or buttons, introduced ourselves, and gave a very brief history of LWV and current, nonpartisan goals. We said we hoped to be able to publicize townhalls that AZ's two senators would be holding during the Feb. recess, but were unable to get any information about such."

Stephanie Marispini went to a recent "Meet and Greet" with Maricopa County Recorder Adrian Fontes.

"I personally found him open to technology and very objective regarding simply wanting the job done and figuring out best ways to improve."

She noted that he is working on several voter access/education ideas: one would provide free transportation on election day; another would allow texting through the website, to remind voters to vote, receive information on ballots, etc. Mr. Fontes does NOT support electronic online voting, but prefers paper ballots.

Good News! County Recorder's Goal is to be a "Voter-Centric" Administration

A group of 7 League members from LWVMP and LWVNWMC were invited to visit **Adrian Fontes** in his office on February 1st. They met first with Mr. Heredia, the new Communications Manager for the County Recorder, and later with Mr. Fontes. The meeting was pleasant and informative. **Here are some things that were learned:**

- *Outreach coordinators are being hired for each County supervisor's district to reach schools, churches, municipalities, businesses, & neighborhood associations, create programs appropriate to each, and push out new initiatives via these groups.
- *The County would like to develop a cadre of speakers on: voter registration, poll locations, poll workers, early voting, and election day activities.
- *The long-held Community Outreach Meetings may or may not continue after the office conducts a survey to determine their usefulness or how they should be changed.
- *A program is being considered to take voting equipment to schools so students can actually use such for school elections and thus become familiar with such.
- *Counties are creatures of the state; thus state law applies, whereas cities are chartered. The County Recorder's office is legally one function of the Board of Supervisors, under a Charter created by the Board in 1985. The Recorder is responsible for registration through the creation of the ballots to the polling places. After that, process is in the hands of the County Elections Dept.
- *Mr. Fontes would like to have all mail-in ballots, which would eliminate the need for new voting equipment (\$25-\$30 million). All 'mail in' ballots would still allow for early voting locations/centers.
- *In 2017, there will only be "jurisdictional" elections: e.g. municipal, school and special district elections, which Mr. Fontes thinks would be a great time to try out all 'mail in' ballots before the entire County went to such. If done County-wide, savings to schools would be \$1.5 million.
- *Fontes said he also favors Automatic Voter Registration (AVR), and is opposed to registered independents NOT being allowed to vote in the Presidential Preferential election (which he called a Closed Partisan Primary) because everyone in AZ pays for what is really a partisan activity. AVR (opt-out) would need legislative action.
- *Re: questions about purging/cancellations of voters, Mr. Fontes said that the Secretary of State is supposed to send names of those registering in their state to the AZ SOS. Regarding the program called 'cross check' (see article in this C&C) he said that he needs to learn more about it but is aware that there is a high error rate. He said he regularly gets 1-2 names a week to purge.
- *Mr. Fontes explained that the reason it takes so long (10 days) to count all mail-in ballots is purely a matter of there not being enough room anywhere in the County buildings to open all the ballot boxes, and bring in enough people to feed ballots into tabulation machines. So, it has to be done in batches, which takes longer. He thinks in the near future, the County Recorder will have access to more space.

Local League News: LWVMP

On February 4th LWVMP held a successful New Member Orientation, for approximately 70 new League members. The energy was high and we are very grateful that there are so many folks interested in fighting for the values and processes that make democracy work for all. We hope to hold another event before the summer comes.

One wonderful consequence of our increased membership is that we now have new members joining the LWVMP Administrative Board (subject to final approval at the Annual Meeting). While new to the LWVMP, their career and life experiences will be very valuable as we move forward. They are:

Michelle Dorsey as Coalitions Chair
Gloria Olsen as Secretary
Kathy Swenson as Issues/Program Chair

If you haven't already been contacted by one of our Board members as a result of issues or committees you have indicated you're interested in helping with, you *will* be! Please keep on eye on your email!



Orientation Evaluations



We truly appreciate all the comments on the orientation evaluations. We've tried to address the main questions, below:

LWVMP Structure/Meeting Times and Places

Several members are in the process of planning *evening or weekend* Community Team meetings. Everyone should know, as well, that it is perfectly fine for any individual to start an informal group (for discussion of an issue, for example, or for a specific task like letter-writing) that could become a more formal Community Team. Teams are group-driven anyhow, within League guidelines of nonpartisanship and speaking with one voice.

The best way to get to know others with similar interests is in these Community Team settings, where people discuss and take action together.

We realize the current Phoenix meeting location has *parking issues*, and this is one reason for introducing more community teams. If you have a specific suggestion for a time, location, etc. please let us know. :))

Great idea to develop an *organizational diagram* -- we will do it!

Our [website](#) has a current calendar of meeting times and places.

What issues do we support?

The primary focus of LWVAZ is "Making Democracy Work". This includes all elements of election reform, especially campaign finance. But we have positions on many issues (education, health care policy, an independent judiciary, immigration, the environment . . .). They are often broadly stated for flexibility to specific cases, and may be covered in this newsletter, or evident via the action we take on a bill. See more information on our website: www.lwvmetrophoenix.org under "Action and Advocacy", left-hand side. LWVUS positions are at <http://lwv.org/content/impact-issues> and LWVAZ positions at <http://lwvaz.org/lwvaz-action-agenda/>.

How do we get started?

The answer to that questions depends on how much time you have to spend, whether you have a particular interest area you are already educated in/wanting to work on under the League "banner", and what type of task you prefer to do. To learn more about League spend some time on the LWVMP and LWVUS websites --a swiss cheese approach, as Rivko Knox says: nibbling here, nibbling there.

For direct advocacy work, you could start by:

- a) registering for RTS and responding to Action Alerts;
- b) becoming familiar with the azleg.gov website;
- c) attempting a letter to the editor.

To meet other like-minded people, attend a Community Team meeting, which may eventually lead to starting one of your own!

If you have time, you might consider:

- a) choosing an area of government for which you can be an observer, to both educate yourself and report back to others on public policy-making in that area;
- b) choosing an issue on which you would like to become more knowledgeable -- and beginning your education -- so that you can take action later in a variety of ways (writing/speaking/teaching/training).

How best to use RTS beyond thumbs up/down?

Don't think that thumbs up/down can't make a difference -- bills have been pulled because of the number of "thumbs" on one side or another! But you can also:

- a) Add comments;
- b) sign up to speak in person (though it does take a lot of time to sit in Committee meetings waiting to be heard, which then may or may not even happen);
- c) click on the bill title to see how many others have signed in, on which side, and their comments;
- d) encourage others you know to sign up!!

Best email to pitch ideas:

The best single email is infolwvmp@gmail.com. If wanting a specific person, such as President Care Lengel, go to <http://lwvmetrophoenix.org/contact.html>. There is also a process whereby new study items can be proposed, brought to the Annual Meeting (April 8) and voted on by the membership, which will be explained in a future email about the Annual Meeting. Also, Community Teams are great places to suggest new ideas.

Issues of Interest

Purging Voters from Voter Rolls Using the Crosscheck Program: Arizona Uses It, but *Should* We?

"The 1993 National Voter Registration Act mandates that state and local elections officers keep voter registration lists accurate by removing the names of people who die, move or fail in successive elections to vote. Voters who've been convicted of a felony, ruled mentally incompetent or found to be non-citizens also can also be removed . . . Local election officials clean up voting registration lists under *state* laws governing who should be removed from the lists. The U.S. Election Assistance Commission reported that 15 million names were scrubbed from the lists nationally in 2014." (*The Center for Public Integrity.org*)

States often work together or with the federal government to help in voter-list-purging. In 2014, the Presidential Commission on Election Administration recommended that states participate in an interstate compact to share voter registration information. But a number of voting rights groups are challenging the purges of voter rolls, citing data that show a disproportionate number of purged voters are young, homeless, poor, black or Latino. A description of the problems cited in various lawsuits is included in [this article from The Center For Public Integrity](#)

One system being challenged is the *Interstate Crosscheck* system, which identifies voters potentially registered to vote in more than one state using matches of first, middle and last name, plus birth date--the last four digits of a Social Security number are provided for additional verification with the caveat that it "may or may not match". 27 states now participate in this system, including Arizona. The built-in racial bias of the system is detailed in [this article in Rolling Stone](#).

The Center for American Progress Action Fund notes that the Crosscheck system "is riddled with errors"; and that it "flagged roughly 7 million names of potential double voters prior to the 2014 election, however. . . . not a single person has been convicted of double voting pursuant to Crosscheck data. This large number of false positives is due to Crosscheck not taking into account information that may disqualify a match." [See details here.](#)

The Center recommends an alternative mechanism, currently adopted by 12 states, known as the "Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC), a program developed by IBM and the Pew Charitable Trusts. Rather than just matching the voter's name and date of birth, ERIC requires an exact match across several fields, such as driver's license number or Social Security number. It also gives state election officials the opportunity to build the rolls . . . , providing lists of potentially unregistered voters as an outreach opportunity."

Education: Are School Vouchers Harmful?

Results of new research studies show that school vouchers aren't the nirvana they have been advertised to be. [A TucsonWeekly article](#) notes that "The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, a conservative, pro-school choice think tank, **published a study** in July, 2016, about Ohio's voucher program, which began in 2005. The results for the voucher students weren't good." From that report:

The students who use vouchers to attend private schools have fared worse academically compared to their closely matched peers attending public schools. The study finds negative effects that are greater in math than in English language arts. Such impacts also appear to persist over time, suggesting that the results are not driven simply by the setbacks that typically accompany any change of school.

This is not the only study. The results of eleven new studies "are startling -- the worst in their field", cited a [New York Times article](#). Writes the *TucsonWeekly*: "School choice proponents say we need vouchers to rescue students from "failing government schools," using the schools' dismal test scores to prove their point. But those same test scores appear to indicate that private schools are bigger 'failures' than the public schools the students left."

Child Welfare

"Most Arizonans likely feel all too familiar with heartbreaking stories of abused children. . . . Yet most might be surprised to learn that physical and sexual abuse are much less common than a less-visible, less-examined but similarly dangerous type of child maltreatment: neglect." See [the report on "The Neglect of Neglect"](#) from ASU's Morrison Institute for Public Policy.

Democracy

[Reports of U.S. Democracy's Death Have Been Greatly Exaggerated:](#)

Recent Protests Show That Americans Want More Government, Just Not This Government

[Is liberal democracy too limited?](#)

Did you know the average American is a woman? **Watch and be inspired:**

[Love has no labels: Patriotism: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0MdK8hBkR3s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0MdK8hBkR3s)

Humanity

What kinds of letters do Presidents get? Here's an unusual and quite poignant peek at the back side of an institution. [Here's how it was in the Obama administration.](#)

Voter Fraud

LWV often must put voter fraud in context, [as per this allegation in Ohio](#):

"Reviews of election data by Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted found 821 non-citizens have registered to vote in the state over the past five years — 126 of whom cast ballots. League of Women Voters of Ohio Executive Director Carrie Davis said the allegations should be put into the proper context."

'In November 2016, Ohio had 7,861,025 registered voters and, of those, 5,607,641 cast ballots in the November election. Husted's 385 registered amounts to 0.004898 percent of total registered voters, and his alleged 82 votes cast amount to 0.001462 percent of the 5,607,641 total votes cast in November 2016," Davis said in a written statement. She also noted that the cases have yet to be investigated by law enforcement or heard in court.'

Arizona's Clean Elections Commission, Dear to LWV's Heart [Get your basic questions about the CCEC answered here.](#)

Our trusty advocate, Rivko Knox, acts as an observer at Citizen's Clean Elections Commission (CCEC) meetings, and provides reports. They are quite detailed. If you would like all the detail, please contact Alice Stambaugh or Rivko for a copy. Tom Collins is the Executive Director of the CCEC and there are 5 commissioners.

Here are edited highlights from the February 23rd, 2017 meeting.

1. The recently-appointed new Commissioner, attorney Mary Chan, used to work for the SOS's office under Ken Bennett. She said she remembers fondly working with LWV folks in a very cooperative manner.
2. Funding of the Citizens Clean Elections Commission: As a result of the termination of tax checkoffs and tax credits, CCEC revenue has decreased from \$19 million to \$7 million a year.

Legislative Agenda. Collins said that SB1158 is going to the House; it will exclude the surcharge on court penalties--set aside to fund the CCEC--from being reduced by a judge, though other fees will be more easily subject to reduction to enable more prior offenders to regain their full rights, including voting rights.

Background: The primary sources of funds for the CCEC come from Clean Election Candidates \$5 contributions during election years, fines paid by entities that violate CCEC rules AND a statutory 10% surcharge on civil penalties and criminal fines. Up until October 2011, CCEC revenues included photo radar surcharges and until Dec. 2013 tax checks off and tax credits. However, the Legislature terminated these. Thus the CCEC is highly dependent upon surcharges/penalties. It is therefore finding itself in conflict with a new AZ Supreme Court "Fairness and Justice Project" that is attempting to reduce these surcharges, which of course weigh most heavily on those with limited incomes (and can keep some from being able to have their voting rights restored). However, recommendation to reduce surcharges could also severely impact on the ability of the CCEC to operate, although the CCEC's share of the surcharges/penalties is relatively minor. ** This may raise some real

conflicts for those who support Clean Elections and also do not want to see poor defendants burdened with high fees and penalties.)

3. Thorny Issues

a. Secretary of State's Office. The SOS has requested \$300,000 from the CCEC to help create a more modern report filing system, that they say will also cover all local governments, and that will cost about \$700,000 total. Chan said she remembered such a system being built for a web based system in 2013 and wanted to know what happened to that one and why more money was needed now. Collins said that the SOS deleted some CCEC reports from the existing system, which resulted in CCEC having to create its own reporting forms etc. and which is still being resolved with them. The 2013 one has never been fully completed. Further he said that under Governor Brewer, CCEC was 'at the table' in the design of such a system and CCEC reports were in it. Various Commissioners asked questions: if some reports are statutorily required, how could the SOS delete them? What control will CCEC have if it provides these funds? Will CCEC really use almost half the system and if not, why pay almost half the costs? What will be the "return on investment" for CCEC? And 'this sounds more like a 'supplemental' appropriation for the SOS's office.' Collins said that before any CCEC funds are spent, he will contract with an IT specialist to assess what the 'new system' might provide to CCEC and how much it is worth.

b. Governor's Regulatory Review Council (GRRC). For those keeping up, you will be aware of the very long ongoing battle between the GRRC and the CCEC. The CCEC says it is not subject to the GRRC but out of courtesy provides it with 5-year reports, which in the past (2000, 2005, 2010) have always been discussed with GRRC staff and accepted. And then came 2015, when the GRRC refused to accept the report, eventually explained why not, and then refused to accept the revisions etc. etc. Thus, two GRRC Commissioners came to this meeting to try to resolve the impasse, along with their legal counsel. At the end, I think the two parties agreed to disagree, i.e., CCEC says is it not subject to GRRC and is protected by any future laws requiring such by the Voter Projection Act, and GRRC says they are but for now, litigation will only take place if some other party sues.

c. Proposed New Rules Relating to Campaign Consultants, to Include Political Parties. You may also be aware that there was a complaint filed toward the end of last year regarding expenditures by Clean candidates to the Democratic Party for the purchase of 'services' (things like providing a list of voter rolls), which resulted in audits for such candidates and which led Representative Leach to file a bill to repeal Clean Elections -- he said he saw it as a way to 'funnel money' to a political party. During the hearing of that bill (HCR2004, currently dead), Collins said that the Commission was aware of the concern and was in the process of drafting proposed rules to address this issue. Such rules will now be put out for public comment.

