



THE VOTER



Volume 64

No. 7

March 2011

- 1** **Tuesday, 9:30am**
Eastside Unit
Federal Role in Education
Bring articles on this subject
Ward 2 Council Office
7575 E. Speedway
Call: Phylis, 885-3271
- 2** **Wednesday, 5pm**
LWVGT Board meeting
LWVGT Office
- 3** **Thursday, 11:30am**
Northwest Unit
Michelangelo's Restaurant
420 W. Magee Rd.
Call: Barbara, 825-6537
- 8** **Tuesday, 10am**
SaddleBrooke Unit
Discuss League Positions & Current Issues, Coyote Rm.,
N. SaddleBrooke Clubhouse
Call: Linda, 241-1043
- 11** **Friday, 11:30am**
Green Valley Unit
Sahuarita City Council Member
Sahuarita's Growth, Roads & Other Issues
Madera Room, La Posada
Call: Sue, 399-9763
- 19** **Saturday, 9:30am**
General Meeting
Federal Role in Public Education
Main Library, Tucson
- 26** **Saturday**
LWVAZ Board meeting
- 5** **Tuesday, 10am**
SaddleBrooke Unit
Border Patrol
Yvonne Stag, speaker
Activity Center, HOA#1
64518 Galveston Lane
Call, Linda, 241-1043
- 6** **Wednesday, 5pm**
LWVGT Board meeting
- 8** **Friday, 10:15am-2pm**
LWVGT Annual Meeting & Luncheon
Mt. Oyster Club
- 12** **Tuesday, 10am**
SaddleBrooke Unit
Discussion Meeting
Coyote Rm., N. SaddleBrooke Clubhouse
HOA #1 Clubhouse
- 15** **Friday, 11:30am**
Green Valley Unit
(Note one-time change to 3d Friday due to LWVGT Annual Meeting)
Call: Sue, 399-9763

March

April

GENERAL MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 2011

9:30 am Refreshments
10 am-noon Program Meeting
Joel Valdez Main Library
101 N. Stone Ave., Tucson, AZ

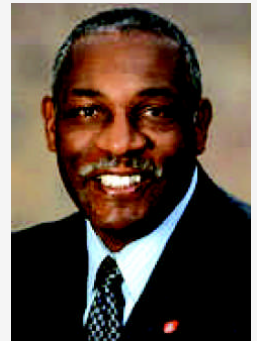
(Free parking in the Library Underground Garage with entrance off Alameda)

THE FEDERAL ROLE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

At their biennial meeting in Atlanta in June of 2010, the national League of Women Voters adopted the topic "The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education" for a two-year study. As our introduction to this important topic, the March program will address this issue.

With background on the growth of and changes in the federal government's role,

Prof. John Taylor, PhD of the University of Arizona's Department of Education will be our first presenter. **Dr. Lupita Cavazos-Garcia, Assistant Superintendent for Government Programs and Community Outreach for the Tucson Unified School District**, will give us an up-to-date view of the role of government programs in the K-12



system from the perspective of the day-to-day and fiscal year operations of the Arizona's second-largest school district.

This topic follows the February meeting's presentation on the conclusion of the LWVGT's two-year study of charter schools in the Greater Tucson area.

League members are encouraged to participate in both of these timely programs and to learn about LWVGT programs coming up.

RESERVE THE DATE FOR LWVGT ANNUAL MEETING

April 8, 2011 at the Mt. Oyster Club from 10:15am to 2pm

Get this date on your calendar and watch for the Call to Annual Meeting, including reservation forms, to be mailed to all members in early March.

President's Report

Elsewhere in this issue is a report from our recent membership survey. The Board will fold these results into its planning for next year. Many thanks go to Betsy Zukoski who created the survey questions and to Virginia Burkel and Betty Geehan who assisted with this work. Thanks also go to members who took the time to respond to the questionnaire.

I hope you will attend the LWVGT annual meeting and luncheon on Friday, April 8 at 10:15 am to 2:00 pm. Watch for a special March mailing that will give details on this important event at the Mountain Oyster Club, 6400 E. El Dorado Circle.

A message from our national president Elisabeth MacNamara emphasizes the need for us to practice civility in all that we do. We must begin added training for moderators of forums. The rancorous 2010 elections were difficult for LWV because we believe that a lack of decorum threatens our democracy. What can we do to encourage listening even when we don't agree? A group of members is meeting and will make some recommendations at the March 2 Board meeting.

The state LWV is a part of an Arizona Competitive Districts Coalition (ACDC) which is engaged in educating the public on the importance of competitive congressional and legislative districts to the democratic process. For more information see the article on redistricting in this Voter. I hope you will contribute to this important work.

Carol West, LWVGT President



RUNNING AND WINNING VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

I need some **help from a few of you!** After a successful **Running and Winning** Workshop at Cienega High School, the “pros” on the Steering Committee have arrived at some ways to change and emphasize our goals for the future. We will meet again on Tuesday, March 15, 2011, 1:00 pm at Martha Cooper Library. We meet once a month.

The **HELP** that I need (and I may call a few of you if no volunteers call me) would be related to 4-6 days of work in the **communications with “Elected and Campaigning Women”** as a day of work each in April, August, September, and October. Lu Kembel and Marion Pickens are great in working with this also. And **there is a small job of keeping our “sub-budget” of the Education Fund up to date and communicating with contributors and the Steering Committee.** This is such a great project that I know there are a few of you who will want to join with us. Please call me at 574-8295 (home) or 465-1785 (cell)

Shirley Sandelands, Co-Chair Running and Winning

The LWVGT VOTER is published monthly August through April, with a combined December/January issue. Maria Moreno, Nuvoprint, Inc., is the designer. For information contact any member of the VOTER Editorial Board, Betty Bengtson (bbengtson@earthlink.net or 219-3507), Gini McGirr (ginilwv@aol.com or 579-2138) or Betsy Zukoski (czukoski@earthlink.net or 299-6312).

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

The deadline has passed for the filing of bills. There were 640 bills filed the Friday before the deadline in the House along with 37 concurrent resolutions which are the bills that can end up on the ballot. There were 608 bills and 68 resolutions filed in the Senate.

A total of 97 education bills had been filed at the end of January. Enrollment figures show drop but link to immigration law is unclear. One bill is for schools to send information to Dept. of Education on students who cannot prove lawful presence in the country. HB2222 gives unlimited tax credits and taxpayers will receive dollar for dollar credit on their income tax form for contributions to student tuition organizations.

Another note on education, a judge has set the deadline of March 10th to file briefs for the next step in the decades old court fight over adequacy of state instruction of students learning English language which was originally filed in 1992 on behalf of children and parents in the Nogales school district. Court cases can REALLY drag on.

Clean Elections: A bill has been filed to repeal this Act. SCR 1025 was heard in the Senate Judiciary Committee on February 7th, at which time the bill passed on vote of 6-2. Members were asked to write or call the committee members to vote No on this bill. The LWVAZ lobbyists gave testimony on this bill. If this continues to pass through the committees and floor votes, it will end up on the 2012 ballot. So watch for Action Alerts and be ready to contact your legislators. There are several bills to amend the Act.

Merit Selection/Judicial: HCR2016 is the same old bill to change the population threshold from 250,000 to 500,000. This comes up every year and hopefully it will not pass again this year. Also HCR 2020 would let the governor appoint anyone as a judge instead of using a list submitted by a commission. All appointments would be confirmed by the senate.

Firearms: There are an abundance of these this year as usual. Bills to let guns be carried on colleges and universities; having guns in a game refuge; Universities and colleges cannot prohibit the possession of a concealed weapon by person with concealed weapon permit. There is one bill S1201 Firearms Omnibus that takes care of just about everything.

Environmental: We are watching eight bills on land or water issues.

Social Services: There are five bills pertaining to abortion. One is a class 3 felony if abortion performed on basis of sex or race selection. Another one prohibits public funds for this procedure. On Health issues, there are several bills for transplant surgery funding.

Immigration: S1309 Arizona Citizenship bill was heard in Judiciary committee on Feb. 7th and was Held. S1308 is Birth Certificates, Citizenship, interstate compact. This is compact with other states on what is citizenship. This was heard and Held in the same committee. Pres. Pearce will probably send them to a more friendly committee to get the bills out.

Arizona Legislative Information Service (ALIS): For those of you who want to monitor the bills that the League is supporting/opposing/watching, here is what you do. Go to the Arizona Legislative website at www.azleg.gov

1. In the middle of page, click on ALIS Tracking; below that, click on Track
2. User ID is LWVAZ; Password is Lila. (This is case-sensitive; you must key "LWVAZ" and "Lila" with caps as indicated.)
3. This goes to the LWVAZ page. It usually has Alerts to click on if any of the bills are in committees, on the floor, etc.
4. On the top middle of the page, click on PERSONAL PROGRESS. Page comes up with the 5 lists of bills that we are tracking: Clean Elections/Judicial; Election Reform, Education, Social Policy, Environmental.
6. Click on any one and the bills entered will show up. Click on Print Progress Report on bottom of page to read them. It does not print them. It shows the Overview of them as to where they are in committees.

On The Home Page

1. If you know the number of the bill that you want to read, you can put it in the blank space on top of the page and hit enter.
2. You can find Standing Committee members and the Committee agendas.
3. You can find the Floor calendars to see what bills are up that day. Check both the House and Senate floor calendars. You can see the names, phone numbers, rooms, emails of the House and Senate legislators.

Gini McGirr, Government Chair

LWVAZ EXECUTIVE BRANCH STUDY UPDATE

Several years ago at the state convention in Tucson, delegates voted to do a study on the Structure of the Executive Branch of State Government. Due to the chair person resigning, the study did not get off and running until this past year.

This study pertains to the Lieutenant Governor/Secretary of State position. There is now background information available from the State League and consensus questions for the study. So there will be a LWVGT general meeting and consensus on this in the fall.

Gini McGirr, LWVAZ Secretary and LWVGT Legislative Chair

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *Political Yet Nonpartisan After 90 Years*

At the inaugural meeting of the League of Women Voters in 1920, Carrie Chapman Catt stated:

“In the League of Women Voters we have an anomaly: We are going to be a semi-political body. We want political things; we want legislation; we are going to educate for citizenship. In that body we have got to be nonpartisan and all partisan. Democrats from Alabama and Republicans from New Hampshire must work together for the same things.”

In their wisdom, the leaders of the League established a base of durable principles and guidelines that have stood the League in good stead for 90 years, earning the respect of the public and the political arena alike. Our founding mothers understood the need for our organization to be nonpartisan. The nonpartisan policy has added strength to the League's positions on issues, made possible wide acceptance of our services to voters and given our organization enduring credibility.

In this time of hyper-partisanship, an organization that rises above the fray is desperately needed to facilitate civil discourse and respect for the opinions of others. Without this, our democracy will not only cease to thrive, it possibly may crash and burn.

We must be extremely careful to sustain our image of nonpartisanship. The general public and elected officials need to be reminded that the League is nonpartisan and what that means. While individuals members are encouraged to participate fully in the party of their choice, state and local League board members who are visible in the community abstain from political involvement. If we are seen as partisan it will diminish our strength.

Gini McGirr, Legislative Chair

2011 CITIZEN'S DIRECTORY AVAILABLE

The 2011 LWVGT *Citizen's Directory of Elected Officials* is now available. A copy will be mailed to each LWVGT member with the Call to Annual Meeting in early March. Copies for distribution are available at the LWVGT Office. Call 327-7652 for more information.

Many thanks go to **Sue DeArmond and Betsy Zukoski** for researching the updated information and editing the *Directory* and to **Tucson Electric Power** for again paying for the printing.

Carol West, LWVGT President



Mission Statement

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

REDISTRICTING IS IN THE NEWS

The U.S. census is taken every ten years. Among other things, the census determines the shifts in population and accomplishes reapportionment of legislative and congressional districts. For example, there are 435 members of the U.S. House of Representatives. The census helps determine which states have grown in population to require additional representation, while other states that lost people lose some seats. In the latest census Arizona gained an additional seat which will be in the Maricopa/Pinal County area.

In 2000 the Arizona League of Women Voters and the Valley Citizens League sponsored a successful ballot initiative that amended the Arizona Constitution "to end gerrymandering and create an independent commission of balanced appointments to oversee the mapping of fair and competitive congressional and legislative districts." The voters passed this later that year. There were lawsuits on this which lasted years.

Every ten years a new redistricting commission is formed to redraw the legislative and congressional districts. There were 79 applicants for the commission. The Commission on Appellate Court appointments reviews and selects the finalists who are then forwarded to the Speaker of the House, the President of the Senate, and the two Democratic Party legislative minority leaders. Each has one appointment, and no more than two can be from the same county. **As of the printing of this Voter, there have been three appointments to the Commission: Scott Freeman, Republican from Phoenix; Jose Manuel Herrera, Democrat from Phoenix; and Richard Stertz, Republican from Tucson.** The commission itself selects a registered independent voter from the finalists as chair.

The commission can only use census data, and all congressional districts must have an equal number of people. The Voting Rights Act requires that there be the same number of minority districts as Arizona previously had. Lines drawn for new districts must be scrutinized and pre-cleared by the U. S. Department of Justice. Districts must be compact and contiguous, and the commission must respect city, county, and town boundaries as well as mountain ranges, rivers, and physical barriers. A U.S. Supreme Court decision requires that people with "similar interests must be together."

The LWVAZ has joined the Arizona Competitive Districts Coalition (ACDC) with AARP, Arizona Advocacy Network (AzAN), League of Conservation Voters, Teachers Union and other groups. The mission "is to educate the public in Arizona about the importance of competitive congressional and legislative districts to the democratic process. To give interested individuals, groups and partners the tools needed to communicate to the Redistricting Commission about the need for competitive districts."

The ACDC will sponsor a public contest for creating competitive districts. A web-based mapping tool called 'Redistrict America' is being developed specifically for AZ. This is a user-friendly tool and will allow citizens to compete in preparing maps that do the best job of meeting all six of the criteria. The contest is to draw maps that can be presented to the Commission. If you would like to help fund this unique mapping tool, please write your check in the name of LWVAZ Education Fund and mail to the LWV/AZ office at 4423 N 24th St., Suite 500, Phoenix, AZ 85016. Please mark 'Redistricting' on the info line on the check.

The LWVAZ has a proud history on this important issue, and we hope that you will participate both as a watchdog and a "mapper" so that more of our legislative and congressional districts are truly competitive. **For more information on the 2000 proposition, go to the Citizen Independent Redistricting www.azredistricting.org where you will find the proposition, the mission, the maps being used now and more information on the Commission itself.**

Carol West, LWVGT President and Gini McGirr, Legislative Chair



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LWVUS: www.lwv.org
LWVGT: www.lwwgt.org

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY RESULTS

This is an overview of the outcomes of the membership survey which we presented to League members in September in an effort to reconnect with membership perceptions of the organization, what they value, why they joined, how they participate and their views on whether the LWVGT has lived up to their expectations. We also sought their ideas for improvement.

Twenty-eight forms were returned which at the time of the count comes to 11.5% considered to be a satisfactory response. The many enthusiastic written answers reflected that members took time to think about and make positive comments regarding their League experiences, as well as suggestions that could help us better fulfill the League mission and goals.

Member reasons for joining primarily highlighted the desire to meet and learn about government with intelligent and motivated women and men. There was satisfaction that 22 of 24 answers declared that their expectations were fulfilled with emphasis on the forming of lasting friendships. There was a request for more diversity in age and background, more field trips and a suggestion that we study more "hot button" issues and also that care be taken to be unbiased when we inform and critique issues.

The fact that 13 members read *The Voter* in hand and 14 on line may bear some scrutiny. All 27 readers were pleased with the content. Suggestions for improvement included a desire to see more recognition of the many volunteers who fulfill the variety of needs that it takes to keep the League alive and active. More board profiles, national information and website information to follow up on topics the League is dealing with were requested.

Voter service fulfills many Leaguers' desires to learn and be a part of the League efforts to encourage citizen participation in their government. Members both attend and participate in forums, voter registration, ballot proposition distribution and make up, and speakers bureau. Suggestions for further activity included more activity in off election years, more visibility at community events and more press releases.

Monthly information and unit meetings are popular with the responders and many attend holiday parties and the Annual Meetings. Some attended the more specialized meetings in 2010. NOBODY responded to the suggestion of ideas for time or location of meetings.

Fourteen were in favor of Action, 2 were unsure and 2 said no, one primarily because we must be extremely careful that action only be taken by very well informed members. In the interest of promoting membership recruitment, it was suggested that the League might be wise to remain neutral on some extremely controversial issues. Other ideas included a need for more PR on national positions and more public meetings on local positions.

Areas suggested for action were environment, health care, social positions and education.

Under further comments there was praise for Running and Winning, an urge to involve more youth and a lament that too few are carrying the burden of all the work required to run the League.

Many thanks to members who responded to the survey. This survey was for informational purposes for members and the Board who will review it at the yearly local planning meeting.

Betsy Zukoski, Communications Chair

NEWS ON THE NATIONAL LWV FRONT

PRIVATIZATION OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES STUDY COMMITTEE: The committee members have been selected from members across the country and will be doing the research and defining the scope of the study. Finalization of the scope is anticipated by June 2011.

ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN EDUCATION: The committee members have been selected for this study and material is being researched. (This will be the Greater Tucson general meeting program in March. See page 1)

LWVUS LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2011: The national Board made the decisions on what issues are likely to come before the 112th Congress, the opportunities to make an impact, program decisions made at the 2010 Convention, member interest and resources available to manage these priorities effectively. **The Board adopted the following Legislative Priorities for 2011: Clean Air Defense; Health Care Defense; Money in Elections (campaign finance reform); and Voter Registration and Election Administration. The Legislative Watch List is: CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women); Climate Change; Ethics; Immigration; and Safe Drilling and Mining ("Fracking").** *The Watch List means that if an opportunity arises on these issues and does not interfere with action on an advocacy priority, the LWVUS may take action if it appears we can make an impact.*

LWV FILES AMICUS BRIEF: In an *amicus brief*, the national League asked the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals not to grant *en banc* review of a previous decision invalidating the Arizona proof-of-citizenship requirement for voter registration.

LWVAZ FILES AMICUS BRIEF: The Arizona League has signed on to the Arizona's Clean Elections program in the *McComish v. Bennett* litigation currently before the U.S. Supreme Court.

PROTECT PUBLIC FINANCING SYSTEM: The League fought against efforts last month to eliminate the public financing system for presidential elections. Although the House voted in favor of repeal, prospects in the Senate are a bit better. The League spoke out in a letter to the House, joined a coalition letter and is urging members and citizens to take action in opposing the elimination of this system.

ELECTIONS: Voter photo identification bills have been introduced around the country in states like CO, CT, IA, MS, NE, TN, KS, MN, MO, SC, TX, VA and WI. The League's Public Advocacy for Voter Protection (PAVP) project is working with several of these states to fight such legislation. For some states, this is the first time the bills have a reasonable chance of passing, due to changed government composition in the post-2010 elections period. It is important to remember that even with unfriendly legislatures and/or governors, such bills have been defeated in the past.

HONORED WOMEN IN 112TH CONGRESS: The LWV and Rachel's Network sponsored a swearing in reception to honor the women of the U.S. House of Representatives of the 112th Congress on January 5th.

ARIZONA MEMBER IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Karen Michael, LWV Metro Phoenix, was on the front of the last *League E-Voice* with a great picture and article on her activities while living in Minnesota and Phoenix. You can go in to the national website www.lwv.org and find this article.

Gini McGirr, Government Chair



MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

The **LWVAZ Convention will be held May 21-22, 2011** at the Windmill Inn, Surprise, AZ.
More information will be forthcoming next month.

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OF GREATER TUCSON**
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DID YOU KNOW?

(This continuing column will be on excerpts from "LWV Through the Decades", written by former president Kay Maxwell)

Early History: From the spirit of the suffrage movement and the shock of the First World War, there came a great idea that a nonpartisan civic organization could provide the education and experience the public needed to assure the success of democracy. The League of Women Voters was founded on that idea.

In her address to the National American Women Suffrage Association's (NAWSA) 50th convention in St. Louis, MO, in 1919, President Carrie Chapman Catt proposed the creation of a league of women voters to "finish the fight" and aid in reconstruction of the nation. And so the League of Women Voters was formed within NAWSA, composed of organizations in the state where woman suffrage had already been attained.

The next year, on February 14, 1920, six months before the 19th amendment to the Constitution was ratified the League was formally organized in Chicago as the National League of Women Voters. Catt described the purpose: *"The League of Women Voters is not to dissolve any present organization but to unite all existing organizations of women who believe in its principles. It is not to lure women from partisanship but to combine them in an effort for legislation which will protect coming movements, which we cannot even foretell, from suffering the untoward conditions which have hindered for so long the coming of equal suffrage. Are the women of the United States big enough to see their opportunity?"*

Maud Wood Park became the first national president and had steered the women's suffrage amendment through Congress in the last two years before ratification. From the beginning, League took action on stands through lobbying and got selected issues included in the platforms of both major political parties. Many procedural changes have been made in the way program is defined and adopted, but all the changes in the basic concept of study-member agreement-action has remained constant.

The League is political, but non-partisan. It never supports political parties or candidates, but it does study issues, develop consensus positions and then works to support those positions. As Carrie Chapman Catt noted in 1919, *"Is the League political? Certainly, but not partisan. Its members are free as other women to join and vote with the party of their choice. They make no pledge otherwise in joining the League."*

Gini McGirr, Legislative Chair