



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
GREATER VERDE VALLEY

## *The VoteR*

**League of Women Voters Greater Verde Valley**

***[www.lwvsedona-verdevalley.org](http://www.lwvsedona-verdevalley.org)***

**P. O. Box 966 Sedona, AZ 86339**

## ***September 2012***

***NEEDED: HELP WITH MEDIA RELATIONS FOR VOTER SERVICE***

***LWVGVV BOARD MEETINGS RESUME SEPT. 20<sup>TH</sup> – JOIN US!***



### **President's Message**

America Votes -2012: October 3, 2012 -- America Listens

Today is the 6<sup>th</sup> of September and the last day of candidate selection for the President and Vice President for the upcoming 4-year cycle.

At the end of October, 2011, the Commission on Presidential Debates – the non-partisan, non –profit organization that has sponsored these debates since 1988 – selected the University of Denver as a debate host, making DU the first university in Colorado and the Rocky Mountain Region to host a presidential debate. The

University's Chancellor, Robert Coombe, has been informed that since this is the first debate of the series, one that involves a sitting president and is taking place at a critical time for world and national affairs, the DU debate may be one of the "highest-rated television programs in all of 2012, approaching the numbers of the Super Bowl".

WOW!! My BFA alma mater and later my teaching place!!! I just knew DU had it in itself to pull this off.

Just imagine the on-campus media frenzy before, during and after this first debate!! DU is a handsome campus, a blend of old and new structures and wonderful outdoor spaces and places. It's easy for me to picture media people and all the others scurrying about on October 3, particularly during the "DebateFest" an outdoor 'watch party' with live music, voter registration and live debate-viewing on giant outdoor screens. This is all free, but one does need a ticket. 'Issues Alley' will be a walk way of tents and tables devoted to organizations championing many issues, PLUS a food truck rally (yumee!)

And in best university tradition, the lectures and other events are broad enough to touch many interests, for example, "Science and Antiscience in the U.S. Elections" (Shawn Otto) and chief Washington correspondent for *The New York Times*, David Sanger on his latest book "An Age of Reckoning: Obama's Surprising Use of American Power".

The presidential debate begins at 7PM on most major networks.

*Ellie Bauer*

## Voter Service

Our league provided primary election candidate forums for Congressional Districts 1 and 4, State Legislative District 6, and Yavapai County District 2 Commissioner. All were broadcast by Yavapai Broadcasting and are still available on You Tube. The links are on the home page of our website [www.lwvsedona-verdevalley.org](http://www.lwvsedona-verdevalley.org).

Many thanks to the hardworking League members who arranged and worked at putting on these forums. Robyn Prud'homme-Bauer, Mary Chicoine, and Liz Danbury moderated, Ruth and Richard Kiessel took turns timekeeping and helped Ellie Bauer and Mary Gassaway sort questions. Ryan Nichols of Yavapai Broadcasting deserves a lot of credit and a big thank you for his work in taping and broadcasting all four of the forums.

On August 30<sup>th</sup> – just two days after the primary election – our Voter Service stalwarts met again to work out plans for the general election forums. We will plan to have forums for Arizona LD6 (House and Senate), US CD 4 and 1, and County Supervisor District 2. We will now be working on finding locations and dates and then, after that, working with the candidates. Once the details are complete, they will be publicized to the membership and the public.

## **Urgent Request for Media Relations Person!**

Arrangements are under way for forums for the upcoming elections. Recent Primary Election forums were televised by Yavapai Broadcasting and we hope to have general election forums televised as well. As more and more information is being conveyed and received through electronic means, LWVGVV needs to become more media savvy. If any member would like to help with publicizing, promoting, and arranging media for voter services activities, please contact Ruth Kiessel.

## **Spread the News about the NEW! VOTE411.ORG**



Check out the revamped [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org) website and tell your friends about this easy way to find out how and where to vote, when the next election takes place, and much, much more. This is a nationwide data base; you just plug in your zip code, select the topic you want to know about, and it's all there.

## **Voter Registration**

The League of Women Voters of the United States has joined more than 100 sponsors in "National Voter Registration Day," which takes place on September 25<sup>th</sup>. Go to [www.nationalvoterregistrationday.org](http://www.nationalvoterregistrationday.org) for more information. We still need volunteers to help us with voter registration during the critical upcoming weeks. Please contact Evie Rowland if you can help. It's important.

## **Further Clarification About Use of Federal Voter Registration Forms**

The following information was received from Gini McGirr at LWVAZ on August 20<sup>th</sup>:

### **Judge Orders AZ to Accept Voter Registration Federal Forms**

In back-to-back decisions, court orders have mandated the State of Arizona to accept voter registrations on the 'federal form' which does not require proof of citizenship. (Proof of citizenship to register was established under recent Arizona law.) The forms must be accepted for registration to vote in any LOCAL, STATE or NATIONAL election.

Additionally, Judge Roslyn Silver has given state and county election officials until the end of the month to comply with this order and make these alternate forms readily available (as other the state forms are, including on websites). Specifically, the judge stated that the state and counties "*shall ensure widespread distribution of the federal form through all reasonable channels.*"

This does NOT change the requirements to be registered to vote in ANY WAY. Registrants still need to meet all requirements and certify (by their signatures) that they do meet them. (It is a class 6 felony to falsely claim qualification.) In addition, it does NOT change the need to show ID at the polls when voting.

## Member Information

**New Board Member:** Long-time League member and Sedona resident Marian Sjostrom has stepped up to fill the vacant position of Secretary on the LWVGVV Board. Since this is also an Executive Committee position, it is especially important that it has now been filled. Welcome, Marian, and THANK YOU!

(Marian has kindly agreed to tell us a little more about herself, and here is what she has to say –

Hi Leaguers,

I am very happy to be on the Board of the LWV. I trust I will serve you well.

I have been a resident of Sedona for 18 years (since June 1, 1994). Phyllis Latch introduced me to the League and I became a member. I have probably been a member most of that time. As you can see from the Membership Directory I was President for a few months in 1996. Right now I don't remember why it was only a few months -- other than I was probably in way over my head... Luckily Lil Biechschmidt completed my year. I have 3 children and 3 grandchildren. My second husband, Tom McCready, passed away December 13, 2004. We moved to Sedona from Torrance, CA. Good move for us. After he passed away I decided I wanted to stay in Sedona rather than move back to Southern California to be near my daughters and grandchildren. It was a good decision for me. I was President of NAWBO (National Association of Women Business Owners) 2010-2011. I own 2 businesses -- one is Juice Plus, whole food in capsule. We also have a Tower Garden which is vertical gardening which uses 90% less water than an ordinary garden. The other is Communication Matterz -- I have written 7 books on better communication and teach workshops whenever I can. I will be teaching at OLLI this semester. Thank you to Southwest Airlines I have been able to visit my grandchildren in California about every 2 months for a reasonable amount of money. Yea!!! They really know who grandma is.

## **Monthly Meetings of LWVGVV Board of Directors Resume September 20<sup>th</sup>.**

The Board of Directors will resume meeting monthly following the summer hiatus. This year, board meetings will take place on the third Thursday of the month at the Sedona Shadows Clubhouse from 1:00-3:00 pm. All members are invited and encouraged to attend board meetings. The Sedona Shadows community is located at 6770 W. SR89A (next to Sedona Pines resort between Sedona and Page Springs). After you make the left turn into Sedona Shadows, follow the signs to the office and the meeting rooms are behind the swimming pool.

**Membership Renewal/Membership Form:** Please use the attached membership form if you still need to renew your membership for 2012-2013. If you are already paid up, you can use it to recruit a new member!

## From the League of Women Voters of Arizona

**"League opposes the "Top 2" measure but has found it hard to get our message out."**

The State League has researched the issue of the Top 2 (open primary) initiative and after much discussion agreed to oppose it. Our stance has nothing to do with partisan behavior, but with our understanding of the problems presented by Top 2 and the fact that there are other, better solutions. However, journalists and print media consistently say any opposition to Top 2 is all about protecting parties. We tried to respond to an article by Laurie Roberts that said exactly that. This letter is included below. The paper would not print this rebuttal to Ms. Roberts and instead printed another of her articles saying the same thing the next week!

Of course, if the LWV had money to do so, we could get our opinions in print more readily. Nevertheless, we can try to get our own message out via electronic avenues. Please share this rebuttal to Ms. Roberts to anyone who might ask you 'why did the League oppose Top 2?'

Dr. Barbara Klein  
President, LWV Arizona

**League's Rebuttal Letter:**  
August 15, 2012

Laurie Roberts is often cited by our members as 'tough but fair' (a high compliment). Her article "Politicians Want Voters' Hands Off Their Partisan Primaries" (August 14, 2012) is an exception. So, why is it unfair?

First, because Ms. Roberts insinuates that the Top 2 initiative is power to the people. It is not. Second, she seems to claim that the only reason one could oppose Top 2 is for partisan, 'protect-the-party' reasons. It is not.

The League of Women Voters of Arizona opposes the initiative because a change to the election system should not be better for some and worse for many others. Our group believes that aside from equality in getting ON the ballot for general elections (which should be corrected by other means), Independents can ALREADY vote in the primaries. Top-2 offers little improvements and is worse for many. It is worse for Independents (such as myself) who will never see another Independent on the general ballot, unless they are incredibly wealthy. It is worse for the major parties (depending on the district) and it is devastating to minor parties.

But worse yet is that it offers much less voter choice for a general election. Do we really want 2 Republicans or 2 Democrats as the only choice on a November ballot?

It limits choice and will hurt voter turnout. A little better for some, much worse for others.

Neither historically nor now has the League had a position, or interest, in protecting parties or their funding sources. We do understand the constitutional "right of association," and respect that right. However, we have no dog in that fight. Not all who oppose this measure are protecting the party. Like other organizations which work for election change, we know the pit-falls of this one.

We do have positions that support BETTER SOLUTIONS, and are dismayed that the Top-2 backers chose the one change that disenfranchises voters. We don't dismiss their goals, or the concerns of Ms. Roberts (we might even share some of them), but election change should not be (questionably) better for some and worse for others. It should be fair and better for all.

Ms. Roberts is claiming that Top 2 is on some superior high-road. It is not.

Barbara Klein  
President, LWV of Arizona

## [League of Women Voters of the United States](#)

### **Campaign Finance: Update and Clarification of League's Stand on a Constitutional Amendment:**

In her August 30<sup>th</sup> Leader's Update, LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara cautioned League members about advocacy concerning State and Federal legislative proposals seeking to amend the Constitution in order to correct the adverse effects of the Supreme Court's decision in Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission. The League is operating under a resolution adopted by our national convention last June that calls for "advocating strongly for any and all measures, including but not limited to a constitutional amendment." The resolution also requires, of course, that the measures that the Board supports be consistent with existing League positions. This has become an incredibly complex issue for the League, since the Campaign Finance Task Force and the LWVUS Board have studied 14 U.S. Congressional resolutions on this matter and have not found any of them to be consistent with League positions on campaign finance reform and individual liberties. There are also movements in the states asking various state legislatures to pass resolutions calling upon Congress to submit a constitutional amendment to the states for ratification.

For the time being, the LWVUS Board has concluded that existing proposals "illustrate the complexity of the issue, the risk of unintended consequences, and the difficulty of crafting precise language in the form of a constitutional amendment."

The LWVUS Board has not endorsed those efforts and until such time as it does, state and local Leagues should not advocate for these resolutions. State and local Leagues are advised to seek guidance from LWVUS (our local League would work through the LWVAZ) before embarking on any advocacy on this issue. As always,

League members may, and are encouraged to, discuss and speak up on issues as individuals as long as they do not appear to be voicing views of the LWV.

The full analysis of proposed amendments is well worth reading; it can be found on the LWVUS website at: <http://www.lwv.org/content/review-constitutional-amendments-proposed-response-citizens-united>

LWVSVV CALENDAR	2012-2013
Date	Event
September 20 <sup>th</sup> , Thursday 1:00-3:00pm	Meeting of LWVGVV Board of Directors  Sedona Shadows Clubhouse - 6770 W. State Route 89A
November 6 <sup>th</sup> , Tuesday	General Election Day

**Tech Support: If you have trouble viewing this newsletter, please see below and find it online at [www.lwvsedona-verdevalley.org](http://www.lwvsedona-verdevalley.org). OR call Kathy Heidepriem; we can send you a printed copy.**



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

**League of Women Voters Greater Verde Valley Board Members 2012-2013**

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Marian Sjostrom, Sedona  
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Off-Board  
Evie Rowland  
Voter Registration

Off-Board  
Mary Gassaway  
Voter Service