

.Update on activities, events, and plans for the League of Women Voters Greater Verde Valley



# The Voter

League of Women Voters  
Greater Verde Valley  
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FEBRUARY 2016

## President's Letter


Dear League Members,

This newsletter summarizes our activities this month and the involvement of many members and friends of the League. You can read more details about each activity in the newsletter below.

From January 16 through February 20 our Voter Registration Team set up shop in 18 locations in Sedona, VOC, Cottonwood and Clarkdale, and registered approximately 150 new voters and gave

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ELECTION INFORMATION YOU NEED

forms to be filled out to approximately 100 more. Our next registration drive will be after the Presidential Preference Election on March 22 and will continue through April 15 with special emphasis on registering to be able to vote in the special May 17 election on the Education Proposition 123.

We launched the Sedona Civics Challenge on February 11 and 18 with great success and a lot of fun by everyone who participated. Our January and February Programs on "Dark Money" and "Education in Arizona" respectively were successful and informative about important issues we need to know about for the May and November elections.

The Political Book Club is up and running and it's even possible to start another group if enough people are interested. Ten is the maximum number that allows everyone a chance to participate.

And our membership is growing - a special welcome to new members...and strong encouragement to find a project and get involved. You'll meet terrific people and know you are making a difference in a very important election year. New members and prospective members are invited to a special gathering on March 7. More details are in the newsletter below.

Happy Spring....let it signify great blossoming of our League in the Verde Valley!

Barbara Litrell  
[blitrell@aol.com](mailto:blitrell@aol.com)

### **League Orientation and Member Meeting Set for Monday, March 7th**

League President Barbara Litrell will be hosting a second orientation meeting for new members and for people who may have an interest in joining the League. Current and former members are welcome as well. Our League is growing and our goal is to add 25 new members before the end of our fiscal year in July 2016. The meeting will include a light supper, a presentation about the League and all that it offers to members, and an opportunity to sign up for one of our teams. It's a great opportunity to learn why members like being part of the League and to share your ideas for making our projects successful and more fun for



LWGVV President  
Barbara Litrell

Vice President  
Robyn Prudhomme-Bauer

Treasurer-Secretary  
Mary Gassaway

Directors  
Kathy Davis  
Janet Kissinger



**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

League Board

**Third Thursday**

everyone.

Happening on March 7th, 5:00-7:00 p.m. RSVP's to Barbara at blitrell@aol.com or call her at 639-0135.

**Members: Please let your friends know about this opportunity to join a great organization!**

### **Prison Reform is the Topic of March Forum on Critical Arizona Election Issues... Don't Miss it**

The third program of our series "Critical 2016 Election Issues" will take place on Monday, March 21, and will feature Dr. David Wells of Arizona State University. His topic will be "Prison Crisis: Why is Arizona in the Top 10 States for Incarceration?" This series is open to the public and free of charge.

In 2002, Arizona spent 40% more on higher education than it did on prisons. Today we spend ALMOST 60% MORE on incarceration than on higher education! Private prison contracts lock the state into 20-year occupancy agreements. The state guarantees to nearly fill the facility or pay as if it were nearly full. Meanwhile, states like New York have half the incarceration rate of Arizona and have cut crime rates at the same time. Arizona needs to rethink its priorities to focus more on alternatives and transition services aimed to reduce recidivism, especially for nonviolent offenders and drug-induced crime.

This series is presented through a collaboration of the League of Women Voters Greater Verde Valley and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. The March 21 presentation will take place from 9:00-10:30am at Yavapai College Sedona, Rm 34 -- and again in the afternoon from Noon-1:30pm at Yavapai College Clarkdale, Rm G106.

Future meetings will take place on April 18th, May 16th, June 20th, July 18th, August 15th, September 19th, and October 17th.

### **State League News: Be Informed Before Voting on Proposition 123 - State Funding of Education**

The League of Women Voters of Arizona believes that this is a

**Yavapai County  
Offices, Cottonwood  
2:00-4:00 p.m.  
(call to confirm if  
you plan to attend)**

**March 5, 2016**

**Book Club  
RSVP B. Litrell  
If you are  
interested**

**March 7, 2016**

**Member/New  
Member Meeting  
5:00-7:00 pm  
RSVP B. Litrell**

**March 8**

**Special Recall  
Election,  
Camp Verde**

**March 21**

**"Critical Election  
Issues 2016 -  
Prison Reform"**

**Sedona Campus  
Yavapai College  
9:00-10:30 a.m.**

**Clarkdale Campus  
Yavapai College  
noon-1:30pm**

**March 22**

**Presidential  
Preference  
Election**

**April 18**

**"Critical Election  
Issues, Public**

critically important election addressing the funding of public education today and in the future. It includes a provision requiring a change in the Arizona Constitution regarding the State Lands Trust - We urge you to become informed and exercise your voice by voting in the May 17th Special Election.

The League has been working hard to analyze and explain the background, the content, and the possible consequences of passing or not passing this legislation. A detailed background paper can be found at [www.lwvaz.org](http://www.lwvaz.org) and also will be posed on our league's website at [www.lwvverdevalley.com](http://www.lwvverdevalley.com) Be sure to read it.

### **Sedona Civics Challenge**

The Sedona Civics Challenge wrapped up on February 18th, when the winners were declared and we celebrated the League's 96th Anniversary. It was put together by League member Barbara Litrell, Andrea Houchard of NAU's "Philosophy in the Public Interest," and Paul Friedman, of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. They assembled a total of 75 questions involving Federal, State, and Local Government for the quiz show, which took place over two nights in Sedona. There were eight teams at the beginning of the competition; in the end, the City of Sedona team outdid the team from Sedona Red Rock High School in the final round. Special thanks to Rotary Club of Sedona, Rotary Club of Sedona Red Rocks, Great Decisions, Sedona/Verde Valley Secular Freethinkers, 2 Wild Card Teams from audience members, Sedona Red Rock High School, and the City of Sedona. Special congrats to the City of Sedona team and the students and teacher from Red Rock High School.

### **Critical Issues: Dr. Rosemary Papa on the State of Education in Arizona - "Ground Zero is NOT the Goal"**

Dr. Rosemary Papa delivered a powerful presentation on the status of education in our state on February 15<sup>th</sup>, at a forum presented by the League of Women Voters Greater Verde Valley and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.

According to Dr. Papa, "High quality public education is the key to success and the right of all children in Arizona. Your vote matters to your children, and to your children's children to preserve democracy and positive civic behavior in our country. Raise

### **Lands"**

**9:00am Sedona**

**12:00 noon Clarkdale**

### **May 17**

**Special Election**

**Proposition 123**

**AZ Education**

**Financing**

### **May-June**

**LWVGVV Annual**

**Meeting, Elections**

### **August 30**

**Primary Elections**

### **November 8th**

**General Elections**

**National**

**State**

**County**

**Municipal**

**Ballot Issues**



**The League of**

questions of candidates as to their stand on education and study the ballot issues with respect to education. ***Be informed and then vote.***"

Just a few of the issues that she addressed were the performance of Arizona students; teacher pay; the effects of school privatization on the public school system; the funding of public schools; tax credits and school vouchers – and more. She cited bills in the Arizona legislature having to do with funding, admissions policies, curriculum, standardized testing – and more. All of this has a weighty impact on the success of public school education in Arizona.

If you would like to listen to an interview with Rosemary about this important issue, click on

<http://verdevalleyindependentdemocrats.org/2016/02/08/rosemary-papa-interview-podcast-february-8-2016/>

One of the key issues in the 2016 Arizona state elections will be the direction and funding of education in our state. From the special ballot measure election in May to the candidates who are elected to the Legislature in the August Primaries and the November General Election, the philosophy of public education and the resulting policies and priorities will chart the future course of education in Arizona.

### **Voter Services and Elections**

The League of Women Voters Greater Verde Valley has put together an active program of registering voters, information forums on critical issues facing Arizona, and candidate forums.

These efforts will continue until the fall elections are over. The goal is to provide opportunities for voters to learn the issues and get to know the candidates running for elected office.

This busy year begins with a special recall election in Camp Verde on March 8th. It is a mail-in election, so ballots have already been sent out to all registered voters in the Town of Camp Verde. The ballot states the grounds presented by the petition for the recall of Camp Verde Vice Mayor Bruce George and includes Mr. George's justification for his action in office. Then the ballot asks the voter to vote for 1 of 2 candidates – Bruce George or Leah Robbins. Write-in candidates can also be listed.

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.



### **VOTER REGISTRATION**

Let people know that if they have an AZ driver's license they can register to vote or make any needed changes

at:

<https://servicearizona.com>

The League attempted to hold a candidate public forum for the two candidates in this election, but one of the candidates was not available. So, instead, we asked each candidate to prepare a brief statement on why they want to be a council member, and the skills and qualifications they would bring to the position. The statements are on our website at [www.lwvverdevalley.com](http://www.lwvverdevalley.com)

The League of Women Voters Greater Verde Valley knows that the written statements distributed to the public are just the beginning of a dialogue between candidates and voters. So, in this election -- as in all elections -- we encourage voters to reach out to the candidates and find out their positions on the specific issues most important to them.

**Remember, your vote is your voice.**

### **Monthly League Book Club Underway**

Our first book was "The Selfie Vote: Where Millennials are leading America" by Kristen Soltis Anderson -- about the future of politics and where this Millennial generation might be taking us.. It was a good read -- recommended especially for political junkies who enjoy looking ahead.

The group is now working through Thomas Piketty's acclaimed book "CAPITAL in the Twenty-First Century." Pickety lays out his analysis of the relationship between capitalism and inequality. It's a huge subject and a matter of intense debate RIGHT NOW.

Contact Barbara Litrell if you are interested in the Book Club.

### **Welcome New Members**

Christy DuCharme, Cottonwood

Kathy Juliano, Sedona

Sunday Larson, Sedona

Jessica and Stephen Williamson, Sedona

**Thank You for joining us and we look forward to seeing you at**

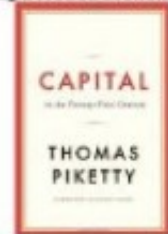
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**FOR FURTHER INFO:  
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**OR:**



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**who argues Capitalism leads to  
inequality...BY DESIGN**

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our meetings and events!

## **National League News**

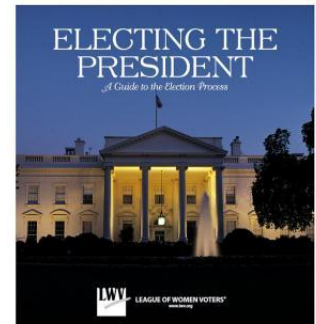
If you have not visited the website -- [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) -- of the League of Women Voters of the United States, now would be a good time to become acquainted with it. You can learn just about everything you need to know about the League, its history, and what's going on now.

Of particular interest are two documents that are available now and worth taking a look at: "Electing the President 2016" and "Impact on Issues 2014-2016." The first one explains all that happens in the course of a Presidential election cycle; the other one is a current compilation of where the League of Women Voters stands on a multitude of issues (all of which the League has studied in detail over the years and updated as needed.)

Do a search on the home page to look at or save these documents.

at  
[www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

Visit the LWV  
of Arizona  
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