



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF SEDONA-VERDE VALLEY

The VoteR

League of Women Voters of Sedona-Verde Valley

www.lwvsedona-verdevalley.org

P. O. Box 966 Sedona, AZ 86339

January 2012

Welcome to A New Election Year!

**DON'T MISS: Anniversary Luncheon Saturday, Feb. 11
Sedona Candidate Forum Thursday, Feb. 16
Clarkdale Candidate Forum Wednesday, Feb. 22**



Former Phoenix Mayor Paul Johnson

Anniversary Luncheon Speaker

Paul Johnson to Speak on Open Elections-Open Government

The League of Women Voters of Sedona-Verde Valley (LWV-SVV) is pleased to announce that former Phoenix Mayor Paul Johnson, co-founder and chairman of the Open Elections-Open Government Committee, will be the honored guest speaker at its anniversary luncheon on Saturday, February 11, from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm, at the Agave of Sedona Event Center, 1146 W. Highway 89A, in West Sedona. (*Turn north at the light at Airport Road; take immediate left to the Agave Event Center.*)

Johnson will talk about a citizen-led effort seeking to place an initiative on the 2012 Arizona ballot that will reform and fundamentally change the election process, opening it up to more voters and candidates. The focus of the initiative is to open the process to all individuals, regardless of their party registration. While the League has not taken a position on the proposal, the local League is devoting full attention to voter education and civic engagement activities. "This meeting is an opportunity for citizens to learn more about the Arizona primary system and consider possibilities for changes," said Ellie Bauer, LWV-SVV president. "We are concerned about voter participation, this is a timely topic, and we are pleased to bring Mayor Johnson to the Verde Valley," she added.

Paul Johnson served as Phoenix Mayor from 1990-1994, after serving on the Phoenix City Council from 1985 to 1990. While best known for his time in politics, he is also a leader in economic development, has also founded companies, has large real estate holdings, and serves on several boards.

The luncheon is open to the public at a cost of \$30.00; cost for League members is \$25.00. A gift raffle will also be held. We would like League members to donate raffle items if possible; contact Liz Danbury if you have something to donate that would be a nice raffle item.

Reservations are requested no later than February 3, 2011. Contact Donna Pratt or Liz Danbury.

Please use the flyer at the end of this newsletter to publicize our event!

President's Message

Growing with our Time

At our January Board meeting, a name change for our local League was presented – the new name: The League of Women Voters of the Greater Verde Valley.

The reasoning: Many of our towns and unincorporated communities, have grown in population and activity. Our new Districts - County, Legislative and Congressional have altered that which we thought might last forever. Or has it?

As the Verde Valley we now have the incredible opportunity to spread our story and our history, to continue to influence life and action in our expanded region.

To better describe the Verde Valley, I am proposing a name change:

NOW: the League of Women Voters of Sedona-Verde Valley
NEW: the League of Women Voters of the Greater Verde Valley.

This will be on the discussed and voted on by the membership at our Annual Meeting, May 5, 2012.

Presidential Preference Election

Arizona's U.S. Presidential Preference Election will take place on February 28th, 2012. It will be a by-mail only election. Ballots will be mailed out to voters who are registered with either the Republican or Green Party. Unlike other primaries in Arizona, this primary is not open to nonpartisan voters. If you wish to participate in this election you must be registered with a participating party by January 30, 2012.

Candidate Forums for Elections in Sedona, Clarkdale, and Jerome

Our League will be conducting candidate forums for the three local municipal government primary elections to be held on March 13, 2012. Please help us out by volunteering either for timekeeping or question card distribution and collection. If you have never attended a candidate forum, do not miss these opportunities to be informed voters. 2012 will be a big election year and there will be more forums in the fall. We're planning to provide a training session for members who would like to be more involved in this signature League activity. To volunteer, please contact Ruth Kiessel of Voter Services (contact information is at the end of this newsletter).

Sedona: The LWVSVV is sponsoring a primary election forum with the mayoral and council candidates running for the Sedona City Council. The forum will be held on Thursday, February 16th, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Sedona Public Library at 3250 White Bear Road in Sedona.

Clarkdale: The LWVSVV is sponsoring a primary election forum with the mayoral and council candidates running for the Clarkdale City Council. The forum will be held on Wednesday, February 22, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Clarkdale-Jerome School gymnasium, 16th and Main Streets, Clarkdale.

Jerome: Planning for the Jerome candidate forum is still underway.

The Mechanics of League Membership

During the past year, there was some confusion among the membership as to the membership year, when and how to renew, whether League dues are tax deductible, and the relationship between National League membership and Local League membership. Since we've raised our dues over the past few years, the dues amount has been questioned also.

Our membership and fiscal year begin on the 1st of July each year; the annual membership meeting and elections in May are normally our last event of the membership year. So, typically, we send out dues renewal letters or reminders during July and as necessary thereafter. When you join the local league (the League of Women Voters of Sedona-Verde Valley) you automatically become a member of the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) and the League of Women Voters of Arizona (LWVAZ). While these are three separate organizations, we work closely together; the structure is intended to ensure that we have both a grass roots base and a strong voice nationally.

Our annual dues are \$50.00 for an individual membership and \$70.00 for a household membership (two or more persons). Other available levels are Supporting (\$60.00), Contributing (\$85.00), and Sustaining (\$100.00). Normally, League dues are not tax-deductible. However, membership categories **above** \$70.00 **are** tax-deductible, but **only** if you make your check out to the LWVAZ Education Fund. The Education Fund is a separate 501(c)3 organization where the League's funds for educational activities are kept. Otherwise, dues go into our Operating Fund for administrative expenses and league issue studies. We also have a special fund within the LWVAZ Education Fund; it is a memorial to Dorothy Hores, who was a League member and statewide leader on water issues in past years. Donations to Dorothy's fund are always welcome, **and are also tax-deductible.**

To join the League or renew your membership, send a check in the appropriate amount to LWV of Sedona-Verde Valley at P.O. Box 966, Sedona, AZ 86339. A membership form can be downloaded at www.lwvsedona-verdevalley.org.

All members should be aware that a significant amount of the dues they pay must be sent on to the LWVUS and LWVAZ; they should not bill you separately for membership if you pay at the local league level. Currently, we pay \$10.00 per member to LWVAZ and \$30.00 per member to LWVUS. That does not leave a lot of money for our local operations and is one reason we need to do fundraisers and ask for donations at our public events.

To be a voting member of the League of Women Voters you must be a United States citizen, age 18 or over. Others may be associate (non-voting) members. And, of course, the League of Women Voters is open to both women and men!

January Meeting of the Board of Directors – The LWVSVV Board met on January 12th to work on planning for the remainder of the League year. Ruth Kiessel and Mary Gassaway have pulled together candidate forums for the city and town spring primaries, and arrangements have been made for the anniversary luncheon and speaker. The Nominating Committee has begun its work. We completed our review of membership renewals so have our roster set as required by the LWVUS. It was decided that it's time for a review of our Bylaws; Judy Miller, Donna Pratt, and Ellie Bauer have formed a committee to do that. We are considering changing the structure of the board and changing the name of our league. Any proposed bylaw changes will be presented to the membership for approval in May. Contact a committee member if you have any thoughts on this. Ellie Bauer is remaining in contact with the O'Connor House Project regarding voter education and election issues that need to be focused on THIS YEAR. We are

particularly interested in the independent voter and in making sure that the public knows "How to Vote in Arizona." Board Members Ellie Bauer and Robyn Prud'homme-Bauer recently met with the Beaver Creek Community Association to explain voting procedures and registration. We need voter education material and meeting-ready presentations to expand our ability to perform this service in our communities.

The next meeting of the LWVSVV Board of Directors will take place on Thursday, February 16th, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Oak Creek Valley Clubhouse. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend. (Call Judy Miller for directions.)

Candidates Needed for 2012-2013 Board of Directors and Nominating Committee - Former LWVSVV Chairperson Fran Levengood is leading this year's Nominating Committee, which also includes Liz Danbury and Angela LeFevre. If you would like to run for a position on either the Board or next year's Nominating Committee, please call Fran. She also welcomes suggestions of current, former, or prospective members who might be interested in applying their knowledge, skills, or perspectives to our League's many activities.

Welcome New Member Susan B. Snodgrass, of Sedona, who recently joined our league. We hope to meet her soon at some of our events.

[LWVAZ Adopts Position on Arizona Executive Branch](#)

The LWVAZ believes that a clear line of succession in the Executive Branch of the State of Arizona should be more obvious to the public than it is in the current system where the Secretary of State assumes the role of Governor in times of absence, removal, resignation, death or other such changes. To avoid mid-term changes in party, continuity problems or policy reversals, LWVAZ supports the creation of an Office of Lieutenant Governor with duties separate from that of the Secretary of State.

In addition, the LWVAZ believes that the governor and the elected office, which is next in line of succession to the governor, should run on the same party ticket. If that office continues to be held by the Secretary of State, LWVAZ strongly believe that all partisan aspects of elections should be removed from the jurisdiction of the Secretary of State and managed by an independent body/commission.

What do we do with this position now? A proposed bill has been introduced in the Arizona Legislature to create the position of Lt. Governor and make that position the next in line of succession after the Governor. So LWVAZ will be commenting on the bill.

LWVAZ Recommends Citizens United Decision as Top Priority for League Action in 2012

The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters Arizona at their January 7, 2012 board meeting unanimously passed a motion urging the LWVUS to make a fight against the Citizens United ruling the top advocacy priority in 2012. We feel that this issue will give the League opportunities to make an impact – campaign finance reform has been a top priority for League and continues to be with the issues that have arisen since the Citizens United ruling. We believe that there is a lot of member interest on this issue. This is definitely a League issue where we can make a difference!

(It was this 2010 Supreme Court decision that has made it possible for Political Action Committees that are “independent” of candidates and their campaigns to raise and spend unlimited amounts of money from corporations and individuals – and to avoid timely disclosure of those sources. We have already seen a huge impact of this decision on the current primary election season.)

LWVUS Action Alert: Although these “SuperPAC’s” are supposed to be independent of the candidates’ and their campaigns, there is little assurance that this is in fact the case. The national League is recommending a move that could improve the enforcement of campaign finance laws by urging President Obama to appoint new members to the currently dysfunctional Federal Election Commission and replace them with people who will take action more effectively in this turbulent election year. Go to <https://www.whitehouse.gov/petitions#!/petitions> if you would like to sign a petition to the President.

Privatization Study

The League of Women Voters’ nationwide study, “Privatization of Government Services, Assets, and Functions, 2011” is well underway and our league is participating by reading the study materials; we will have a membership meeting to discuss and respond to consensus questions on April 11th. Members who would like to become informed on this important and timely public policy debate can view and/or download the study materials at <http://www.lwv.org/member-resources/privatization>.

One paper of particular interest is called “**Privatization: The Public Policy Debate.**” This paper goes through the evolution of the push for privatization and the LWV Study leadership points out at the end that “The public agenda of privatization requires a close examination of the proper relationship between government, business and civil society. What should the role of government be in protecting the environment, helping the poor, defending the nation, providing justice, ensuring democracy, protecting public health, ensuring public safety, providing education, promoting a thriving economy, and ensuring safe work environments and a living wage? Our country must seek a pragmatic balance between social and economic returns.” (Paper prepared by Nora Leech for the “Privatization of Government Services, Assets, and Functions Study, 2011” Copyright League of Women voters.)

If you would like to be more involved (and learn more), please join the Study Committee for a planning meeting tentatively scheduled to take place in Clarkdale on February 21st. Call Robyn Prud'homme-Bauer for information.

Board Members 2011-2012

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Rita Livingston, Sedona
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LWVSVV CALENDAR	2011-2012
Date	Event
February 11 th , Saturday 11:30am-1:30pm	LWV Anniversary Luncheon at Agave Event Center (Best Western W. Sedona) Speaker: Former Phoenix Mayor Paul Johnson on Open Elections
February 16 th , Thursday, 6:30-8:30pm	Sedona Candidate Forum Sedona Public Library , 3250 White Bear Rd
February 16 th , Thursday, 1:00-3:00 p.m.	LWVSVV Board Meeting Oak Creek Valley Clubhouse Call Judy Miller for directions
February 21 st , Tuesday, Time TBD	Meeting on Privatization Study Clarkdale
February 22 nd , Wednesday, 6:30-8:30pm	Clarkdale Candidate Forum Clarkdale-Jerome School, 16 th and Main St
February 28 th	Presidential Preference Primary, by mail-in ballot only; must be registered with a participating party by January 30th
March 13 th , Tuesday	Municipal Elections in Clarkdale, Jerome, and Sedona Must be registered by February 13th

<p>April 11th, Wednesday, 2:00-4:00pm– Contact Robyn Prud'homme-Bauer if you are interested in working on this study</p>	<p>Consensus meeting on LWVUS Study of Privatization of Government</p> <p>Mystic Hills Clubhouse, 108 E. Mallard in Sedona (Call Kathy Heidepriem for directions)</p>
<p>May 5th, Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (Tentative)</p>	<p>Annual business meeting and elections, speaker and a meal</p> <p>Las Carretas Restaurant, Clarkdale (Tentative)</p>

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
of Sedona-Verde Valley

INVITATION

Anniversary Luncheon

featuring

Former Phoenix Mayor Paul Johnson

“Open Elections/Open Government”

a citizen initiative to reform the Arizona election process.

11:30 - 1:30, Saturday, February 11, 2012

Agave Event Center, 146 W. Hwy 89A, West Sedona

GIFT RAFFLE
WIN A PRIZE

R.S.V.P. PLEASE

Reserve your seat by February 3.

Cost of the Luncheon is \$30 (\$25 for LWV Members).

Contact Donna Pratt at 282-6428 or dpratt@esedona.net

or Liz Danbury at 282-5061 or ldanbury@esedona.net