

President's Update

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www.lwvaz.org

Did Someone Say it's Easy?

Did someone say it is supposed to be Easy?

You know that phrase about if it walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, it is a duck. Well, what if it is 1000 pounds, has grey scaling skin, incredibly large floppy ears and a trunk that is long and used for eating, drinking and everything else - and I tell you it is a duck. I tell you this loud and clear and over and over. So, is it a duck? Probably not, huh?

Non-partisanship is like this. It has never been easy to be a 'political' group with many positions (the lion's share which tend to be a bit progressive) and remain non-partisan. In times of extreme and obvious political polarization of people and parties and un-civil language, it is even harder.

We cannot just SAY we are non-partisan and then not ACT like it. I know some groups do this, but then you wonder – is it a duck? Perhaps it is just more ingrained in League tradition to actually work at being non-partisan. This is the fine line – to STRONGLY

support our positions with advocacy and yet keep all our dealings on an 'issue basis', not throwing in our lot with one party or another.

Perhaps we should have some 'ethical exercises' within our Local Leagues and small groups. Lay out a scenario and figure out what IS and what is NOT the appropriate way to handle things. That may bring up some interesting discussion.

I do not think that we were ever told it was easy - and we cannot act like it is. We have to work hard at being a group that speaks respectfully, and fairly treats ALL parties in a balanced manner (not just Republicans and Democrats, but Independents and third parties as well). We do this by 'considering' all points (pros and cons). We never have to **agree** with all points; we just have to give fair treatment. If we are accomplishing our goal, it won't be easy. On the other hand, it is a good way to promote civil discourse. I ask us all to 'stay on guard.'

Included:



1. Did Someone Say that our principles are easy?
2. We lose a former State President – Catherine Zandler
3. LWVUS Responses to Controversial TV ads
4. LWVUS launches Clean Air PROMISE campaign

[Check out the new state website www.lwvaz.org](http://www.lwvaz.org)

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League never supports or opposes a party or candidate but advocates for or against issues based on positions established after long-term study.

We are a grassroots organization. Join us in making democracy work!

Some Tips. As a rule of thumb, remember we are allowed to have educational forums without both sides IF WE ARE ADVOCATING for the practical application of our principles or position – that is allowed. To do this, we MUST have a position! An example of this might be our lectures on the Judicial Merit Selection /Retention program. These LWV presentations are ‘educational’ but they are totally one-sided and promote the program (even when we discuss weaknesses). In this example, we have the supporting position and may choose to ACT on it. However, as a rule, never hold one-sided events if we do NOT have an ESTABLISHED and OFFICIAL position to base it on.

Candidate forums and Hot Topics (without a supporting position) should NEVER be one-sided. [One ostensible exception is that we are allowed to moderate a primary debate if two or more candidates take part– without advocating for the party of course.] In general however, as a starting point, ask yourself: are there at least two candidates (from different parities or points of view) who will speak? For issue forums, will two sides be equally presented? [You need to answer YES.]

We may place supporting or opposing advocacy letters in election booklets for initiatives or referendums. However, speaking at educational forums on the **same issues** we DO NOT TELL our view. We present both sides in such a way as the listener cannot tell our opinion.

To BE the BEST
that YOU can BE
DO the BEST
that YOU can DO

When in doubt – put yourself in the shoes of candidates or parties from all sides. Ask if what you are doing would be fair in the eyes of a reasonable person.

Good luck in your efforts to remain nonpartisan while politically active in these divisive times. No one EVER said it would be easy!

Clean Elections
Serves
MANY
over
MONEY

We Lose a Former State President – Catherine Zandler

It **saddens** me both personally and for our League to say that Catherine Zandler, a former state president died at the age of 89 on August 1, 2011. She had been attending League meetings even this year. One of the most profound things I read about her was **“She will leave a wonderful legacy of activism for the sake of humanity.”** Catherine was a generous woman with a big

smile who not only led the League as state president in the 70s but worked for several other organizations and charities as well. Friend Rivko Knox described her as *“a great person, bright, very energetic, very smart, and very kind.”*

Another Local League member, Jeanine Starrett said *“Catherine was a whirlwind of activity as League president and lobby corps organizer as well as a steadfast supporter of causes to help those who needed help through her church, the City of Phoenix, committees, and other groups. She was in the spotlight a great deal. “Despite her many*

social action activities and having the responsibility of caring for a large family, Catherine managed to exude a serene demeanor and always had time for friends and fun.”

Many members remember Catherine not only as a terrific League president but as a friend whom they will cherish and miss. We were lucky to know her and have her in our League. We will be honored to take your thoughts or donations to the LWVAZ Ed Fund in her name. I hope that would make Catherine proud.

We all MAKE A
DIFFERENCE.

Sometimes in League it is
YOU or nobody!

See updates & reports on **Redistricting** in separate mailing. For more info visit www.lwvaz.org

Response from LWVUS on Controversial TV ads aired in the spring

Arizona members, you may remember that we passed a resolution at convention regarding the how/ when/ why LWVUS runs certain issue campaigns in particular states. We did not receive a specific response but were sent a statement that had been released in other areas. Nevertheless, after Council the LWVUS sent out the following guidelines going forward. [Please see the Clean Air Project immediately following this, which is related.]

Guidelines for Major LWVUS/EF In-State Initiatives

In General

From time to time, the LWVUS/EF may undertake major advocacy, educational, visibility or membership campaigns or initiatives in one or more states. Major initiatives may enhance the League's effectiveness in achieving its educational, advocacy and organizational goals or further a current program or organizational priority. **All aspects of major initiatives must be consistent with LWVUS/EF bylaws, policies, and positions.**

*Those of us from other Local Leagues in Arizona wish to express our best wishes to our members in **Cochise County** that are cleaning up from the Monument Fire.*

Consultation with State and Local Leagues

In advance of the launching of a major initiative, the LWVUS/EF Board and staff shall do the necessary consultation and appropriate pre-planning with the state Leagues directly involved in the initiative.

The LWVUS/EF will brief state League presidents on the rationale and scope of the initiative. The consultation may include communicating, coordinating and reinforcing the League's activities and/or message, and ensuring that the League speaks with one voice.

Information will be shared with state League(s) first, and unless otherwise directed by the state League leadership, the LWVUS/EF will work to ensure that appropriate supporting materials are prepared and distributed in a timely manner to state and local League leaders. Materials will be designed to help League leaders understand and assist in the initiative at the state and local level as appropriate. Examples of materials include information and response templates, additional factsheets, press releases, model letters to the editor and other substantive documents prepared in support of the initiative.

The LWVUS/EF will work to help ensure that appropriate spokespersons are identified and briefed on the initiative. The LWVUS/EF will inform the LWVUS Lobby Corps members and the Ruth M. Shur Fellows of any major in-state initiatives in a timely manner.

Monitoring and Results

The LWVUS/EF will monitor the progress of major initiatives, including implementation challenges and successes, internal feedback and external response, and level of impact at the national, state and local levels. As initiatives progress, the information obtained may lead to adjustments.

Approved by LWVUS Board 7/28/2011

Not a 'Pledge' but a 'Promise' - LWV Launches Clean Air Promise Campaign

Forty years of education and advocacy to protect the Clean Air Act and the EPA's duty to enforce its provisions culminated in strong advertising in Missouri and Massachusetts this spring. That advertising and the supporting efforts of our friends in the environmental community is resetting the debate on the future of the EPA from jobs and regulation to public health. As we expected, efforts to eviscerate the EPA are continuing. The League, in partnership with environmental and public health organizations, will ask members of Congress, other elected officials, key community leaders and the public to make the "[Clean Air Promise](#)." Protecting the public health by controlling air pollution is something we depend on Congress to do. The Clean Air Promise is designed to allow the public, elected officials at all levels and community leaders to send a strong message that clean air and the EPA have overwhelming public support. The EPA is not a budget item but rather is vital to the health of future generations who, without it, will be just as endangered as polar bears and penguins. It is time for our elected officials to vote for people not polluters. (Portions of a letter from LWVUS president, Elisabeth MacNamara)

Meet our Challenge Make this Commitment

*"I will bring in 1 new member
within 2 years
to help Make Democracy Work."*

Please pick ONE person in the next year to 'woo' and teach about the League. Within two years – make sure you bring that ONE person into League.

YOU can do it

THE CLEAN AIR PROMISE

~ Making this promise is our social commitment and we depend on our officials to safeguard it ~

I Promise to protect America's children and families from dangerous air pollution.

Because toxics and pollutants such as mercury, smog, carbon, and soot, cause thousands of hospital visits, asthma attacks, and even deaths,

I will support clean air policies and other protections that scientists and public health experts have recommended to the EPA to safeguard our air quality.

Visit new League site www.peoplenotpolluters.org and make the promise yourself!

The Promise effort will have three components. The first is the launch of the campaign through a League-branded TV ad which will appear on network stations in Washington, D.C. and on selected cable outlets. The ad will feature real children suffering from asthma, a condition aggravated by dirty air, and a request by the mother of such a child that everyone make the promise. The second component will be a grassroots effort by LWV as well as our partners in the public health and environmental community to raise awareness of the public health effects of pollution and the importance of the EPA by asking members of our community to make the promise. The third component is collecting personal stories of those impacted by air pollution. The public will be directed to an LWV website to make the promise and share their stories. Just like the personal stories that draw members to the League, personal experience makes this issue real.

The League of Women Voters is where **hands-on work to
safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.**