



Democrats of Oro Valley

Newsletter
March
2021

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Serving Democrats in Oro Valley and Greater Northwest Tucson
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Our job as Americans is to restore that basic bargain that says, if you work hard, if you're willing to meet your responsibilities, you can get ahead. Our middle class, when it's growing, when it's thriving, when there are ladders of opportunity for people to do a little bit better each year and then make sure that their kids are doing even better than them, that's the American dream. That's what we have to fight for. That has to be the north star that guides everything we do.
Barack Obama

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BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE



MARCH ZOOM MEETING - Guest Speaker: Bunny Davis

Bunny Davis, Retired Attorney & Educator

Bunny Davis' presentation "Words Matter" is designed to connect Americans of all ages and stages with our founding documents by discussing the actual words of selected portions of the documents themselves. Ruth "Bunny" Davis, J.D, M.Ed. is the U.S. Project's founder and chief presenter. She states: "I do this as a labor of love for my country in the hopes that if we get back to basics, we, the people, will be able to use common language to define our societal issues, and therefore will have a better chance of finding workable solutions to our challenges." She will also discuss our state constitution in relation to today's issues.

Bunny and Tamara Rala Kreiswirth co-founded a nonpartisan website www.azpublicsquare.org to promote citizen engagement in Arizona politics. Visitors to the website can read about bills before they are voted on. Davis, who is a retired lawyer translates the legal jargon into plain language. They provide links to the bills and the legislators who propose them. For Bunny, "This is about being an American, being an Arizonan and being a citizen."

Bunny Davis is a retired attorney, public school teacher, university instructor and mental health counselor. She lived in Tucson, AZ for forty-four years, and now lives in Tempe, AZ.

INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING COMMISSION (IRC) UPDATE

by Dee Maitland

The IRC cancelled their last February meeting in light of the Census Bureau announcing data will not be available at the end of March as earlier stated but would be released in September. The IRC met on March 2 to decide how to proceed due to this six-month delay. Office quarters have been found. Requests for bids have been released for mapping consultants and attorneys. The job of Executive has been posted, so their website should be updated regularly once hiring has occurred.

One of the most difficult of the six criteria the IRC has to include in their mapping considerations is "communities of interest". Once the IRC is housed and staffed, it is expected they will follow the example of the two previous commissions and schedule listening tours to gain an understanding of how citizens view communities of interest. We will keep you posted when they will be in our area.



Interested in making your voice heard on all the issues you care about? There are numerous organizations that can assist you. One you may want to consider is Civic Engagement Beyond Voting (CEBV), which actively promotes the Request to Speak system and has registered over 8,000 participants since 2017.

If you go to their website (<https://www.cebv.us>) and click on “Go to Request to Speak,” you will find all the information you need. Their leadership will help you register for RTS and train you on its use. They will also provide you with a weekly guide that describes and analyzes the bills currently being considered by the Arizona Legislature.

Public Education Is in Jeopardy

by Luci Messing

Arizona Public Schools are in desperate need of our help. For decades, there has been a sustained effort to dismantle public education in Arizona. The majority party in the Legislature has consistently failed to meet its constitutional obligation to our students. It has taken lawsuits, citizen’s initiatives like Prop208 and Prop305, and the RedForEd movement to improve the dire situation in our public schools.

Over 90% of our children attend public schools. These are the future doctors, nurses, teachers, policeman, fireman, and leaders in the world. Yet the majority in the Legislature continues to increase the amount of our tax dollars spent on vouchers, tax credits, and tuition for private and parochial schools. It is difficult to understand how this practice is allowed under the “separation of church and state” expectation.

Arizona stands at the bottom in the United States when it comes to per pupil spending, teacher salaries and student learning conditions. Another unacceptable statistic is that the graduating class of 2020 had never attended a fully funded public school. We must do better.

Voters approved Prop208 in November of 2020 to begin to address the much-needed funding for our public schools. The majority of Arizonans support public education. Instead of accepting the results of the election and the will of the people, numerous bills have been introduced this session to negatively impact Prop208 funds. See below.

If you are interested in helping public education, there are several things you can do.

- Contact your legislators, committee chairs, Speaker Bowers, President Fann and the Governor to let them know that you oppose the anti-education bills listed.
- Support groups and organizations that fight for and defend public education, such as SaveOurSchools, Pima Democratic Education Caucus, and the Arizona Education Association.
- Support your local school or school district.

Here are the **bad** bills that are moving through the Legislature:

SB1783 – passed. Allows an alternative business tax that would **avoid** the Prop208 surcharge for education. Estimated to deprive our schools and children of \$527million **annually**.

SB1400 - passed. Would **force** schools to give elective credit for private lessons or sport clubs. This has major equity implications and would ensure the elimination of music/arts/fine arts/sports programs in many schools and their invaluable educators.

SB1108 - passed. Would slash property taxes that fund our public schools **in half**.

SB1058 - passed. Would mandate teachers post **all** lesson plans/resources/materials for **every** class, **every** day for an entire **year** in advance, and would not allow for **any** deviation.

New Finchem Recall Effort

by Nick Medel, Volunteer Coordinator

On March 5th, Rural Arizonans for Accountability officially launched their campaign to recall Mark Finchem. You can now share this information with your personal circle to start getting your friends and family involved.

We are soon going to start organizing in places all around LD 11 to get volunteers mobilized. Please fill out this volunteer form so you can have the most up to date information on how and where to get involved. Please also share it with any friends or family who would be interested.

Signup form: <https://forms.gle/PkfkNjQivqELTphY6>

We have a huge uphill climb ahead of us. We have a goal to get 40,000 signatures in the next 120 days, so that means we cannot do this work without the help of volunteers like you.

We want to hit the ground running. If you or anyone you know would be willing to start collecting signatures from friends and family around LD11, please let me know. Respond to this email and someone from Rural Arizonans for Accountability will deliver petitions to your house.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask. You can contact me at 469-865-5693.

The Best of Biden

by Jacolyn Marshall

The day he took office President Biden pledged to serve all Americans. Nowhere is that pledge more clearly reflected than in his cabinet and cabinet-level appointments. His appointees include 15 men and 12 women of various ethnicities and persuasions: 11 White, 6 Black, 5 Latin, 3 Asian, 1 Native American, and 2 LGBTQ. His appointees are well-educated, experienced in their appointed fields, and well-prepared to lead. Their combined efforts promise to lead us toward a better, stronger, and safer nation, a nation with a renewed respect for science, the rule of law, social justice, and human rights. They will help move us toward economic, educational, environmental and immigration reforms.

Biden has demonstrated his willingness to consult his advisors and his ability to effectively respond to the crises that beset us. He has the experience, integrity, and compassion to guide our nation. He also has the knowledge, tact, and experience in international affairs to represent us on the world stage.

His administration gives us hope that we can right our course and sail into a brighter future, and with Biden at the helm, our Ship of State is once again in steady hands.

OPPORTUNITIES, PLEASE BE GENEROUS HELP OUR LOCAL FOOD BANK

* Please consider donating some non-perishable food items or making a cash donation to one of our local food banks during this stressful time.

*The Democrats of Oro Valley care about the health and well-being of our community.

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS!

* Thanks to all of you who support our brave troops.

**Please donate any of these items to one of our local veterans groups for distribution: deodorant, shaving items, toothpaste, tooth brushes, pocket novels and puzzle books.*

April Meeting

Monday, April 12
6:30 pm

Speaker: Lisa Graves
Writer

Topic: Kochs & ALEC