



Democrats of Oro Valley

Newsletter
June
2025

NIL CARBORUNDUM ILLEGITIMI

Serving Democrats in Oro Valley and Greater Northwest Tucson
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Republicans passed the largest cut to Medicaid in American history. It means 14 million Americans will be without health insurance and takes food out of the mouths of children, seniors and veterans. All to give a massive tax break to their billionaire donors like Elon Musk. We need to rise up and prove that when Republicans come after our families, we are coming for their seats. *Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries*

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Speakers: Gabriella Cázares-Kelly, David Fitzsimmons, & Kevin Volk



Gabriella Cázares-Kelly, Pima County Recorder

Gabriella Cázares-Kelly was elected Pima County Recorder in November 2020 and began her administration in January 2021. She leads an office that oversees voter registration, early voting and document recording for Pima County.

She is a proud, union-dues-paying, former public school educator and community organizer. She is one of four women who co-founded Indivisible Tohono, a grassroots community organization that provides education and civic-engagement opportunities for members of her tribe, the Tohono O'odham Nation.

She was inspired to run for office after encountering many systemic barriers preventing people from simply registering to vote. She is the first Native American to hold an elected Pima County office and the third Native American to hold a county-level office in the State of Arizona.



David Fitzsimmons, political cartoonist

For 35-years Fitzsimmons, a UA Journalism School Hall of Fame honoree, internationally syndicated political cartoonist, Pulitzer finalist, and an award-winning weekly columnist threw ink for the Arizona Daily Star.

Fitz was the President of the Tucson Press Club for ten years; a conference speaker for many years; and a standup quick-draw comedian. Fitz performed with the Sweat Lodge Comedy Troupe. He wrote, hosted and performed in annual productions of his “Twisted Christmas” shows for the Diaper Bank at the Fox for ten years, produced and hosted fundraisers for breast cancer survivors called “Titters” and “Thanks for the Mammaries,” hosted and performed with “Reveille” gay men’s chorus, and hosted and produced the popular holiday event “The Old Pueblo Radio Show” at the Rialto for 8 years.

Two years ago, he retired from cartooning and public life and, according to him: “I became a nobody, just a grandpa and a dad and a husband to Ellen, the Queen of the Tucson Festival of Books. I am delighted that some days are so free I don’t know what day it is.” Today, Fitz publishes and writes a progressive newsletter on Substack that has 4,250 subscribers and keeps growing.

Here is the link to his blog: <https://davidwfitzsimmons.substack.com/>



Paid vacation for legislators while Arizona waits by Kevin Volk in the *Tucson Sentinel*, 5/21

With less than two months before our budget deadline, Republican leaders in the Arizona State Legislature hit pause, declaring a recess.

Over in the State Senate, it's for three weeks. In the State House, where I serve, it was originally for nearly two weeks. Then we went back to work - for one day, only to learn that we would go on recess for another two weeks. That comes to a total of almost four weeks of recess.

Let me be clear: this isn't a well-earned break. It's a paid vacation taken right before the most important deadline of the year – passing a budget by June 30 before our state government shuts down.

Ask yourself: if you're in an everyday job, can you walk off the job for three or four weeks right before your biggest project deadline of the year - and still collect your pay? Of course not. No hardworking Arizonan could get away with that. But that's exactly what the majority has decided is appropriate for state legislators.

I ran for office to solve problems. That's what I do as a small business owner. That's what I did as a teacher. That's how we serve people.

It didn't used to be this way. But over the past few years, we've seen a pattern develop at the Republican-led Legislature: lots of time spent on political statement bills destined for vetoes, delay or avoidance of engagement on major issues, and sessions that go on and on. After four months of this session, we are lacking progress on major issues.

Water: We have spent hundreds of hours on water bills that undermine water security or nibble around the edges. One was described by a supporter as a Band-aid. Arizonans deserve more than just Band-aids — they deserve comprehensive solutions to address this crisis and protect our most precious resource. Meanwhile, rainfall for this year is drastically lower and serious reforms with strong bipartisan support like the Rural Groundwater Management Act never got a hearing.

Childcare: Families across Arizona have been crying out for help with childcare — currently a crushing cost for working families and a major barrier keeping parents out of the workforce. And yet we haven't seen Republicans put anything on the agenda — not the Governor's Working Families proposal, not other programs.

Education funding: Prop. 123 has been sending much-needed funding to schools for 10 years. It expires this year. In order to address the growing shortage of teachers and other educators, we need to renew it. Instead of moving a clean extension supported by educators and the business community, Republicans waited for months and are now muddying the waters, floating a new proposal that includes a private school voucher poison pill. They were going to release it, then canceled. Current status? Unknown.

Budget: The budget is the primary delineated responsibility of the state legislature — a weighty issue that deserves careful consideration. The governor submitted a budget proposal in January outlining the executive's priorities. Since then? Crickets from Republican leadership. No counterproposal. No negotiations. No plan. We are running out of time.

Here's a not-so-fun fact: With this extended legislative vacation, we will likely only have about 14 working days to discuss, negotiate, and finalize the state budget. That means that we will be making decisions on more than \$1 billion taxpayer dollars per workday.

Legislators were elected to get things done. Arizonans have entrusted us to solve problems — a great responsibility. At the very least, we owe it to them to show up and do the work — especially with the clock ticking. Taking a break from doing the people's work is inexcusable. If you're frustrated with the Legislature right now, I get it. I'm frustrated too. I see what needs to be done. I want to do the work. But as it's currently run, disorganization and delay are the new normal, and a recess seems to take priority over delivering results.

The only good news is that in our system there's always a chance to change what you don't like. Arizona voters can and should demand better.

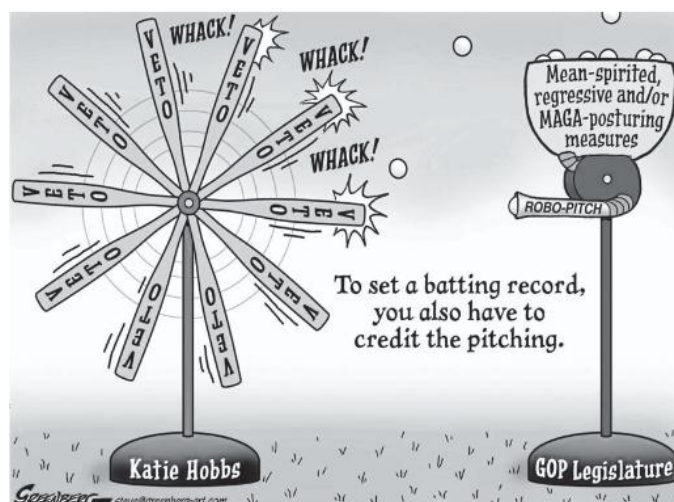


Democrats of Oro Valley Community Service Project *by Susan Bickel*

Twelve people participated in the DOV's annual Adopt-a-Roadway clean-up project on Saturday, May 24th. With so many volunteers we made quick work of keeping our assigned portion of our community clean.

Our thanks to: Mike and Chris Dayton, Susan Dalton, Michael Mills, Jim Lombardo, Brian and Susan Bickel, Jean Meconi, Mary Ann Ahrens, Kim Otero, and Mary Barnes. Special thanks to Joanna Mendoza, Candidate for CD6, and her Director of Operations Kyle McCarthy.

Along the way we encountered some interesting finds: a live rattlesnake, an intact non-human skull, and a clipboard. We had a great time doing our civic duty and catching up with friends.

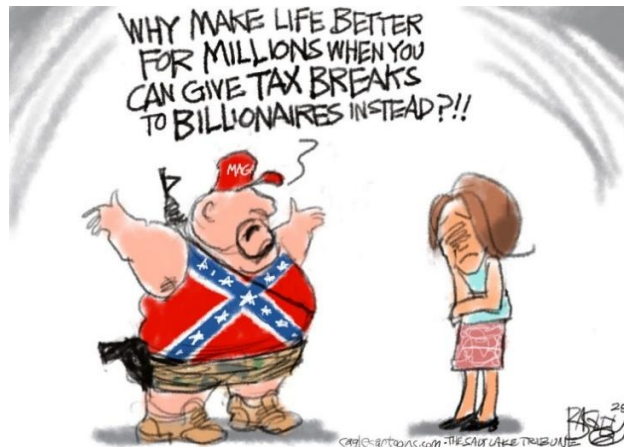


MAGA Maggots Leach and Keshel *by Dee Maitland*

Today is the 137th day of the Arizona Congress. They've chosen to be on paid vacation instead of developing a budget so we don't have their tax cut and voucher aspirations, but we can know their proclivities though the bills they advanced. Of the 1679 bills introduced this session 354 were sent to the Governor for her signature. To date she has vetoed 137 (39%) of them. Our reprehensible representatives Leach and Keshel voted "yes" or "no vote" on all of the vetoed bills. Besides the cultural issue of their gender bias and gun owner protections, the vetoed bills cohere with the Project 2025 and MAGA agendas coming out of Washington.

- ✓ 27 (20%) would have undermined voters by making it harder to vote and sabotaging citizen initiatives.
- ✓ 21 (15%) would have micro-managed all aspects of public education; mandated geography textbooks identify the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America; and given curriculum power to fringe parents.
- ✓ 17 (12%) would have protected private and corporate water "rights" and sabotaged efforts for state-wide water solutions.
- ✓ 8 (6%) would have supported oil and gas industries over alternative energy sources and allowed for higher consumer prices.

Most emblematic of Leach and Keshel's total buy-in to the Trump agenda are the 3 bills that would mandate the State invest in cryptocurrency even though there is no central bank for it. One of the bills would put state retirement funds in crypto, expanding the risk to retirees. I can only believe this is fealty to the various Trump family crypto schemes furthering their get-richer corruption.



Finchem is Still a Danger to LD17 *by Dee Maitland*

Years ago, I attended Legislative Day with the League of Women Voters of Greater Tucson. I spent an hour with Mark Finchem, our old LD11 representative. At that time, he was a proponent of two bills: one allowing uranium mining in the Grand Canyon and the other reclaiming the 38.6% of our state land owned by the Federal government.

It looks like his dreams may come true under the Trump administration by transferring our public lands that currently bring revenue into the state to for-profit developers and billionaires.

According to the Arizona Office of Tourism: "Arizona's warm weather and magnificent natural beauty made tourism the number one export industry in Arizona in 2023. That year, 45.7 million people visited Arizona who

collectively spent \$29.3 billion in our state. The money spent by visitors supports jobs and generates tax revenue. The \$4.2 billion in 2023 tax revenue equals an annual tax savings of \$889 for every Arizona household and supported 187,000 industry jobs.”

To protect ourselves and our precious lands, we must win the state in 2026 and the country in 2028.



Guilt by Association *by Dee Maitland*

Juan Ciscomani was the deciding vote passing Trump’s Big Beautiful Bill (**BBB**). The bill, if passed by the Senate will benefit the rich over the poor; the old over our young; and freeze the past by crippling the future.

Republicans who voted for this **Budget Busting Bill** need to pay a price for every child who starves, every person made homeless, every student who can’t finish college, and every person who dies from lack of health care or a preventable disease.





Illegal ICE Arrests in Maricopa, *ABC News*

Yesterday, a disturbing video surfaced from outside a Phoenix courthouse—one that should alarm every Arizonan who believes in justice and due process.

In the video, ICE agents are seen waiting to detain individuals as they exit the courthouse following immigration proceedings. A mother and her children were quickly apprehended and loaded into an unmarked white van, likely headed toward deportation.

ICE claims they're only deporting individuals with criminal records. But according to the detained woman's attorney, she has no criminal background whatsoever.

This wasn't about deporting criminals—it was about fear and intimidation.

Sound familiar? It should. This is straight out of the Joe Arpaio playbook—and now his protégé, Sheriff Jerry Sheridan, is carrying on that legacy as the Maricopa County Sheriff. Sheridan is allowing this to happen on his watch—and worse, he may be encouraging it.

In 2016, we ousted Joe Arpaio from the Sheriff's Office. But it took six long years to do it. That's why the Maricopa County Democratic Party is starting the work to remove Sheriff Sheridan NOW. He's up for re-election in 2028, and we cannot afford to let him continue down Arpaio's path of abuse and extremism.

As we speak, our staff is protesting this injustice and standing up for our community.



Good News for Democracy *compiled by Jacolyn Marshall*



From the Associated Press:

- 5/6: Attorneys General in 19 states, including AZ and DC sued Health and Human Services for eliminating 10,000 employees, collapsing 28 agencies, destroying life-saving programs and creating a health crisis.
- 5/6: AGs in 17 states and DC filed suit against the Trump administration for trying to block the development of wind energy asking the federal judge to declare Trump's order unlawful.
- 5/7: Federal judge barred Trump from shrinking the Institute of Museum and Library Services and other agencies that fund libraries across the US, settle labor disputes with public-sector workers, and support state business contracting programs.
- 5/7: A second federal judge rejected Trump's use of the US wartime act to speed deportations of those he labels as members of a Venezuelan gang on grounds that the gang is not attacking the US.
- 5/8: Federal Appeals Court upheld a judge's order to return a Tufts University student from a Louisiana immigration detention center to New England for a hearing regarding her right to express herself.
- 5/8: Federal judge ordered the Education Department to undo a freeze on the remaining US relief money from the Covid pandemic that was given to schools to help students recover academically.
- 5/8: FAA announced its plans to upgrade the technology used to get radar data to air traffic controllers directing planes to Newark airport and improve staffing to alleviate problems causing cancelations.
- 5/9: Freed Palestinian student Mahdawi helped launch a \$1million fundraising campaign to strengthen the legal safety net for immigrants.
- 5/10: Mexico sued tech giant Google over its labeling of the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America since Trump's order carries authority only within the US.
- 5/10: A coalition of 15 states sued the Trump administration over its efforts to fast-track oil and coal projects that bypass environmental protection laws and threaten endangered species, critical habitats and cultural resources.
- 5/10: Republican centrists like Rep. Bacon are opposing some, but not all, of the steep Medicaid cuts; they are raising concerns about eliminating clean -energy tax credits and have positioned themselves at the negotiating table.
- 5/11: Leaders from France, the UK, Germany and Poland threatened to increase pressure on Putin if he does not accept an unconditional 30-day ceasefire in Ukraine.
- 5/12: US regulators announced three new color additives made from natural sources have been approved for use in the nation's food supply in order to improve our health as they phase out petroleum-based dyes.
- 5/13: Senator Gallego proposed a 21-page immigration plan that would increase the number of visas and Green Cards, expedite the naturalization process for those who serve in the military, provide a pathway to citizenship for DACA children, invest in technology to detect drugs and human trafficking, hire more asylum officers, and raise the standard for seeking asylum.

- 5/13: Harvard responded to the Education Department's threats to cut \$2.2 billion in funding by outlining the reforms it has undertaken to combat antisemitism and bigotry and warning it will not budge on adhering to its core, legally protected principles.
- 5/13: Quakers marched 300 miles from NYC to DC to protest Trump's crackdown on immigrants; earlier this year they sued the federal government over immigration arrests in houses of worship.
- 5/14: A coalition of 20 AGs filed two federal lawsuits claiming Trump is threatening to withhold billions of dollars in transportation and disaster relief funds unless states agree to his immigration agenda.
- 5/14: The Indian government denied Trump's claim that the ceasefire between India and Pakistan came about because of his trade concessions, saying no such talks took place.
- 5/14: FDA approved an at-home cervical cancer testing kit, increasing early diagnosis and treatment.
- 5/14: Senator Schumer vowed to hold up Department of Justice nominations in the Senate until he gets proof Qatar's "free" Air Force One plane is not naked corruption and a national security threat.
- 5/15: Governor Hobbs signed legislation creating a rapid response system for issuing and coordinating alerts for missing Native Americans.
- 5/15: Republicans and Democrats alike questioned HHS Secretary Kennedy about his deep staffing cuts, research funding freezes, drastic policy changes and his mixed messages on vaccines.
- 5/15: USDA restores climate change-related pages to its websites after being sued by a National Farming Association, Natural Resources Defense Council, and Environmental Protection Group.
- 5/16: Supreme Court is poised to block Trump's restrictions on birthright citizenship which conflicts with their 1893 decision that the 14th Amendment grants citizenship to all born here.
- 5/16: The chair of Tesla sold off \$230 million of company stock since Musk's appointment that triggered boycotts and protests against his cars and sent Tesla profits and stock prices plunging.
- 5/16: Harvard invested \$250 million to continue research efforts amid the federal funding freeze, joining a growing number of colleges moving to self-fund their research programs.
- 5/16: A handful of Republicans joined all the Democrats in a stunning vote to defeat Trump's tax bill.
- 5/16: Pope Leo's election is viewed as a sign of hope: an American who can speak for them rather than act against them.
- 5/17: Supreme Court rejected Trump's appeal to resume deportations of Venezuelans.
- 5/17: Federal District Judge granted an injunction to prevent HHS from slashing \$11 billion in federal money for public health infrastructure across the country.
- 5/20: Federal judge blocked Trump from dismantling the US Institute of Peace, a think tank created and funded by Congress to resolve violent conflicts around the globe on grounds it ignored the steps required by law and the four congressional committees that have oversight of the institute.
- 5/20: Chief Justice Roberts condemned Trump's push to impeach the federal judge who found probable cause his administration committed contempt of court by ignoring the judge's order on deportations.
- 5/21: Ukraine's European allies imposed new sanctions on Moscow for its failure to end the war.

- 5/22: In an emergency hearing Boston federal judge declared Trump illegally violated a court order blocking deportations to third countries when 8 migrants were sent to South Sudan.
- 5/22: Acting president of Columbia University recognized student activist Khalil who should have received his diploma during their graduation ceremony but was detained and unjustly denied his right to freedom of speech.
- 5/23: Supreme Court ended a publicly funded Catholic charter school in Oklahoma in a 4-4 ruling
- 5/23: Federal judge blocked Trump's executive order to dismantle the Education Department and ordered the agency to reinstate all fired employees in two consolidated lawsuits stating the illegal closures prevent the department from carrying out its responsibilities as required by Congress.
- 5/24: Federal judge blocked Trump from cutting Harvard's enrollment of foreign students that violates the First Amendment and will have a devastating effect on more than 7,000 visa holders
- 5/25: Federal judge blocked Trump from terminating the legal status of international students nationwide.
- 5/25: Federal judge ordered Trump administration to return a Guatemalan man it deported to Mexico where he was allegedly raped and kidnapped, an action that lacked any semblance of due process.
- 5/28: Federal judge lambasted Trump for manufacturing chaos and a lack of clarity as a means of evasion regarding the deportations of migrants to South Sudan.
- 5/28: NPR sued Trump for his executive order cutting federal funds to the 246-station network on grounds that it violates their free speech and relies on authority he does not have.
- 5/29: German Chancellor pledged to help Ukraine develop its own long-range missile systems that would be free of Western-imposed limitations on their use and their targets as they strive to repel Russia's invasion,
- 5/29: Federal judge released a Russian-born Harvard University researcher from immigration custody while she deals with a charge of smuggling frog embryos into the US for her cancer research.
- 5/29: Federal judge refused to dismiss a lawsuit accusing Elon Musk and the DOGE of illegally accessing government data systems, canceling government contracts, and firing federal employees.

From Capitol Media Services/ Arizona Daily Star/ Arizona Republic:

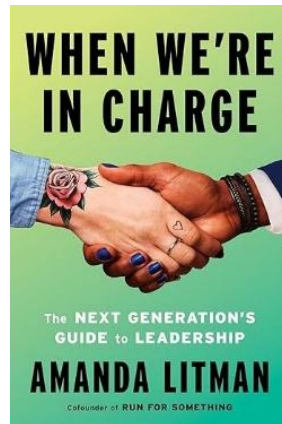
- 5/6: In a landslide vote, the UA faculty approved a referendum urging President Garimella and the Arizona Board of Regents to legally contest and refuse compliance with unlawful demands that threaten academic freedom, the university's governance, and the constitutional rights and safety of students and staff.
- 5/13: Arizona Diaper Bank promoted Period Poverty Awareness Week with its mission to collect \$10,000 and its equivalent in hygiene products for the one in three women who need them.
- 5/13: Community Foundation for Southern Arizona sponsored an event aimed at paring up volunteers and prospective board members with local nonprofits representing arts and education, health and wellness, youth and seniors, foster care and animal welfare, social justice and the environment.
- 5/14: Governor Hobbs vetoed 48 bills, including requiring hospitals to report a patient's immigration status; outlawing cuts in spending for police services; making haphazard changes in ground water regulations; allowing concealed weapons on college campuses, owning silencers, and giving school board members access to sensitive records.

- 5/15: Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management treated 23,000 thousand acres of land and joined the Great Plains Interstate Fire Compact to access suppression resources from other states.
- 5/15: AG Mayes filed a lawsuit to halt pumping groundwater by a Saudi-owned alfalfa farm that is in an “active management area” which requires monitoring and limiting groundwater pumping.
- 5/17 Pima County joined Chicago and Denver in a lawsuit against Homeland Security for money owed them for sheltering migrants; Pima County is owed \$12 million for the agency’s Shelter and Services Program.
- 5/17: Arizona assumed responsibility to regulate tens of thousands wells that dump fluids into the ground that recharge aquifers and could one day bring groundwater desalination to the state.
- 5/20: Old Pueblo Community Services broke ground on a \$3.4 Million renovation of its midtown Veteran’s Center that will raise its capacity to 400 unhoused veterans annually.
- 5/20: Over \$800,000 worth of new items originally intended for asylum seekers were given by the Pima County Community & Workforce Department to the Salvation Army distribution site in Tucson.
- 5/22: City council voted to restore partial funding for Pima Early Education Program with funds from the Hite Foundation and discretionary funds totaling up to \$335K, down from \$740K in previous years.
- 5/22: Governor Hobbs advocated for the Head Start program that serves 17,000 children as a key driver for the future of the state that would suffer dire consequences if it were to suffer federal funding cuts.
- 5/23: Governor Hobbs formed a task force to provide detailed heat-safety guidelines for employers that govern workers, including providing shade, water, rest periods and training.
- 5/23: Tucson Mayor Romero was one of five US mayors sponsored by the Qatari Embassy in DC to attend an Economic Forum featuring 120 speakers and over 1,500 delegates from across the world.
- 5/24: Senators Mark Kelly and Ruben Gallego strongly opposed Republican-led bill that would make Trump’s 2017 tax cuts permanent and would make deep cuts to Medicaid services affecting 300,000 Arizonans.

From Run for Something by Amanda Litman

- 5/12: In the past 6 months, more than 45,000+ people have signed up to run for office. That’s more than in the entire first three years of Trump’s first term.
 - Next year we have a real chance to win big and flip chambers in 2026. For the first time in years, Virginia Democrats are fielding a full slate of candidates for state house.
 - We are partnering with Senator Bernie Sanders to train people to run for office all across the country and we look forward to announcing more partnerships like this in the next few months.
 - When We’re in Charge is a first-of-its-kind practical manual for millennials and Gen Zers who are taking on positions of power and what it means to lead differently in all kinds of spaces.
- 5/19: When we run great local candidates willing to stand up for our values, we can win hard races.
 - John Ewing kept his campaign for mayor of Omaha focused on local issues like street repairs and garbage service while the three-term incumbent Republican mayor talked about trans kids.
 - John won handily and flipped control of the mayorship for the first time in over a decade.
- 5/19: Media coverage:
 - My conversation with Molly Jong Fast on [Fast Politics](#) discussed the generational divide in Democratic politics (and a small rant about how everything is a housing problem.)

- 5/27: We've spent the last 8+ years recruiting young leaders and pushing for generational change.
 - If you care about fixing the Democratic Party and rebuilding our way out of this, you need to care about bringing younger leadership into the fold.
 - Aging leaders need to let go of their dying grasp on power. It's a system that has privileged seniority and entitlement over efficacy and purpose. It's a mindset that the individual is more important than the whole.
 - We are leaving possible points of leverage on the table by letting leaders die in office instead of making space for new voices.



Please join us at our in-person monthly meetings in the large meeting room of the Oro Valley Library from 6:00 – 7:30 pm. We look forward to seeing you!

OPPORTUNITIES, PLEASE BE GENEROUS HELP OUR LOCAL FOOD BANK SUPPORT OUR TROOPS!

* 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.

* 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, toothbrushes, pocket novels and puzzle books.*

July Meeting

Monday, July 14
6:00 -7:30 pm
Oro Valley Library

Speakers:
Larry Bodine, Dr. Teresa Ruiz, & Mo Goldman

Topic:
Politics, Candidacies