



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CENTRAL YAVAPAI COUNTY

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LWV THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CENTRAL YAVAPAI COUNTY
INVITES:

GUEST SPEAKERS:
The Honorable Ralph Hess
Chief Jerald Monahan
Len & Wendy Elgen

TO DISCUSS:

GUN REGULATION – TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE?
Saturday, November 2, 2013
9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Las Fuentes Resort Village, 1035 Scott Drive, Prescott

The League of Women Voters of the United States
position: Protect the health and safety of citizens through
limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of
handguns and semi-automatic weapons. Support
regulation of firearms for consumer safety.

No guns
allowed on
Las
Fuentes
Properties

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS IS A NON-PARTISAN POLITICAL ORGANIZATION ENCOURAGING THE INFORMED AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS IN GOVERNMENT. IT NEITHER SUPPORTS NOR OPPOSES POLITICAL PARTIES OR CANDIDATES.



President's Message

Greetings to everyone. The wonderful fall weather we have been experiencing has been the one thing that kept our energies and spirits up throughout the awful and painful debacle our congressional leaders put us through. May the right lessons be learned from their foolishness! Enough said.

We are about to have a local election in Prescott for a new councilperson and in our local areas for the education bond and budget override. The LWV always supports education by sufficient funding. Be sure to fill out your ballot right away and mail or deliver it to the Fair Street County building early.

Our upcoming program is going to be lively. Gun control is such a hot topic and we expect to have a large audience. Don't hold back if you are feeling too passionate one way or the other to show up. This will be a well moderated meeting with questions for the panel, and a Q & A session with *written questions only* from the audience. This should keep the tone even and perhaps we will all leave the meeting informed and satisfied. We are very pleased to have a retired Judge, the Prescott Chief of Police, and two representatives of the NRA on the panel. I can't think of a more interesting meeting to invite your non-member friends to attend. So please do just that.

We are having our Holiday Luncheon on Dec. 6th. We will have a lovely menu and the price is incredibly still only \$15 for a complete lunch. We ask that you reserve ahead of time by paying in advance. You can bring your check or money to the meeting on Nov. 2nd or, if you prefer, mail a check by Nov. 25th. We will also send out an invitation via email for your convenience with all the details and menu choices. We are having a fun gathering in lieu of a general meeting in December. This will be a lovely lunch, the plans are wonderful.

I hope to send you my message in our November newsletter, and I should make it back in time. Immediately following the Nov. 2nd meeting, my husband Pat and I are heading for Phoenix and then Rome for a well earned and anticipated three week vacation cruise. I'll be home in time to join you for the Holiday Luncheon fun. See you Saturday, Nov. 2nd.

Vicky O'Hara, President



We have plenty of opportunity to get involved in League activities such as voter registration, program planning and publicity. Just let the Board know what you'd like to do!

About our Presenters on November 2....

Brief introduction to Ralph Hess:

Ralph Hess retired in 2011 as a full time judge *pro tem* with the Yavapai County Superior Court. During his judicial career, Judge Hess presided over varied general jurisdiction calendars that included the following areas of law: civil, family law, probate, mental health and civil commitment, criminal, juvenile, and therapeutic jurisprudence.

Prior to his appointment as a full time judge *pro tem*, Judge Hess served as a part-time juvenile drug court commissioner *pro tem* for Yavapai County Superior Court. He was also an Assistant City Attorney for the City of Prescott representing the then self-insured municipality in civil rights, personal injury, workers' compensation, employment, contract, condemnation, zoning, and election matters. He engaged in private general practices in Maricopa County before relocating to Prescott in 1990. He received a Juris Doctor Degree from the University of Toledo and a Bachelor of Science Degree from Bowling Green State University.

In retirement, former Judge Hess occasionally facilitates mediations through the Yavapai County Superior Court and is supportive of various civil liberty, environmental, and non-violence causes. Locally, he has participated with Occupy Prescott and recently joined the local chapter of Veterans for Peace, the Tom Pettit Chapter.

Biographies were requested but not received from the other speakers.

2013-2014 LWV Calendar

General meetings open to the public will be held on the first Saturday of the month, usually in the lower level Community Room at Las Fuentes.

Saturday, Nov. 2	9:30 AM	General Meeting	Reasonable Gun Regulation
Friday, November 8	8:00 AM	Board Meeting	
Friday, Dec. 6	TBA	Members	Holiday Luncheon
Friday, December 13	11:00AM	Board Meeting	
Saturday, Jan. 4	9:30 AM	General Meeting	ALEC/Common Cause
Friday, January 10	8:00 AM	Board Meeting	
January 29	TBA	Meet and Greet	Non-Profits and Government Officials
Saturday, Febr. 1	9:30 AM	General Meeting	Local and State Program Planning
Friday, February 7	11:00AM	Board Meeting	
Saturday, Mar. 1	9:30 AM	General Meeting	Legislative Update
Friday, March 7	8:00 AM	Board Meeting	
Saturday, Apr. 5	9:30 AM	General Meeting	Poverty and Education
Friday, April 11	11:00 AM	Board Meeting	
Saturday, May. 3	TBA	Members Only	Annual Meeting and Luncheon,

The League's Position

Statement of Position on Gun Control, as Adopted by 1990 Convention and amended by the 1994 and 1998 Conventions:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the proliferation of handguns and semi-automatic assault weapons in the United States is a major health and safety threat to its citizens. The League supports strong federal measures to limit the accessibility and regulate the ownership of these weapons by private citizens. The League supports regulating firearms for consumer safety.

The League supports licensing procedures for gun ownership by private citizens to include a waiting period for background check, personal identity verification, gun safety education and annual license renewal. The license fee should be adequate to bear the cost of education and verification.

The League supports a ban on "Saturday night specials," enforcement of strict penalties for the improper possession of and crimes committed with handguns and assault weapons, and allocation of resources to better regulate and monitor gun dealers.

The League acknowledges that the U.S. Supreme Court and the lower federal courts have ruled consistently that the Second Amendment confers a right to keep and bear arms only in connection with service in a well regulated militia—known today as the National Guard.

Update re Court Rulings



From Wikipedia

Second Amendment to the U. S. Constitution:

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

The Second Amendment (Amendment II)

to the United States Constitution protects the right of the people to keep and bear arms from infringement. It was adopted on December 15, 1791, along with the rest of the United States Bill of Rights. The Second Amendment was based partially on the right to keep and bear arms in English common-law and was influenced by the English Bill of Rights of 1689. This right was described by Sir William Blackstone as an auxiliary right, supporting the natural rights of self-defense, resistance to oppression, and the civic duty to act in concert in defense of the state.^[1]

In *United States v. Cruikshank* (1876), the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that, "The right to bear arms is not granted by the Constitution; neither is it in any manner dependent upon that instrument for its existence" and limited the applicability of the Second Amendment to the federal government. In *United States v. Miller* (1939), the Supreme Court ruled that the federal government and the states could limit any weapon types not having a "reasonable relationship to the preservation or efficiency of a well regulated militia".

In the twenty-first century, the amendment has been subjected to renewed academic inquiry and judicial interest. In *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008), the Supreme court handed down a landmark decision, expressly holding that the amendment protects an individual right to possess and carry firearms.

District of Columbia v. Heller

1. The Second Amendment protects an individual right to possess a firearm unconnected with service in a militia, and to use that arm for traditionally lawful purposes, such as self-defense within the home.
2. Like most rights, the Second Amendment right is not unlimited. It is not a right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner whatsoever and for whatever purpose: For example, concealed weapons prohibitions have been upheld under the Amendment or state analogues. The Court's opinion should not be taken to cast doubt on longstanding prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the mentally ill, or laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings, or laws imposing conditions and qualifications on the commercial sale of arms.
3. The handgun ban and the trigger-lock requirement (as applied to self-defense) violate the Second Amendment. Similarly, the requirement that any lawful firearm in the home be disassembled or bound by a trigger lock makes it impossible for citizens to use arms for the core lawful purpose of self-defense and is hence unconstitutional. Because *Heller* conceded at oral argument that the D. C. licensing law is permissible if it is not enforced arbitrarily and capriciously, the Court assumes that a license will satisfy his prayer for relief and does not address the licensing requirement. Assuming he is not disqualified from exercising Second Amendment rights, the District must permit *Heller* to register his handgun and must issue him a license to carry it in the home.

Despite these decisions, the debate between the 'gun control' and 'gun rights' movements and related organizations continues. Since *Heller*, the United States courts of appeals have ruled on many Second Amendment challenges to convictions and gun control laws.

Gun laws in the United States

From Wikipedia

Gun laws in the United States regulate the sale, possession, and use of firearms and ammunition. State laws vary, and are independent of existing federal firearms laws, although they are sometimes broader or more limited in scope than the federal laws. For instance, some US states have created assault weapon bans that are similar to the expired federal assault weapons ban.

State level laws vary significantly in their form, content, and level of restriction. Forty-four states have a provision in their state constitutions similar to the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The exceptions are California, Iowa, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, and New York. In New York, however, the statutory civil rights laws contain a provision virtually identical to the Second Amendment.^{[1][2]} As well, the Supreme Court of the United States has held that the protections of the Second Amendment apply against state governments and their political subdivisions (such as in McDonald v. Chicago).^[3]

Firearm owners are subject to the firearm laws of the state they are in, and not exclusively their state of residence. Reciprocity between states exists in certain situations, such as with regard to concealed carry permits. These are recognized on a state-by-state basis. For example, Idaho recognizes an Oregon permit, but Oregon does not recognize an Idaho permit. Florida issues a license to carry both concealed weapons and firearms, but others license only the concealed carry of firearms. Some states do not recognize out-of-state permits to carry a firearm at all, so it is important to understand the laws of each state when traveling with a handgun.^[4]

In many cases, state firearms laws can be considerably less restrictive than federal firearms laws. This does not confer any *de jure* immunity against prosecution for violations of the federal laws. However, state and local police departments are not legally obligated to enforce federal gun law as per the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in Printz v. United States.^{[5][6]}

Gun laws in Arizona

Subject/Law	Long guns	Handguns	Relevant Statutes	Notes
State permit required to purchase?	No	No	None	No
Firearm registration required?	No	No	<u>ARS 13-3101</u>	State law requires that weapons regulated by the federal National Firearms Act (NFA) be possessed in compliance with the federal NFA.
"Assault weapon" prohibition or restrictions?	No	No	None	No
Magazine Capacity Restriction?	No	No		
Owner license required?	No	No	None	No

Concealed Carry Weapon (CCW) permits issued?	Yes	Yes	<u>ARS 13-3112</u> <u>ARS 13-3102</u>	In Arizona, a person over age 21 may legally carry a concealed firearm or deadly weapon without a permit within the state, except for certain prohibited locations, and must disclose the fact to a law enforcement officer if questioned. Although no longer required, a CCW permit may still be obtained and has certain advantages, including reciprocity with many other states having CCW laws.
Open carry allowed?	Yes	Yes		May carry openly without permit/license.
State preemption of local restrictions?	Yes	Yes	<u>ARS 13-3108</u>	
<u>NFA</u> weapons restricted?	No	No	<u>ARS 13-3101</u>	Automatic weapons, short barreled rifles/ shotguns, and sound suppressors are legal as long as they are registered with the NFA and are in compliance with federal law.
Peaceable journey laws?	No	No	None	Federal rules observed.

10 Big Questions in the U.S. Gun Control Debate

by Patrick J. Kiger

<http://www.howstuffworks.com/10-questions-in-gun-control-debate.htm#page=1>

10. How Many Guns Are in the U.S.?

The U.S. has a lot of guns -- so many, in fact, that there's nearly one firearm for every person who lives in the country. According to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, in 2009 there were an estimated 310 million guns in the U.S., including 114 million handguns, 110 million rifles and 86 million shotguns [source: Krouse]. The 2012 U.S. population is nearly 314 million.

This already huge privately held arsenal is growing at a very fast rate. About 8 million firearms are manufactured globally each year, and 4.5 million are bought by people who live in the U.S. [source: Small Arms Survey].

That may lead you to the mistaken impression that everyone is packing heat. In truth, however, the majority of Americans still are unarmed. In a January 2012 Gallup poll, for example, 43 percent of Americans said they had a gun in their homes [source: Gallup]. That's consistent with the General Social Survey, which has found that over the past several decades, only 44.3 percent of Americans have kept firearms where they live [source: GSS]. In fact, the portion of Americans who are gun owners seems to be on the decline; Gallup, for example, found that the percentage who had guns in 2012 was 8 percent lower

than in the mid-1990s. Some believe that gun ownership may be decreasing because gun owners tend to be middle-aged white males, a demographic that represents a smaller segment of the population in 2013 [sources: [Statistic Brain](#), [Brennan](#)].

However, a relatively small number of heavily armed people -- about 20 percent of the population -- own 65 percent of U.S. firepower, a 2004 survey found [source: [Hepburn et al.](#)].

9. What Does the Second Amendment Say?

The Second Amendment to the [U.S. Constitution](#) states the following: "A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed." But what that means is the subject of intense debate. Pro-gun partisans argue that the Constitution's framers guaranteed peoples' right to possess and carry just about any sort of firearm. Gun control advocates say it was intended to allow states to maintain the equivalent of today's [National Guard](#) units [source: [Krouse](#)].

But as Supreme Court Justice Charles Evans Hughes once noted, "The Constitution is what the judges say it is" [source: [Columbia University](#)]. And so far, probably to both sides' frustration, the courts have never fully defined the Second Amendment and its implications. Instead, the U.S. Supreme Court has issued a series of rulings that mostly have upheld the government's authority to impose restrictions upon weapons.

For example, in the 1937 case *U.S. v. Miller*, a court upheld a federal statute requiring licensing of sawed-off shotguns, saying that some sorts of weaponry weren't needed by a militia and thus weren't constitutionally protected. (Gun rights advocates replied that this type of weapon had been used by militia before.) More recently, in the 2008 case *District of Columbia v. Heller*, the court found that citizens did have a right to possess handguns at home for self-defense. But the justices said the government still could impose other limits -- such as banning criminals and mentally ill people from owning guns, regulating gun sales and barring guns from schools and other places [source: [Krouse](#)].

8. Is the U.S. Gun Homicide Rate Really That High?

In 2011, the most recent year for which statistics are available, the U.S. had 11,101 homicides committed with [firearms](#), which amounted to about 70 percent of all homicides, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That's a rate of about 3.6 gun killings per 100,000 people [source: [Hoyert and Xu](#)].

Whether that rate seems high to you depends upon your perspective. The U.S. isn't the country with the most gun murders, by any stretch -- that would be the tiny Central American nation of Honduras, which has 68.4 gun killings per 100,000 people, which is 19 times the U.S. rate. And there are a bunch of other countries with higher rates than the U.S., such as Mexico, Colombia, the Philippines and South Africa [source: [UNODC](#)]. But those places tend to be developing countries where law and order is weak, or else places with political unrest. Compared to other industrialized democracies, the U.S. gun homicide rate is through the roof. It's more than four times the rate in Italy, six times that of Canada and about 30 times the gun homicide rate in Great Britain or France [source: [Newcomb](#)].

So here's another question: [Would the crime rate in the U.S. be lower if there were fewer guns available?](#) Again it depends on which study you consult. Burglary and assault rates are higher in Britain than in the U.S., but homicide rates are much lower [source: [Civitas Crime](#)]. The UN Global Study on Homicide (by any weapon) put the British homicide rate at 1.2 per 100,000 while the U.S. rate was 4.6 per 100,000 [source: [UNODC](#)]. "While the specific relationship between firearm availability and

homicide is complex, it appears that a vicious circle connects firearm availability and higher homicide levels," the study explains.

7. Are There Countries With as Many Guns as the U.S. but Less Crime?

No, because there isn't another country in the world with as many guns as the U.S. The U.S. comprises 5 percent of the world's population, but owns between 35 and 50 percent of the world's civilian firearms. The rate of about 97 guns per 100 people is tops in the world, with only the unstable Persian Gulf nation of Yemen (90 per 100) coming even close [source: [Small Arms Survey](#)].

So let's reframe the question. Are there countries with relatively high gun-ownership rates -- 50 or more per 100 inhabitants -- and low crime rates? Yes. Finland, which has 69 guns per 100 people, and Switzerland, which has 61 per 100 people [source: [Small Arms Survey](#)]. Finland had just 14 gun homicides in 2010, a rate of 0.26 per 100,000 people. In Switzerland, with 40 gun killings in 2010, had a slightly higher rate of 0.52 per 100,000 [source: [Gunpolicy.org](#)].

But both those countries have stricter gun control laws than the U.S. In Finland, a nation where most use guns for hunting rather than protection, citizens must obtain gun licenses, which must be renewed every five years. They also must state the reason they wish to have a gun -- and self-defense is not a valid reason [source: [Finnish Police](#)].

Police deny or revoke permission if an applicant is convicted of a crime -- or shows any sort of behavior that authorities think might indicate that he or she wouldn't be safe owning a gun. Large-capacity magazines aren't permitted, and weapons must be stored in locked cabinets and unloaded if taken outside the home [source: [Ministry of the Interior](#)]. But even so, Finland suffered mass shootings at schools in 2007 and 2008, in which gunmen killed a total of 18 people [source: [Associated Press](#)].

6. What's a Semi-automatic Gun?

According to the textbook "Crucial Elements of Police Firearm Training," a semi-automatic firearm has a mechanism that automates most of the process of shooting. It automatically loads ammunition from an internal or external magazine into the firing chamber, extracts and ejects the spent cartridge when a shot is fired, and then uses some of the energy of the fired shot to load another cartridge from the magazine so that the shooter can fire again. This enables a shooter to fire a succession of shots quickly, as long as he or she squeezes the trigger again each time [source: [Johnson](#)].

The automation of the loading, firing and reloading process, and the utilization of energy from one round to put the next one in firing position, differentiates a semi-automatic from firearms such as bolt-action rifles and revolvers. In turn, the requirement that a shooter repeatedly depress the trigger again for each shot differentiates a semi-automatic from a fully automatic weapon such as a machine gun. That sort of weapon will continue to fire, as long as the shooter's finger is on the trigger, until it runs out of ammunition [source: [Johnson](#)].

Gun rights advocates often say that semi-automatic firearms should not be considered "assault weapons" because they are not fully capable of "spraying" automatically. But the 2008 edition of "Gun Digest Buyer's Guide to Assault Weapons," a book for gun enthusiasts, lays out a pretty specific definition: Semi-automatic rifles that accept detachable magazines holding more than 10 rounds of ammunition, and often include features -- such as a pistol grip, flash suppressor, folding stock or bayonet mount -- and are designed to make them cosmetically resemble fully-automatic military weapons. The first such weapon was the Colt AR-15, a semi-automatic rifle clone of the military's M16, introduced to the civilian market in 1964 [source: [Peterson](#)].

Assault weapons first earned an unsavory reputation in part because of events such as the 1989 Stockton, Calif., school massacre, in which a mentally unstable drifter shot five children to death with an AKM-47, a semi-automatic copy of a Soviet-Bloc military rifle [source: [Associated Press](#)].

5. How Often Do Gun Owners Actually Prevent Crimes?

People opposed to gun control often have argued that they need firepower to protect themselves against criminals. Take this example from January 2013 when a Georgia woman shot a crowbar-wielding intruder who broke into her home and confronted her and her two young children [source: [CBS News](#)]. Gun control opponents say that a vast number of crimes are prevented by armed citizens, who either shoot an assailant -- an event that happened 326 times in 2010, according to a 2012 Wall Street Journal state-by-state analysis of crime statistics -- or more often, chase the would-be criminal away by brandishing a weapon [source: [Palazzolo and Barry](#)].

There is some social science to back up that thesis. Perhaps the most often-cited evidence is a 1995 study by Northwestern University School of Law researchers Gary Kleck and Marc Gertz. Based upon a random telephone survey of 5,000 Americans, they concluded that there were between 2.1 and 2.5 million defensive gun uses each year. This works out to about 1 percent use of a gun for defensive purposes [source: [Kleck and Gertz](#)].

But critics questioned whether Kleck's and Gertz's findings were reliable. Harvard public health researcher David Hemenway published a paper refuting this and pointing out that "since only 42 percent of U.S. households own firearms and victims in two-thirds of the occupied households were asleep, the 2.5 million figure requires us to believe burglary victims use their guns in self-defense more than 100 percent of the time" [source: [Hemenway](#)]. Another mid-1990s study, based upon a Justice Department survey of nearly 60,000 households, came up with a much smaller estimate of about 21,500 defensive gun uses annually [source: [Committee on Law and Justice](#)].

Even if the low-end estimates are closer to the truth, this still could mean that tens of thousands of crimes are prevented by gun owners annually. But a 2009 University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine study found that people with a gun were 4.5 times more likely to be shot in an assault than those who were unarmed [source: [Science Daily](#)].

4. How Often Are People Killed by Guns That They or Family Members Own?

This is the point that gun control proponents often cite to counter arguments that guns deter crime. People who have guns in their households, they argue, actually may be at greater risk of being hurt or killed by a bullet -- possibly one fired by an angry spouse or by a child playing with a gun that's been left loaded.

Again, there's some social science to support this. A 1997 study published in the American Journal of Public Health found that people in families where someone purchased a gun actually faced an elevated risk of death over the next five years [source: [Cummings et al.](#)]. A three-year study of gunshot injuries in Galveston, Texas, found that only two incidents occurred during burglaries, but there were more than 100 cases of family members, friends and acquaintances being shot by guns in a home [source: [Hemenway](#)].

One big risk is that having a gun within easy reach can escalate an argument or fight into a homicide. A 1992 study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that victims whose family members used a gun in an assault were 12 times more likely to die than when attackers used other weapons such as knives, or their bare hands [source: [Saltzman et al.](#)].

However, an article that appeared in the Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy pointed out that many of the "acquaintance homicides" involved, for instance, drug dealers shooting at each other. "Approximately 90 percent of adult murderers have adult records. ... including four major adultfelony arrests," said the authors [[Kates and Mauser](#)].

Most Americans who die from gun violence in their own homes actually inflict it upon themselves: 19,766 people used guns to commit suicide in 2011, the most recent year for which statistics are available. That accounted for more than half of the U.S. suicides and is much higher than the 2011 gun homicide rate of 11,101 [source: [Hoyert and Xu](#)].

3. Did the Federal Ban on Assault Weapons Affect Crime?

In 1994, Congress passed a 10-year ban on the manufacture and sale of new assault weapons, which the law defined as semi-automatic rifles and handguns with certain military-style features -- such as folding rifle stocks and threaded barrels for attaching silencers -- that didn't have any value to hunters or self-defense. The law also banned magazines with a capacity of more than 10 rounds but exempted weapons manufactured before 1994. The law was allowed to expire in 2004, and how effective it was at preventing crime remains a subject of intense controversy, in part because there wasn't a systematic effort to gather data about its impacts.

A 2004 study by University of Pennsylvania researchers for the Department of Justice found that from 1995 to 2003, gun crimes involving assault weapons that were banned by the law declined in six U.S. cities by between 17 percent and 72 percent. But some of that progress was negated, the researchers found, because even though criminals couldn't buy new assault weapons, they still could easily outfit non-banned weapons with old large-capacity magazines from before the ban, which were plentiful and easily obtained [source: [Koper](#)].

Additionally, manufacturers were able to get around the ban by redesigning weapons and making a few changes to remove the military-style features [source: [Peterson](#)]. The Colt AR-15 that suspect James Eagan Holmes used to kill moviegoers in the Aurora cinema would have been outlawed under the 1994 ban. Yet he could have used a very similar Colt Match Target rifle that would not have fallen under the ban [source: [Plumer](#)].

2. Do States With Strict Gun Control Laws Have Less Gun Violence?

Critics of gun control often point to places such as the District of Columbia, which has a high rate of gun crimes despite strict gun control laws [source: [Liptak](#)]. But social scientist Richard Florida, who has analyzed crime and demographic data, has found a strong correlation between lower firearm deaths and tighter gun restrictions, such as bans on assault weapons and requirements for trigger locks and safe storage of guns. He says that gun violence is less likely to occur in states that have gun control laws. Interestingly, he found no correlation between states' unemployment rates or drug use and gun violence, but he did find that states with high poverty, low numbers of college grads and high numbers of working-class jobs also had more gun violence [source: [Florida](#)].

Gun control advocates say that states' efforts at gun control are undermined, to a degree, by lax laws in neighboring states. Mayors Against Illegal Guns, an organization lobbying for stricter gun legislation, points out that 27.2 percent of guns purchased in Virginia (a state with lax gun control laws) are recovered after being used in a crime within two years of the original sale, which is almost five points higher than the national average, and according to the mayors' group, a strong indication of gun trafficking to criminals [source: [Trace the Guns](#)]. A 2009 study by Johns Hopkins University researchers

found that cities in states with little regulation of gun dealers had guns passing into criminals' hands at two to four times the rate of cities in states with strict laws [source: [ScienceDaily](#)].

1. Has American Public Opinion Shifted on Gun Control, Over Time?

In the early 1990s, Gallup polling showed that 78 percent of Americans favored tighter gun control laws. But that support declined dramatically over the next two decades, and by the mid-to-late 2000s, support dipped to just 44 percent, with nearly as many Americans (43 percent) saying that laws already were strict enough. But in the wake of the Newtown massacre, a December 2012 Gallup poll found a sharp rebound in support, with 58 percent favoring tougher gun statutes, compared to just 34 percent who said they wanted laws to remain the same [source: [Saad](#)].

But Gallup data contains another important but often overlooked point. Though the number of Americans who want stricter gun control has gone up and down (and now up again), the overwhelming majority of Americans over the past 20 years have supported having laws that restrict firearms. In the December 2012 poll, only 6 percent of Americans favor looser legal controls on guns [source: [Saad](#)].

However, that same 2012 poll found that a record 74 percent were opposed to a ban on handguns for anyone but police or other authorized personnel. This was the highest level since Gallup first asked that question in 1959. Pollsters speculate this could reflect Americans' wish to keep the right of self-defense in the wake of high-profile gun violence.





Membership News

Terri Farneti

We have five new members whom I haven't been able to introduce yet and hope to get bios from to let them introduce themselves. Please be sure to welcome them at upcoming meeting!

 Paula Burroughs

 Kristian Kangas

 Joyce VanWalsum

 Ellie Laumark

 Marcia Cossaboom

Membership Orientation

We held our first membership orientation for the year in September. Dale Domzalski was an amazing hostess with hors d'oeuvres and all in her beautiful home. Thank you to Dale and to Vicky O'Hara, Nancy Shugrue, Kathie Rieder, Zene Krogh, Sandi Garramone and Joyce VanWalsum for attending. It was great to have meeting to get to know everyone better.

I will hold another orientation in the beginning of the year and I hope to catch all of the new members at the next one!

Planning Ahead . . . The nominating committee will be meeting in the upcoming months to begin the process of getting the 2014-2015 Board positions filled. The Board is a team of league members who help keep the LWVCYC an organization that is respected and visible in the community. Please consider a board position for next year!

IMPORTANT WEBSITE REFERENCES

LWVUS Website
www.lwv.org

LWVAZ Website
www.lwvaz.org

LWVCYC Website
LWVCYC.org

We recommend that you check these out monthly, or more often. Lots of good information! Bookmark them to save on typing, or go to lwvaz.org, where there are links to click on. Or Google LWVCYC!

Our website includes current and past VOTERS, and other great material. You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter.



League of Women Voters
of Central Yavapai County
P.O. Box 11538
Prescott, AZ 86304-1538

A nonpartisan membership organization, the League of Women Voters neither supports nor opposes political parties or candidates, but encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.