

Extension Homemakers

Arkansas County Newsletter

September, 2020



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The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture is an equal opportunity/equal access/affirmative action institution. If you require a reasonable accommodation to participate or need materials in another format, please contact your County Extension office (or other appropriate office) as soon as possible. Dial 711 for Arkansas Relay.

The Extension Homemaker's mission is to empower individuals and families and to improve the quality of living through continuing education, leadership development, and community service. Together we are making a difference in the lives of others.



OCTOBER EH PROGRAM

Arkansas voters will have more than just people's names on their ballot when they vote this fall. Our ballot also includes several proposed changes to the Arkansas Constitution. The October EH Program is Arkansas Ballot Issues. I have enclosed the program materials for your information along with an *Election Word Search* for fun.

WALK ACROSS ARKANSAS

Walking everyday is one of the easiest exercises for keeping fit, staying healthy, and managing weight. Join the 2020 Fall Walk Across Arkansas and walk towards a healthier life. Participation is free, and registration opened September 8 online at uaex.edu/walk. Minutes can be logged online.



Walk Across Arkansas is an 8-week exercise campaign where you and your team set personal goals for physical activity and try to meet them (with a little help from your friends!) Most of our participants enjoy the camaraderie they share with team members. We have also learned that many of our participants have had more energy, enjoyed better sleep, and found new friends along with a host of other benefits!

Competition is September 15 – November 15. For more information call the Extension Office.

Look us up on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/ArkansasCountyEHC



FLU VACCINATIONS

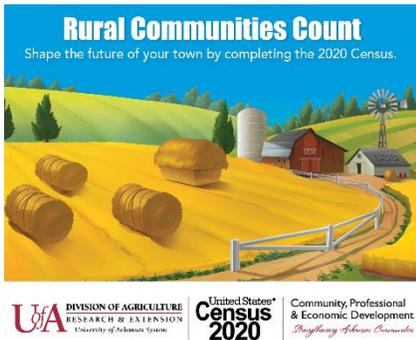
The Centers for Disease Control recommends that everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine every season with rare exceptions. You should get a flu vaccine before flu viruses begin spreading in your community, since it takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body and provide protection against flu. Make plans to get vaccinated before flu season begins. CDC recommends that people get a flu vaccine by the end of October. Flu shots will be available at local health units and no appointment is required. No mass flu clinics are planned at this time. Visit the Arkansas Department of Health, your doctor’s office or a drugstore and possibly avoid getting sick. Stay safe!

EH DELTA DISTRICT RALLY

“Reconnect to EHC” is the theme of the rally on October 22 at the White County Fairgrounds Educational Building in Searcy. Registration is at 9:15 a.m. and the program will begin at 9:45 a.m. Keynote Speaker is Brittany Schrick, Extension Family Life Specialist. The cost is \$18 per person which includes morning snack and lunch. Masks must be worn. All Arkansas Health Dept. guidelines will be followed. Registration along with payment should be turned in to the County Extension Office by Thursday, October 1.

ONE MILLION MEALS

Food Insecurity is the statewide EHC service project for the 2019-20 year. Many families are struggling with food insecurity because of income loss due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. EHC members and friends are encouraged to make a monetary donation as their budget permits. Please take this opportunity to support one of our local food pantries or the state food bank at www.uaex.edu/ehc.



RURAL COMMUNITIES COUNT!

By completing your 2020 Census, you are investing in the long-term health and well-being of Arkansas communities and ensuring your community has the strong public health infrastructure necessary to respond to crises like the COVID-19 pandemic now and for years to come. You can complete your census online at my2020.gov or by calling 844-330-2020.

Please take extra care to maintain good practices such as maintaining social distance, wearing masks and handwashing. You can visit the Cooperative Extension website at: www.uaex.edu/COVID19 or call the Arkansas County Extension Office for information on COVID-19 related issues.

The Cooperative Extension Service is here to help you. If you have questions, please call our office at (870)946-3231 or (870)673-2346. Stay safe! I look forward to seeing you soon.

Visit our website at: <http://www.uaex.edu/counties/arkansas>

ARKANSAS BALLOT ISSUES
Arkansas County Extension Homemakers
Alta Lockley, CEA-4-H/FCS
October, 2020

Uncertainty seems to be the theme for 2020 and the Arkansas ballot issues are no exception. Arkansas is one of 15 states where legislators and citizens have the right to place issues on the ballot for voters to decide. The legislature voted in spring 2019 on the three constitutional amendments they're asking voters to decide, and citizen groups recently submitted more than 89,151 voter signatures collected across the state to qualify their proposals for the November ballot.

But a week after the official statewide ballot was sent to counties, the Arkansas Supreme Court struck two citizen issues – Issue 4 and Issue 5 – from the ballot. The reason? Sponsors told state officials that background checks for people collecting voter signatures had been “acquired” rather than the canvassers had “passed” them. The difference in wording meant none of the signatures from those canvassers could be counted, the court ruled in a split opinion.

The Arkansas Supreme Court’s decision is typically where the story would end. However, sponsors have since filed a federal lawsuit raising freedom of speech issues and have asked a judge to include the two proposed amendments on the ballot.

Several more court rulings are expected soon for other statewide proposals. Issue 2 and Issue 3 from the legislature have been challenged over the wording of the ballot titles. Issue 6 from a citizen group used similar language when submitting their canvasser paperwork, so it’s likely they’ll receive a similar ruling from the court.

Issue 1, a proposed 0.5% permanent state sales tax that would raise funds for state, county, and city road work, is the only proposal not challenged in court.

The Public Policy Center at the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture has provided neutral information on statewide ballot measures since 2004. Despite the unsettled status of proposed ballot issues, we have fact sheets on all of the statewide issues at our website, www.uaex.edu/ballot.

The Ballot Issues

Three of the remaining ballot issues are proposed constitutional amendments. The sixth is a referendum on a state law legislators approved in 2019 that a citizen group would like to

repeal. Arkansas' ballot puts the legislative issues first, followed by citizen initiatives. Below are the issue numbers and our summary of the topics involved.

Referred by the Legislature

Issue 1 – 0.5% state sales tax for state, county and city road and bridge work: This constitutional amendment would create a permanent state sales tax for road work, with the revenue divided between the state (70%), county (15%) and cities (15%). If approved, the sales tax would take effect in 2023. The state's sales tax rate is 6.5%, but a temporary 0.5% sales tax voters approved in 2012 for road work is set to expire in 2021.

Issue 2 – The Arkansas Term Limits Amendment: This constitutional amendment would change Arkansas' existing term limits for state legislators. Currently, legislators can serve up to 16 years total in the General Assembly. Then they are term limited and can no longer serve. Issue 2 would remove that life-time limit. It would allow legislators to serve up to 12 years in a row, followed by a required four-year break in service before they could serve again.

Issue 3 – Changing Arkansas' Citizen Initiative Process, Votes Required for Legislative Ballot Issue Proposals and Publication Requirements: This constitutional amendment would change three sections of the constitution dealing with citizen initiatives, the number of votes required by the legislature to refer an amendment, and the publication requirements for legislative ballot titles.

For citizen initiatives, this amendment would: (1) increase the number of counties where ballot groups must collect voter signatures from 15 counties to 45 counties. (2) Require voter signatures to be submitted to the Secretary of State by Jan. 15. (3) Set an April 15 deadline for when lawsuits can be filed challenging citizen initiatives. (4) Eliminate the cure period, or extra time that statewide, county, and city ballot issue groups have to collect additional voter signatures for their proposals after submitting their first batch of signatures.

For the General Assembly, this amendment would (1) Increase the number of votes required in the state House of Representatives and Senate to place a proposed amendment on the ballot, for a total of 12 additional votes. (2) Eliminate the requirement to publish titles of proposed ballot issues from the legislature in a newspaper in each county six months ahead of the election. Instead, legislative titles be published in a "manner provided by law."

Referred by Citizens through the Petition Process

Issue 4 - The Arkansas Citizens' Redistricting Commission Amendment: This amendment would who is responsible for drawing state and congressional district maps in Arkansas. The Board of Apportionment and state legislators would be replaced with a nine-member Citizens' Redistricting Commission. The proposed amendment lays out how the

commission would be selected, eligibility for serving on the commission, and the criteria they must follow in drawing new districts. The commission would have 3 members representing the majority party in the state General Assembly, 3 members representing the second-highest majority party in the General Assembly, and 3 members from minority parties or no political affiliation. Their meetings and records would be public, and the state would be required to fund their work. Final maps would require six votes, with at least two votes coming each pool of commissioners.

Issue 5- Single Ballot Primary with Top Four Candidates Advancing to General Election for Ranked Choice Voting and Instant Runoff: This proposed amendment would list statewide and congressional candidates on a single primary ballot regardless of political party affiliation. The top four winners would go on to the general election, where voters could rank the candidates in order of their preference. If there's no clear majority winner for one of the covered offices, voters' rankings would be used to narrow down the results until there is a majority winner. This instant runoff process would eliminate the need for a run-off election at a later date. This new system would apply to U.S. congressional offices, state legislators, governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, state treasurer, state auditor, attorney general, and commissioner of state lands.

Issue 6 – Referendum on Act 579, which amends the definition of optometry: This referendum asks voters whether they want to keep or repeal a new state law passed by the legislature in 2019. Act 579 (1) Names five additional procedures optometrists could perform, including several laser procedures. (2) Requires the State Board of Optometry to create a licensing process for those procedures, and (3) Requires optometrists to report the outcomes of these procedures to the state.

For More Information

We will soon publish a voter guide with in-depth information on each of the issues, including what for/against votes mean and what supporters and opponents have to say about the proposals. Our website will be updated as the court hands down decisions on the contested ballot issues. Election Day is Nov. 3. Early voting starts Oct. 19, so use this time to learn about the issues and determine how you want to vote. Copies will soon be available at the Arkansas County Cooperative Extension Service, 1009 Liberty Drive, DeWitt. Contact the Extension Service at (870)946-3231 or (870)673-2346.

Election Word Search

WORD LIST:

- AMMENDMENT
- APPOINT
- BALLOT
- BALLOT
- BILL
- BIPARTISAN
- CANDIDATE
- CONGRESS
- DEMOCRACY
- DEMOCRAT
- DIPLOMAT
- DISTRICT
- ELECTION
- ETHICS
- FEDERAL
- GOVERNMENT
- JUDICIAL
- LIBERAL
- LOBBYIST
- MEDIA
- NOMINATE
- POLL
- PRIMARY
- REPUBLICAN
- SENATE
- STATUTE
- TALLY
- UNITY
- VETO
- VOLUNTEER
- VOTE
- ZONE

C T F S Y B B J M N K L A W W E G E S N X T B G U Z T Y E K
V V R I V D H O L Y R S M U T U N T M E A W R D D Z C R A N
P D J E Z Y Q T Z X M R X L S E F E D A N Q Y F B K M C N E
H K U L P E R F A M M E N D M E N T J Q X A E O U Z D O R Z
D O I M E U L A N Y J P L I D A J U U E C B T A E S M I C C
Y A D Q L X B E M C T P P Z H M K N D T Y S T E A I T H R S
Z B I T P A M L C I A G H T D A Y V G F H T Z O N E U Z D Z
Y U P Q G K M Z I T R J E T A D I Y C D K F D T N Y L A T N
K A L L Z W E D Q C I P F E N I Y C D X D E W E G H U V R Z V W
R P O I H J R O W J A O E D T C Q X D E V E R N M E N T M E
C M M P A C K D Z F C N N S E U G I G O V E R N M E N T M E
D N A D X H T Q G Z O V I L L D T X P T I L O B B Y I S T A
I U T I E Q P I Y J M U L N U M F A S Q R M Y B R Y R N M V
U A L B I P A R T I S A N Z X C D M T Q S R T T Y T Q P V J
B P C A M V D E M O C R A T V U E J V S Z G K Z N O L D Q V
T L Y V R B E A G V Q W C R R D M I N E B S L R Y X I M V C
E T H I C S I U Z Z K M Q E R C O Z K T T R R K A Q B G O L
R M P T W D K O L D R E Y E E S C K Q P C O L C A Q E S G X
F K J U E T U W P N C F Y T N V R O M R J I E T N T R V J W
W X N M L S X Y L H K B D N A K A P P U O R B M I A T P T
Y L P A E E I C O N J X F U E V C M O E D W P T B P L L B X
Z Q X R P O C P V C A E U L G H Y L F A I N T X S J L U W C
C O A H T V O T E T D X Q O D X L Y S B C K H C G I U A O P
A X P D N D G I M E B H K V M M S B V P I Q U A K S D N R V
C D P W R X H L R S R G A C H J N V W H A D L T T M G J E N
M H O J J X I A Y O J E Q Z M V X O V R L P O M S R N B A J
O B I J X L L R A K S O H G X T O X G C K L J J E J E A G R
U G N S J F L M Q Y H U X T O L A B O L F Q S T N H B Q H
M A T N N N E V B Q J X C D Y K D T I A W K S L Y N Z C J P
D A N L R R D J R M F X H Q M H I G B A A H H B I L L C N G