

Women's History Month: AACo Salutes AZ's Women

In honor of March being National Women's History Month here are some highlights about the women who serve as Arizona's County elected officials as well as some influential women from Arizona's past. Of all of the county wide elected positions, women hold 45% of the posts and 100% of the Recorder positions. In their role as public servants, these women have made tremendous improvements to their departments and their communities. Since 1980 Louise Yellowman has been on the Board of Supervisors in Coconino County. At her insistence the Motor Vehicle Division opened an office in Tuba City and she has been instrumental in creating both senior and youth programs within the Navajo Nation.

Also serving since 1980, Cochise County Treasurer Marsha Bonham has always been dedicated to her County. In addition to successfully integrating technology into the Treasurer's office she also maintains close ties to the community by giving regular talks about the history and importance of the railroads in Southern Arizona.

As County Recorder in Maricopa, Helen Purcell has had both statewide and national influence on how elections are conducted. Elected to office in 1988, her 2000 Vote-by-Mail technique became part of the 2000 Computerworld Smithsonian Collection at the National Museum of American History in Washington D.C.

Perhaps these, and all of the other women serving as elected County officials drew some inspiration from trendsetters in Arizona's past. Those in Yavapai County may be familiar with Sharlot Hall. She came to Prescott in 1882 and fell in love with the first governor's house or as she called it "a house of memories." She dedicated most of her life to restoring the building and in 1927 Prescott leased the house to Ms. Hall for life. In 1909 Gov. Sloan appointed her Territorial Historian and thus she became the first woman to hold public office in Arizona.

Apache County gave Arizona and the United States its first woman elected to a state legislature. In 1914, Rachel Berry won a seat in the Arizona House of Representatives. While there she advocated for the state flag we have today, chaired the Good Roads Committee, and unsuccessfully tried to ban cigars and chewing tobacco in the Legislature. After her legislative service Ms. Berry returned to Apache County to chair the Child Welfare Board and serve as a trustee of the school in St. Johns.

The Southern Arizona counties of Cochise and Pima helped Lorna Lockwood find her way into the history books. In 1925 she was the only woman in the graduating class of U of A's College of Law. In 1939 she began 3 terms of service in the Arizona House of Representatives and in 1960 she became the first female state Supreme Court Chief Justice in U.S. history.

Thanks to all the women who contribute to Arizona, your service is greatly appreciated.

Arizona Women's Hall of Fame contributed information for this article

AACo Appreciates all the women in County elected offices throughout the state!

Apache- Melody Capps, Sue Hall, LeNora Johnson, Pauline Begay, Katherine Arviso, Sherry Geisler, Ann Messerer

Cochise- Denise Lundin, Christine Rhodes, Trudy Berry, Marsha Bonham, Judy Bethel

Coconino- Liz Archuleta, Deb Hill, Louise Yellowman, Christine Mazon, Debbie Young, Candace Owens, Cecilia Owen, Bonny Lynn

Gila- Daisy Flores, Anita Escobedo, Linda Haught Ortega, Linda O'Dell, Priscilla Knuckey-Ralls, Patti Nolan

Graham- Jacque Attaway, Darlee Maylen, Wendy John, Donna McGaughey, Jean Reynolds

Greenlee- Armida McCullar, Linda Durr, Cheryl Bowen, Berta Manuz, Patricia Hernandez

La Paz- Mary Scott, Sheri Newman, Shelly Baker, Janice Shelton, Ellen Solper, Elizabeth Williams, Barbara Rycroft

Maricopa- Mary Rose Garrido Wilcox, Helen Purcell, Sandra Dowling, Annette Clark, Jacqueline McVay, Rebecca Macbeth, Pamela Gutierrez, Rachel Torres Carrillo

Mohave- Virlynn Tinnell, Joan McCall, Eunice Blevins, Pam Bibich, Jill Wachtel-Davis

Navajo- Cammy Darris, Juanita Mann, Laurette Justman, A.J. Brown, Phyllis Romo, Alison Burns Kolomitz, Evelyn Bradley

Pima- Ann Day, Sharon Bronson, Barbara LaWall, Patricia Noland, F. Ann Rodriguez, Linda Arzoumanian, Beth Ford, Marla Alvillar, Carmen Maria Dolny, Gail Wight, Susan Bacal, Mary Dorgan, Maria Lilia Felix, Colette Philip

Pinal- Sandie Smith, Kristi Youtsey Ruiz, Laura Dean-Lytle, Dodie Doolittle, Kema Granillo, Toni Lorona, Ellie Brown,

Santa Cruz- Delfina Bauch, Suzie Sainz, Mary Helen Maley

Yavapai- Carol Springer, Sheila Sullivan Polk, Jeanne Hicks, Ana Wayman-Trujillo, Anna Mary Glaab, Katherine Blaylock

Yuma- Lenore Stuart, Casey Prochaska, Beverly Frame, Susan Marler, Karen Fritz, Marcia Worley