



La Palabra

The newsletter of the League of Women Voters of New Mexico

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The League of Women Voters of New Mexico, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Why the state League opposes requirements for voter photo ID

The following appeared in the Las Cruces Sun-News in July

LWVNM Board

The League of Women Voters believes that for our democracy to work, the voting franchise must be extended to every citizen without discrimination based on race, sex, income, education or failure to possess a government-issued photo ID.

'Voter Verification: Facts and Fallacies' panel Jan. 23: See Page 5

Sadly, the history of the United States is fraught with attempts to suppress voter turnout. Property ownership, gender, literacy tests and poll taxes have been used as obstacles to voting. Every obstacle creates, intentionally or otherwise, an adverse impact on some class of citizens.

The League, in particular, takes note of studies that show that photo ID requirements for voting disproportionately impact the young, the elderly, the poor, and racial minorities. Dr. Gabriel Sanchez of the University of New Mexico polled voters leaving the 2006 Bernalillo County polling places. He found that 6 percent of white voters, 8 percent of Latinos and 14 percent of those 65 or older did not have driver's licenses. These percentages may not appear to be large, but with our already low voter turnout, it is politically significant if 1 or 2 percent of citizens are denied the right to vote.

Implementing photo ID would require significant state funding with no return on the investment. Missouri estimated that photo ID would cost the state close to \$6 million in the first year and around

Absent proof of voter fraud, which is scarce to non-existent, there is no justification for making a citizen jump through intimidating hoops to vote.

\$4 million in the second and third years of implementation. Could New Mexico ever justify such an expense when one of four citizens lives in poverty?

To those who argue that it takes a photo ID to fly on an airplane or rent a movie, so why shouldn't we have the same requirement to vote, we respond that it is a matter of indifference to the general welfare of our society and our democracy whether one uses a charge card, rents a movie, or flies on an airplane. But it is not a matter of indifference to our democracy whether citizens are allowed to vote.

Voting is not a privilege; it is a protected right under our federal and state constitutions. Voting is the backbone of our representative democracy. Absent proof of voter fraud, which is scarce to non-existent, there is no justification for making a citizen jump through multiple intimidating hoops in order to vote.

The current voter ID statute, mirroring the requirements of the 2002 Help America Vote Act that was passed by bipartisan majorities in Congress, provides for effective voter identification. Let's leave what's working in place and invest our time, energy, and finances in improving the quality of life for New Mexicans.

Redistricting: Looking ahead to 2020

By Cheryl Haaker

It seems hard to believe, but this year’s statewide redistricting appears to have been an even bigger failure than 2001 was. The governor has vetoed all of the redistricting bills passed by the Legislature except for the Public Education Commission bill. Worse yet, the Legislature did not even pass a Congressional redistricting plan.

Failures. The bills that did pass the House and Senate added fewer seats in the west Albuquerque/Rio Rancho area than had been desired by residents and recommended by demographers. The suggestion that the slow-growing regions of the state have their districts sized near the top of the allowable range and the fast-growing areas given districts on the low side, knowing they would “grow into” them well before 2020, was largely observed in the Senate plan, SB33, but was mainly stood on its head under the House plan, HB39: the urban areas were given districts at the top of the size range, while the rural areas that have literally been losing population have gotten districts with the minimum number of people. Apparently, one rural voter is worth at least 10 percent more than one urbanite in the House ...

Back to the Courthouse. The Special Session on redistricting has adjourned and now it has been left to the courts. What will they do? Going by the precedent of 2001, in which the court said that it was not its responsibility to redistrict, the court might take up a “least change” position.

This was done for the Congressional districts. In 2002, we ended up with the 1990 Congressional districts with just a couple of precincts moved. If the courts do the same this time, we will have the 1990 Congressional districts, with a few precincts moved, through 2021.

“Least change” is relatively easy for the Congressional districts, there being only three of them. For something really complex, like the House, with 70 districts, the courts might decide to start with the plan passed by both houses of the Legislature and make minimal changes mandated by Voting Rights Act lawsuits, as was done in 2001.

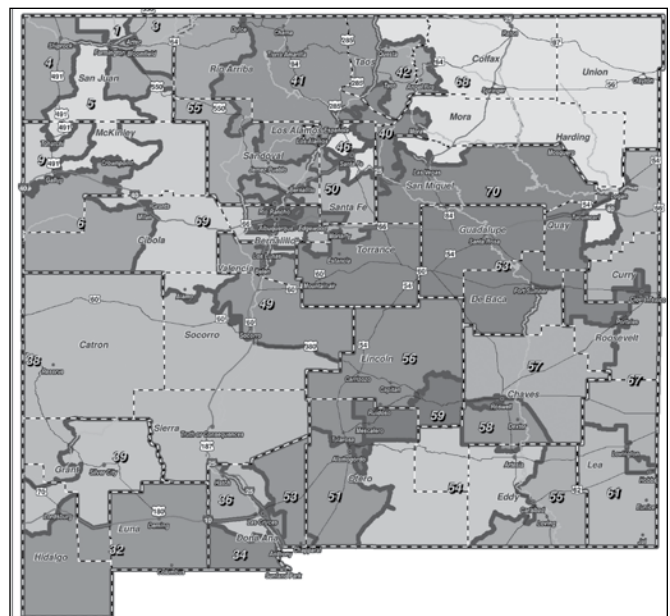
All redistricting lawsuits will be consolidated into the first Judicial District court in Santa Fe and heard by Judge James Hall, who was appointed by Gov. Gary Johnson and retired in 2009. This should provide consistency, speed, efficiency, and one hopes, cost containment. But whatever happens, New Mexicans are going to pay—not just for the litigation, but with suboptimal representation through 2021.

We need to get back to work. The League needs to create a draft proposal on how we feel statewide redistricting should be done in New Mexico. It will have to be an amendment to the state’s Constitution. We will need to work with legislators from both chambers and both parties if at all possible to get a bill into the Legislature. And preferably SOON—before the trainwreck of this year’s redistricting effort is forgotten. Who wants to help? Email or call me! cheryl@haaker.org

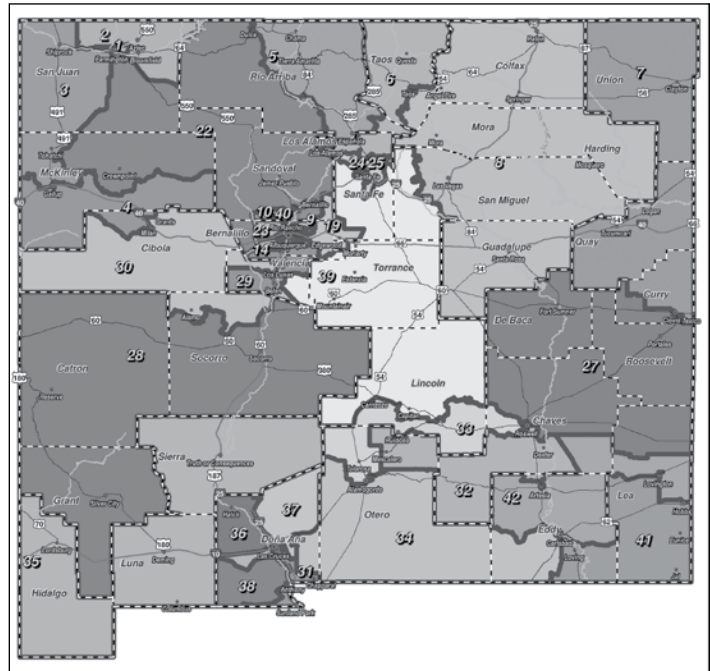
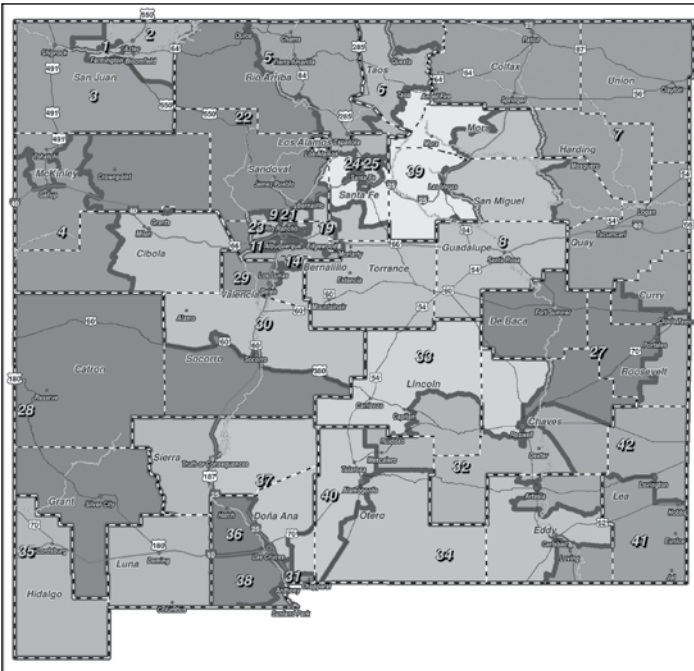


Current House districts

Major changes in districts 67/68, 32/38/39/49, 50/70, 57/58, 54/59. 66 goes to Rio Rancho, leaving Roswell with only three representatives. Los Alamos is contained in a smaller 43. Las Cruces gets part of 38. 65 becomes even more salamander-like.



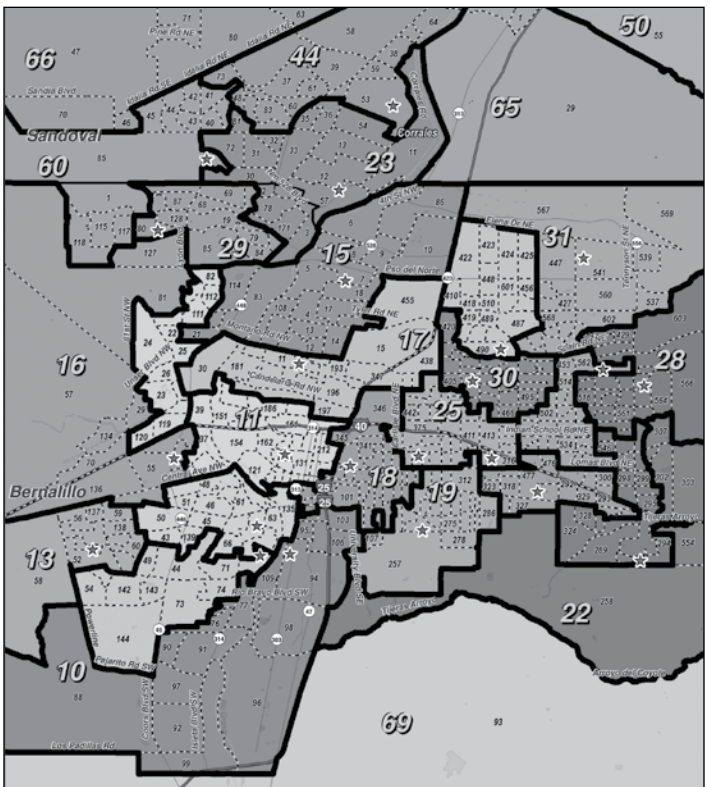
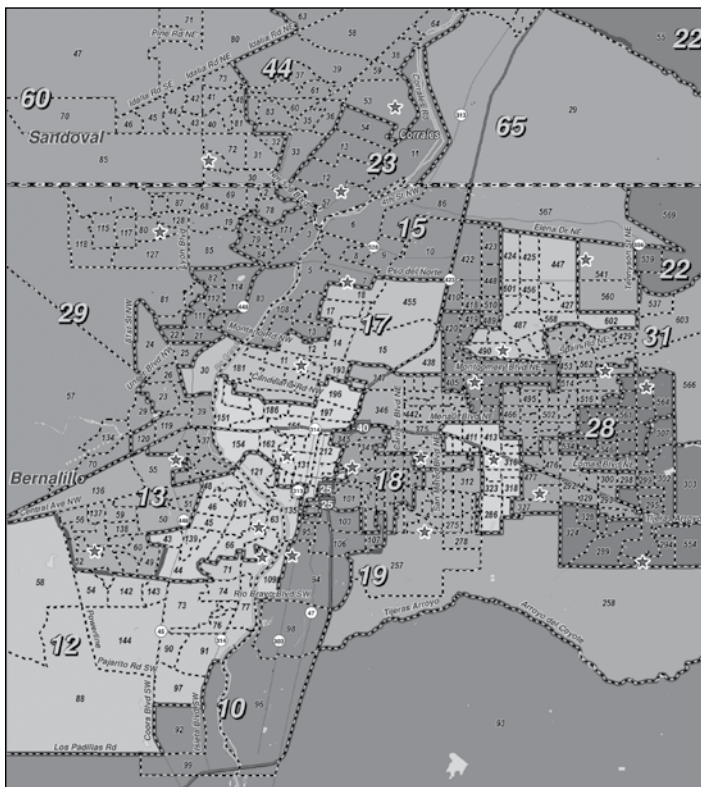
HB39 proposed House districts



Current Senate Districts

SB 33 Senate Districts

↑ Under the Legislature-passed bill, SB 33, Las Cruces loses District 40, which moves to Rio Rancho. A tongue of 35 pokes into the city. Rio Rancho loses 21, which moves back to the east. Los Alamos/White Rock would now be contained in just two districts, 5 and 6. Roswell loses one of its four senators as 42 pulls south. Taos loses 39, which pulls south and expands hugely; it is replaced in Taos by 8, which moves north and also expands.



Current House districts, Albuquerque metro

Proposed House districts in Albuquerque

↑ Districts 13 and 26 move west across I-40. Major changes in 22, 19, 31, 10, 12, A general shifting west to I-25. Districts on east get more compact; those on west shrink and split.

League Day at the Legislature 2012: Priorities

8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2012

State Land Office, Morgan Hall

310 Old Santa Fe Trail, Santa Fe

(just down the street from the Roundhouse)

The 30-day 2012 Legislative Session will deal with many pieces of legislation that have been prioritized by the League of Women Voters.

The 30-day session is limited to budget items and legislation that the governor puts on her call. We expect that the governor will put the Voter Photo ID and eliminating driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants on her call. The LWVNM

opposes both of these pieces of legislation.

This session will also be dealing with the creation of a Health Insurance Exchange—part of the implementation of federal health care reform.

Key to this session will be supporting legislation that creates new revenue sources. Without new revenue sources, a wide range of public programs and services could be cut.

We need your voice to make a difference on these issues. Please plan to attend.

The full details of League Day will be in the winter edition. If you have questions, please e-mail Dick Mason at: action@lwvnm.org or call the office at 505-884-8441.

The LWVNM Action Committee will be sending out e-mail Action Alerts throughout the 2012 Legislative session.

If you are not part of the LWVNM Topics List, please go to lwvnm.org/links.html#listservs and sign up.

For further information on League Day, please call 505-884-8441 or visit the state website at lwvnm.org.

Opportunities to help alcohol study

The lead members of the Alcohol Study Resource Committee met in June, July and September to begin gathering more information for this study.

There are three reports of these meetings ready for distribution to interested League or community members.

Send contact information to Dee Watkins, chair of the study: dwatkins2@earthlink.net (505-823-2308).

Here are some highlights of the Committee's study:

Two approaches to reducing alcohol-related deaths and damage are to focus on individuals and environment. Current strategies in New Mexico have included both methods. The committee is looking at the success of each and how this is

measured.

Barriers to the effective strategies are also being discussed, along with ways to structure priorities for recommending effective action.

Your help is needed to find out about local New Mexico communities. Is there an awareness in your community of the impact of alcohol on vehicular and other accidents, chronic disease, homicide, suicide and other violent acts? Who bears the burden of the costs? Who in the community knows about this and is concerned or taking action?

The next Resource Committee will be Thursday, Oct. 27, 2011; 1-3 p.m. in Albuquerque. This will be a telephone conference meeting.

—Dee Watkins, Chair

Hear ye, hear ye: Salute to New Mexico's anniversary

By Daniel Rudolph
Co-Chair, Salute Committee

On Sept. 17, the LWVNM Board voted to support the "Salute to New Mexico" fundraising dinner sponsored by the LWVCNM to be held in Albuquerque on April 21, 2012. Carol Tucker Trelease and I will co-chair the event, which celebrates New Mexico's 100th anniversary of statehood.

Gov. Susana Martinez has been invited to address the event. In addition, there will be a notable guest speaker, plus a silent auction. New Mexico residents who have contributed in a significant way to New Mexico will be honored. League members are encouraged to submit nominations to Shelly Shepherd, LWVCNM co-president, at shelly@shepdesignassoc.com. Nominations should contain the name and contact information for the person nominated as well as a description of the contribution made by the individual. Awardees will be selected by the LWVCNM and LWVNM board members.

The revenue generated by the dinner will be shared with all the state Leagues on a pro-rated basis, based on the percentage of each League in attendance at the dinner. Therefore it is important to have as many of your League members as possible at the dinner to ensure a greater share of the revenue.

Additional information will be in the winter issue of *La Palabra* regarding event location and possible discounted rates at the event hotel for out-of-town League members.

Voter Verification: Facts and Fallacies

5:30-7:30 p.m. Jan. 23,
Garrett's Desert Inn,
311 Old Santa Fe Trail,
Santa Fe, N.M.

By Meredith Machen

LWVNM is hosting a social/educational event called Voter Verification: Facts and Fallacies—Is Photo ID Necessary? on Jan. 23, the day before League Day at the Legislature. A panel of experts will discuss the facts and fallacies around voter verification

The League is finalizing the panel in coordination with the Election Administration Coalition. Invited panelists include Steve Allen, Common Cause; a representative of the New Mexico County Clerks Affiliate; Alvin Warren for the Native American perspective, and Dr. Gabriel Sanchez, University of New Mexico professor and voting patterns researcher. The event is at 5:30 p.m. at Garrett's Desert Inn, 311 Old Santa Fe Trail.

Our goal is to educate people about the absence of voter fraud and the barriers that photo ID will create for voters. Attendees who wish to stay at the Inn can reserve a room at the Inn's special Legislative rate of \$49 plus tax for a single queen or \$59 plus tax for a king or two queens. Please RSVP for event: leaders@lwvnm.org or 505-577-6337.

Protecting voter participation

Some legislation designed to keep certain voters away from the polls

By Meredith Machen

LWVNM is actively working to prevent the passage of laws designed to keep certain voters away from the polls. Numerous attempts have been made to pass restrictive voter photo ID bills at the state and local levels.

In addition, the governor, secretary of state and others are actively promoting the perception that voter fraud is a widespread problem. According to Daniel Ivey-Soto, executive director of the New Mexico Clerks affiliation, there are NO documented cases of voter fraud occurring at the polls in New Mexico. A coalition consisting of LWVNM, Common Cause New Mexico and other voting-rights advocates are involved in several voter-protection activities.

Testifying in support of a mandatory photo ID bill before the New Mexico Legislature in March, Secretary of State Dianna Duran claimed she had evidence that undocumented immigrants have voted in New Mexico elections. In June 2011, Duran forwarded 64,000 voter files to the New Mexico Department of State Police in an attempt to search for "irregularities." Despite requests, Secretary Duran has refused to provide any evidence supporting these allegations to the public. The coalition has met with reporters across the state to express the view that Duran's handling of this matter has been irresponsible. Fortunately, the state police did not take on the expensive, time-consuming, and unnecessary task of auditing the records.

Meanwhile, the Fair Elections Legal Network, a Washington, D.C.-based nonpartisan nonprofit, decided

to analyze New Mexico's election code to determine if Duran broke state election laws by forwarding the voter files to the state police. Their letter to Duran states: "It is unlawful for the qualified elector's month and day of birth or any portion of the qualified elector's Social Security number required on the certificate of registration to be copied, conveyed or used by anyone other than the person registering to vote, either before or after it is filed with the county clerk, and by elections administrators in their official capacity."

In another arena, the coalition is working with the New Mexico County Clerks affiliation to offer feedback on the clerks' plan to strengthen current voter ID practices without imposing the undue hardships that a mandatory photo ID would cause. While the clerks are not concerned with in-person voting fraud, they wish to put the public perception of such fraud to rest by requesting photo IDs at the polls. If their plan and the enabling legislation passes and is signed by the governor, New Mexico voters will be asked to show a government- or college-issued photo identification at the polls. If voters do not have either of these two types of photo, they can supply their whole Social Security number and birthday on a signed affidavit and still receive regular ballots. This moderate plan is not likely to intimidate and suppress voter turnout.

The League is committed to voter protection, knowing that mandatory photo ID requirements disproportionately impact the disabled, the elderly, the poor, and racial minorities. LWVNM will hold an educational forum on this matter for legislators and League members on Jan. 23, the day before League Day at the Legislature.

News from Local Leagues

Santa Fe County—President Judy Williams

On Sept. 24 the Santa Fe League celebrated 60 years of continuous operation with a garden party in the garden of the historic (WPA) National Park Service headquarters.

Long-time League members, past presidents, politicians and others attended. Our special guest and honoree was Senator Jeff Bingaman. In addition, Becky Frenkel received an award in recognition of her contributions to the League and to the community. It was a great time. Mariano Morales, the composer and conductor, enchanted everyone with his music.

Sept. 28 presented a double-header. The League was on hand in Albuquerque to accept the Dixon First Amendment award from the New Mexico Foundation for Open Government, in recognition of our transparency study and work with local governments on transparency. Billie Blair presented our award, saying “The League’s Santa Fe



Photo by Terry Colby

Sen. Jeff Bingaman and Becky Frenkel, the two honorees at the Santa Fe County League’s 60th Anniversary on Sept. 24.

County project is an inspiring model for citizen participation and a practical template for anyone wishing to

bring sunshine to their own local community.” At the same time the League hosted a lunch and panel discussion for our study of the local courts. Municipal, county magistrate and district court chief judges all participated in an informative discussion.

Members followed the Santa Fe County redistricting process, attending and offering comments at each commission meeting. The county has abided by its pledge to keep the process public and has produced and discarded several maps. It made a final decision at the Oct. 13 final public hearing.

The city of Santa Fe is considering adoption of a transparency position based on the League’s. A resolution has been introduced but not acted on.

The League is planning several meetings and panel discussions in October and November, including a panel on the state’s land use study, the U.S. League’s education study and the Santa Fe mail-in ballot study.

Greater Las Cruces—President Bonnie Burn

Members of the Education Study committee kicked off the second phase of our study, educating and reaching consensus. Las Cruces Public School Superintendent Stan Rounds, as the keynote speaker at our Lunch with a Leader, began the process. He gave a broad overview of the local public school system. An Education Institute consisting of three unit meetings followed:

- State/Federal Government Regulations & How They Impact our Local School System.
- School Education Reform Movement and Its Relevance to our Local School System.
- It Takes a Community to Build Good Schools

A consensus meeting was held and a new position written that will be presented to the Board for approval at its October meeting. All papers associated with the study are available on our website: www.lwvglc.org.

Special recognition and kudos to committee members: Jane Asche, Sue Cain, Sally Christman, Erika Graf-Webster, Roberta Gran, Judy McGuire, Betty Pool, and Bonnie Burn, Chair.

Proposed redistricting maps for the City of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County have been adopted. League members Barbara Goedecke, Peter Ossorio, Tom Schmutge, and I attended the public hearing of the New Mexico Legislative Redistricting Committee held in Las Cruces. Many kudos to Cheryl Haaker and members of the Fair Representation Committee, who did an excellent job of creating public interest across the state. Thank you to everyone who attended the public hearings across the state. Special appreciation to Joe Keefe for videotaping all of the sessions.

The City of Las Cruces is holding its municipal election Nov. 8. The Greater Las Cruces League will be hosting a candidates’ forum and publishing a Voters’ Guide.

Steve Allen, executive director, Common Cause, visited Las Cruces to discuss voter photo ID and the recent allegations of voter fraud by Secretary of State Duran. He was interviewed by local media. Preceding his visit, an op-ed piece, composed from transcript testimony prepared by Jo Porter and Kathy Campbell about voter photo IDs, was published in the *Las Cruces Sun-News*.

News from Local Leagues

Central New Mexico—Co-Presidents Shelly Shepherd and Sandra Browne

The LWVCNM league has not been on vacation this summer. We will report on some of the highlights, and forgive us if we leave out something, because there have been many hard workers “behind the scenes.”

Josephine Porter and Andrea Targhetta deserve high recognition as editors of the 2011 League of Women Voters Municipal Voters’ Guide for the Oct. 4 Albuquerque municipal election. Distribution began Sept. 7 to libraries, senior community centers and other locations throughout the city. The Voters’ Guide was well received, because as always it provides impartial presentation of all ballot issues, including a breakdown of the 11 bond questions, and information regarding the city council candidates. General voting information was provided in both English and Spanish. Josephine and Andrea have been editors of the Voters’ Guides for over a decade and are due the gratitude of LWVCNM for their outstanding professional work. The first thing that comes up in discussions with the public and elected officials when mentioning the League of Women Voters is typically the Voters’ Guide. Bravo!

Delores Watkins and the Drug Policy Committee have not been snoozing this summer. This active group has already begun working on a new study regarding alcohol, looking at the impact of alcohol use and abuse on New Mexico communities, the barriers to reducing this impact, and whether there are policies and interventions that are ineffective or harmful. We look forward to receiving the information that they obtain.

Cheryl Haaker and many LWVCNM league members have joined the LWVNM in a road trip around the state attending Redistricting Committee Hearings



LWVCNM co-president Shelly Shepherd with her mom at the the September luncheon. Central New Mexico has been busy planning a forum on climate change and preparing for our state’s 100th anniversary.

Lora Lucero

and reporting on them. In addition to this huge task, Cheryl has not neglected her duties as technology guru for the League.

Carol Tucker Trelease and Dan Rudolph are co-chairs in planning a celebration of New Mexico’s 100th anniversary of statehood. The LWVNM Board voted to support a fundraising dinner sponsored by the LWVCNM League on April 21, 2012. The revenues generated will be shared with all the state Leagues on a pro-rated basis. Carol, Dan and the committee have many fun and creative ideas to make this an exciting event you will not want to miss. Lots more information will be forthcoming.

The LWVCNM co-sponsored an event on Oct. 16 with the Fulbright Association and Sigma Xi National Scientific Research Society entitled “Perspectives on Climate Change.” Lora Lucero was the LWVCNM liaison for the event. Between 150-200 people attended. Lora will give a full report in the winter *La Palabra*.

Judith Binder has agreed to serve as LWVCNM liaison on the

Advisory Board of the community-based journalism project established by Quote-UnQuote, and attended the “Convocation of Mentor Organizations” program startup meeting on Aug. 20. The goal of the project is to strengthen an emerging statewide rural and urban multilingual news network that represents unheard and diverse voices.

Finally, we have had interesting and inspiring speakers at our general meetings. Mayor R.J. Berry spoke in July about his vision for the future of Albuquerque. Scott C. Miller, author of *Until It’s Gone—Ending Poverty in our Nation, in our Lifetime* was the speaker in August. The luncheon, evening, midtown and Northeast Heights units resumed in September, with Ray Powell, New Mexico Land Commissioner, speaking at the Luncheon Unit on Sept. 8.

State Sen. Linda Lopez spoke at the Luncheon Unit at 11:45 a.m. Oct. 13 at the MCM Elegante Hotel, 2020 Menaul NE. Lopez was co-chair of the state’s Redistricting Committee.

News from Local Leagues

Los Alamos—President Barbara Calef

At Lunch with a Leader in August, Jim Hall, our new state representative, reminded us that, even though our town was spared, the Las Conchas Fire caused considerable damage to homes and businesses in the Jemez Mountains. His first task in his new job was to find assistance for the people who had lost property.

When Hall spoke to us, he was focused on preserving District 43 during the special legislative session. The 2010 Census had revealed that the population of his jurisdiction was short of the ideal by about 2,400.

Hall was worried by warnings he had received from other legislators that his efforts would have no effect on the outcome under the current redistricting system. The warnings seem to have been correct.

Tom Nagawiecki, Los Alamos County's Environmental Services Specialist, discussed waste reduction and energy efficiency at Lunch with a Leader in September. Los Alamos has curbside programs for some paper, plastic and metal wastes. The "single-stream" curbside recycling program increases participation rates, but requires that the county spend as much or more to dispose of the material collected than it does to dispose of trash, since the material is sent to a sorting facility in Santa Fe. It is much more effective for residents to reduce, reuse, and recycle.

Nationwide, almost half of all energy consumed by households is used for space heating; in Los Alamos



New N.M. Rep. Jim Hall, left, spoke about the Las Conchas Fire and redistricting at Lunch with a Leader in August.

this figure might be a bit higher. Water heating is a distant second at 18%, followed by 9% for space cooling (this figure is lower for Los Alamos), then lighting, electronics, cooking, refrigeration, etc. In Los Alamos, residential energy use is increasing significantly, despite lack of population growth.

Efficiency improvements are the best way to reduce energy consumption, for instance, using LEDs and clotheslines, replacing windows and sealing skylights, replacing old furnaces and refrigerators with newer, more efficient models, turning down thermostats and wearing sweaters, and washing clothes with cold water. The county has an energy and water coordinator who will do energy and water conservation audits for county residents.

League members were recently invited to join a discussion about UNM-LA, our local branch of the state university, and its role in the community. Addressing the college's current reputation, the consensus was that it could bear improvement.

Participants in the meeting agreed

that the college should strive to engage residents, become a hub of activity, and offer a variety of challenging programs.

To better serve the interests of the community, the group suggested that the college provide vocational courses including energy conservation, renewable energy installations, auto repair; serve as the academic wing of LANL; and emphasize environmental education, with a link to the Valles Caldera National Preserve.

The LWVLA Land Use and Transportation Committee met in September with the County's Acting Community Development Director to ask about the development issues in White Rock.

The U.S. Department of Energy has transferred several tracts of land to the county to be used to promote economic development. One 60-acre tract in White Rock has been slated for mixed-use development, but prohibitive infrastructure costs (due to the presence of basalt), and the difficulty of obtaining large bank loans have prevented private development so far. The current plan is for the County to build the infrastructure and offer smaller parcels to private developers to build moderately priced homes as well as some office and retail structures. Other plans for White Rock include construction of a new visitor center, and a new senior center and library complex.

La Palabra editor needed!

Do you have a flair for good design and an eye for catching typos? Can you spend a few hours once every three months to put together our state newsletter? *La Palabra* needs a new editor, starting with the next issue. This is a great way to get more involved with the League and help promote LWVNM's efforts and accomplishments. Write to lapalabra@lwnm.org to volunteer or to find out more details.

Land use: Learning from the past or stuck in it?

By Lora Lucero

New Mexico's landscapes are so expansive, beautiful, and downright breathtaking, we might easily overlook man's impact on the land, or think them inconsequential. That would be a mistake. A brief chronology provides some important land use lessons for us today.

The reasons for the abrupt disappearance of the Anasazi in the 13th century are still a matter of debate, but the lesson that we should heed is that our tenure on this land is fragile and we must not take anything for granted.

The Spanish explorers (invaders) did not take their settlement-building for granted. They came armed with rules—known as the Laws of the Indies—which provided details for selecting the site where their town would be built based on considerations of fertile soil, plenty of timber and fresh water, adequate common space for grazing, and easy access.

They were instructed to build the town around a central plaza, and to situate the slaughter houses and other nuisance activities in areas where the filth could be easily disposed. The Laws of the Indies even included design guidelines. Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Taos and Mesilla are present-day reminders of the Spaniards' influence. These early community planners taught us that man's relationship to his environs must not be taken for granted; the location and design of our communities should be deliberate and carefully planned.

When New Mexico was admitted as the 47th state in 1912, the territory had already witnessed the arrival of rail and been surveyed into square townships, which were further subdivided into 36 sections,

There have been no significant amendments to New Mexico's land use laws in 50-plus years. We are witnessing a myriad of disconnects that heighten our concerns for a sustainable future.

each one square mile, or 640 acres. These townships were unrelated to the terrain or any natural features on the ground, but simply a mapping exercise to facilitate the sale of land to settlers and land speculators. As State Land Commissioner Ray Powell mentioned at the LWVCNM luncheon in September, one section in each township was set aside to fund public education; those sections are now overseen by the State Land Office.

New Mexico's population swelled as a result—from 20,000 in 1800, to 200,000 in 1900, and tipping the scales at just over 2 million today. The cautionary note from this part of our history is that land use laws and policies have long-term consequences that may not be clearly understood or appreciated when they are first enacted.

In 1922, the U.S. Department of Commerce published the Standard Zoning Enabling Act (SZA) to provide states with the legal authority to delegate zoning powers to their cities. Zoning is that regulatory tool that separates land uses and spells out how and where structures can be built in the community. Most states adopted the SZA, as did New Mexico, and the cities swiftly enacted their new mandate. The Standard City Planning Enabling Act (1928)

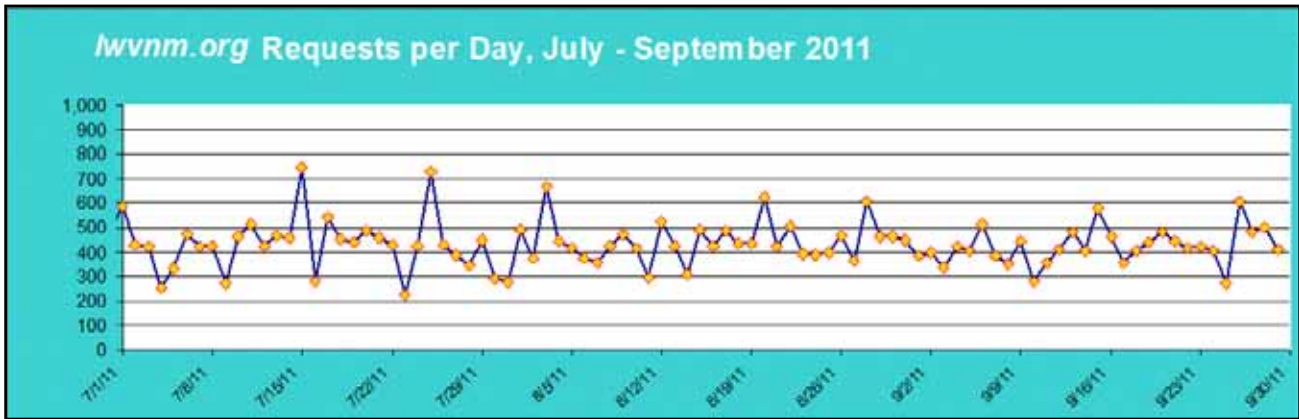
followed a few years later, but was not so fully implemented in many states, including New Mexico. As a result, there are inherent disconnects between our plans and the land use regulations that are meant to implement those plans. The community is not required to prepare or adopt a land use plan, nor is it required to align its regulations (such as zoning and subdivision ordinances) with a plan, or to consider the plans or development in neighboring communities. Community planning has been relegated to the back seat, allowing decision-makers to ignore the possible long-term consequences of their current actions.

Should the state pull back some of the land-use authority it delegated to local governments in the early part of the 20th century and assume a greater role in decision-making? A number of states have started this "Quiet Revolution," restructuring planning and land use laws to address current challenges.

There have been no significant amendments to New Mexico's land use laws in the past 50-plus years. We are witnessing a myriad of disconnects that heighten our concerns for a sustainable future: constrained water resources versus land use development and growth; regional competition for new development to maximize local gross receipts; congested transportation systems versus sprawling subdivisions; future climate change impacts versus current political and economic pressures.

Can we learn lessons from our past or are we doomed to labor beneath the laws that might have worked in the 20th century but fall far short of addressing our challenges in the 21st century? That is one of the important questions the LWVNM land use study hopes to answer.

The Web Monkey



The website has long had a problem with “404” errors: “Page not found.” This occurs when a link references a page that doesn’t exist. Sometimes, there is a misspelling in the page code.

It was thought that the page redesign, which included re-checking all links to make sure that they worked and that all pages on the website were converted to the new format, would take care of the

problem. It seems to be helping: in July, “page not found” errors made up 20.2% of all requests, in August 18.6%, and in September 12.8%—a significant decline, although awful overall. Work continues! (sigh...)

Aside from that, at right are the most requested pages for the July-September 2011 period. The graph above shows total page requests by day for the period July-September 2011.

# Page Requests	Page Requested
6842	404 Page Not Found error
5015	Home page
669	Redistricting resource page
522	Voter Information page
483	Action page
464	Positions page
460	Programs page
431	Board and member documents page
421	Contact page
390	Newsletters page

Highlights from Sept. 17 meeting of state board of directors

Highlights from the Sept. 17 meeting of the LWVNM Board of Directors in Santa Fe.

By Chris Burroughs

Board members moved the location of the November meeting to Santa Fe from Socorro.

Treasurer Cheryl Haaker indicated that the LWVNM bulk-mail account was closed. LWVNM will use the LWVCNM bulk-mail account.

The treasurer’s report indicated that the LWVNM General Fund has \$1,449.49 in the checking account and \$5,020.30 in savings.

Communications chair Joe Keefe said he discovered while attending redistricting meetings around the state that there was interest in the League in Las Vegas, and the board discussed methods to reach more

potential members around the state.

The Board voted to accept the Leadership Team model. Dick Mason and Linda Moscarella serve in lieu of presidents and Keefe and Meredith Machen serve in lieu of vice presidents.

Board policies are to be reviewed every couple of years. Mason proposed that the Nonpartisan and Conflict of Interest Policy and the Policy on Advocacy be reviewed at the Sept. 17 meeting. The board voted to readopt the policies, and, because of the current structure, voted that the Nonpartisan Policy and Conflict of Interest should be amended to say “president or Leadership team in lieu of the president.”

LWVNM archivist Barbara Goedecke submitted a written report on archive activities. The

archives are maintained in the Center for Southwest Research, part of the Zimmerman Library at the University of New Mexico. The link to the online inventory is <http://rmoa.unm.edu/docviewer.php?docId=nmulmss47Ibe.xml>.

Mason provided an update on activities in the Legislature special session. This included efforts to limit social promotion after the third grade (support), Medicaid & Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (support), Foreign Nationals’ Driver’s license requirements (support), and limitation of driver’s licenses (oppose).

Daniel Ivey Soto, executive director of New Mexico Clerks Affiliate, gave a report on the organizations’ Voter Verification Proposal. He provided their recommendations on requirements for in-person and mail voting.

Changes, progress in New Mexico health policy

By Lydia Pendley

This has been a busy and critical summer and early fall for New Mexico's health care system and for implementation of federal Affordable Care Act measures that will significantly impact access to health care for at least 350,000 New Mexicans.

At the federal level a debt ceiling/deficit-reduction "deal" was reached, the Super Committee is at work, and the 2012 budget is "in flux." We need to follow carefully and critically the impact over the next weeks and months on funding for implementation of the federal health-care law, Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security and the many health-related programs that support vulnerable populations in New Mexico.

On the "good news" side, the Department of Health and Human Services ruled this summer that health insurance companies must cover contraceptives without any co-pays.

At the state level, the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee (www.nmlegis.gov) has been meeting monthly to hear reports and testimony on critical issues of health and human needs, including health-care reform, health-insurance reform, Medicaid issues (including Medicaid Redesign), and behavioral health. The next meeting of the LHHS Oct. 5-6 included presentations and discussion on insurance exchanges and a proposal for a nonprofit co-op health-insurance plan.

Medicaid Redesign (www.hsd.state.nm.us) public hearings were held this summer. Several work groups including "personal responsibility" and "pay for performance" have just concluded. The initial draft of the proposed redesign is expected

The PRC has received a second grant (\$3 million) through the Affordable Care Act to continue implementing an improved review process for health insurance rates.

very shortly and will need to be reviewed carefully.

The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission's Division of Insurance (www.nmprc.state.nm.us) is moving ahead with implementation of a more transparent review process of health-insurance rate increases.

Legislation passed in the 2011 legislative session that requires public notice and detailed information about rate increases on the PRC website (www.nmhealthratereview.com), a period for public comment and recommendations to the Superintendent of Insurance prior to rates taking effect. The PRC has received a second grant (\$3 million) through the Affordable Care Act to continue implementing an improved review process for insurance rates.

Tracking this and other consumer protection efforts is critical to health-insurance reform.

In August the governor appointed the director of the Office of Health Care Reform, Dan Derksen, M.D.

Dr. Derksen is a professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine and Senior Fellow for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy at the University of New Mexico. He is a recent past president of the New Mexico Medical Society. He completed a Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellowship in 2008 on assignment to the Washington D.C. office of Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.).

Dr. Derksen continues to practice

family medicine.

While it was not clear after the governor vetoed the Health Insurance Exchange bill that passed in the 2011 Legislative session how the governor would proceed, the OHCR is now applying for the first level of funding for Health Insurance Exchange implementation.

There are two very useful recent publications worth reading from New Mexico Voices for Children (www.nmvoices/publications-by-subject): "Tax Benefits of Health Care Reform in New Mexico" and "Economic Benefits of Health Care Reform in New Mexico."

League members can play an important role in monitoring federal, state and local health policy and action as well as continuing community education regarding the importance of implementation of the federal health care law and the contribution of new federal funding available to New Mexico to increase access and improved delivery of health care.

I would like to invite any League member interested in learning more about health policy and contributing to our positions on these to contact me. I would like to establish a "Health Policy" Committee to provide recommendations to the Action Committee and Leadership Team.

Contact me (Lydia Pendley) at lydiapendley@gmail.com or 505-989-1154.

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Calendar

Saturday, Nov. 5:

Lobbying Workshop at 9 a.m., Sandia Prep Building 100 in Albuquerque. Information: maryhenrie@aol.com and lwvnm.org.

Saturday, Nov. 19: LWVNM Board Meeting in Santa Fe: Oliver La Farge Branch Library

Saturday, Jan. 7: LWVNM Board Meeting in Santa Fe.

Monday, Jan. 23: Voter Verification: Facts and Fallacies (see Page 5 for details)

Tuesday, Jan. 24: League Day at the Legislature (See Page 4 for details)

See lwvnm.org for more details on all events

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