



League of Women Voters of New Mexico

La Palabra

Vol. 68 No. 2

www.lwvnm.org

Fall 2021

League Contacts

LWVNM

Hannah Burling
president@lwvnm.org

Central New Mexico

Academy Office Park, Suites 124,126
3967 Academy Blvd NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110-4158
505-884-8441
Co-Presidents:
Donna Sandoval
Karen Douglas
office@lwvnm.org

Southern New Mexico

P.O. Box 8322
Las Cruces, NM 88006
Eileen VanWie, Co-President van-
week@yahoo.com
Kathy Brook, Co-President Kathy-
brook@comcast.net

Los Alamos

P.O. Box 158
Los Alamos, NM 87544
Barbara Calef, Co-President
Rebecca Shankland, Co-President
president@lwvlosalamos.org

Santa Fe County

P.O. Box 31547
Santa Fe, NM 87594
Jody Larson, Liaison
lwvsfc@gmail.com.

La Palabra Editor

Barbara Calef
bfcalf@gmail.com

La Palabra Publisher

Janet Blair
505-259-0203
jkblair@swcp.com

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.

The President's Corner

By Hannah Burling

LWVNM President: president@lwvnm.org

There are big changes ahead for LWVNM. At the July board meeting, the state League approved forming an Education Fund. This would be an associated 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. The Education Fund will then be able to accept and administer grants so that the state League no longer has to ask the local Leagues to act as fiscal sponsors and burden them with more work. We will also potentially be able to hire staff whose major function would be to mobilize volunteers. The process of obtaining 501(c)3 status could take up to a year.

I hope you have all had a chance to check out the new look for our website. Thanks go to Akkana Peck, Sandra West, Janet Blair and Susan Haase for all their work to improve the appearance and appeal of our virtual home. Please take photos of League events and send them to Akkana at webmaster@lwvnm.org so that we can keep our front page current. We will need to know that we can legally use them.

I have recently participated in two meetings with the national League and there will be new developments coming. I was part of a small group of state presidents who were asked what we needed from LWVUS. The answers included new ways to be a member, mentorship for new members, an updated League Basics, software and website platforms, recognition that DEI should address



disability rights, as well as economic and educational differences. We also talked about interleague and intraleague communications and the possibility of regional conversations. Most exciting however was the promise of a transformed and improved League Management site. I can't wait!

Thanks to Donna Sandoval, LWVCNM Co-President, and Jamie Aranda, LWVSFC member, we are now stepping into the world of

continued on Page 3

Table of Contents

President's Report.....	1
Goldfarb Farewell.....	2
Addressing NM Climate Change.....	3
NM Listens Project.....	5
Dispatch from a Millennial.....	6
Action Comm Report.....	6
Program Report.....	8
Tribal Law Study.....	8
Spent Nuclear Fuels Report.....	10
Local League News.....	11

A Fond Farewell to Diane Goldfarb

Photos by Janet Blair and Karen Wentworth

It was a bittersweet goodbye party for long-time League stalwart, Diane Goldfarb. The party was lavishly hosted by Karen Douglas in her home and attended by several dozen Leaguers. Several of them wrote remembrances of Diane's many years with the New Mexico League.



Meredith Machen and Jody Larson wrote: Diane Goldfarb served on the LWVNM Board for many years and in many roles including Reproductive Rights director and Voter Services chair. She was also president of LWVABC/now LWVCNM for many years. She led many of the state's advocacy efforts related to reproductive choice and health care accessibility, conducted statewide educational programs and moderated candidate forums. Diane was unfailingly gracious and generous with her time and generous with her praise for those of us lucky enough to have worked with her.



Judy Williams wrote: Diane and I worked together in the 2018 and 2020 elections. Both were a real learning experience for us. In 2018 when I was LWVNM president, I got Diane into publishing a dozen separate, printed voter guides for areas of the state with large Native American populations. We obtained a grant to cover printing costs, but it was Diane who shouldered most of the work, with some help from me. Then in 2020 we had to learn a whole new way of doing voter guides when we started to use Vote411. Another steep learning curve

followed, not to mention a huge amount of work. Throughout both elections Diane was professional, dedicated to the task and a pleasure to work with. In spite of all the pressures, we became friends and colleagues. I'll sure miss her next time!

Diane and her husband will shortly be relocating to the east coast to be closer to family.



Captions from top right, counter-clockwise: Karen Douglas, left, with Diane Goldfarb. Terry Quinn cuts the cake. (Left to right) Jody Larson, Diane and Judy Williams. Donna Rigano, left, and Karen Wentworth deep in conversation. (Left to right) Rebecca Shankland, Barbara Calef, Diane and Janet Ford. Group shot of the party at Karen Douglas' home.

Coordinating Strategies to Address Climate Change in New Mexico

By Jeanne Logsdon & Lora Lucero, LWVUS Climate Action Plan Team & LWVCNM Environment & Natural Resources Committee

Recent United Nations reports on climate change are sounding the “code red” alarm that the earth is expected to reach the threshold 1.5° C increase in temperature in the next five years. There’s no escaping the fact that significant actions are needed immediately to have a meaningful impact on the cascading effects of climate change. Higher temperatures are contributing to more drought, increasing wildfires, rising sea levels, and extreme weather events. The State of New Mexico has addressed climate change in fits and starts. It published a climate action plan a decade ago, but few actions were implemented. The current Administration released its climate strategy in 2019 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 45% over 2005 levels by 2030. In October 2020 the New Mexico Climate Change Task Force reported that progress to date “will make a dent,” but the state will need to take further actions to meet GHG reduction goals.

At the municipal level, the City of Albuquerque published its first Climate Action Plan (CAP) in 2009, but little was done to implement it. So, in the spring of 2021 the City started from scratch with the appointment of a CAP Task Force and published a new CAP. The City of Santa Fe has a Sustainable 25-year Plan; Las Cruces adopted its Climate Action Plan in October 2020, and Los Alamos appointed a Resiliency, Energy and Sustainability Task Force in December 2020. These recent steps by state and local public officials show a renewed commitment to address climate change challenges, but there is little evidence that the state and local governments are coordinating or collaborating with each other. Can the League nudge these jurisdictions to work together and coalesce the efforts of other organizations and interested citizens to meet climate goals?

A recently published report by the Climate Action Plan Team of the LWVUS Climate Interest Group provides an invaluable resource for government officials, planners, and community residents who are asking the critical question, “What are the top ten actions and processes that cities should take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?” From its extensive study of dozens of CAPs from cities and counties throughout the country, and hearing from experts in the fields of transportation, energy efficiency, and public policy, the team identified the ten most effective actions and ten processes to reduce GHG emissions. See chart on page 4. Its report also includes examples and studies, all available at <https://groups.io/g/lwvclimateteam/wiki/27436>.

The threats from climate change now require us to shift from the status quo and to learn new habits, take the long view, elevate CAPs (with the emphasis on action) to the top of our priorities, and hold our elected officials and each other accountable for implementing our CAPs. The work of the LWVUS’s climate team is an excellent resource to help us on that journey.

What can our state and local Leagues do to support this effort? An effective next step might be to analyze whether current state and local CAPs reflect the LWV climate team’s Top Ten + Ten. Publicize these actions and processes to educate policy makers and the general public about what is being done elsewhere and can be done here. The climate emergency is right in front of us. Let’s deal with it!

Source: <https://lwvc.org/sites/default/files/Final%20Re->

President’s Corner, from page 1.....

social media. You can help by following us on FaceBook and Twitter. Retweet and share to spread the word!

It’s election season and all the local Leagues are busy with Vote411 and our candidate forums. Our redistricting work continues and the special session for redistricting is scheduled for around December 6th. Our annual Advocacy Workshop will be held on Zoom, which makes it so much more accessible across the state. Then we will swing into the 2022 legislative session. It’s the short session again, focusing on the budget. We hope to meet in person for our annual legislative reception and League Day at the legislature. Please plan to attend. I hope to see you there.



TEN ACTIONS that cities can take to reduce their GHGs

- Move away from fossil fuels**
 1. Terminate fossil fuel *purchase contracts*/enter only into renewable energy contracts.
 2. Permit *new construction* only without fossil fuel energy.

- Electrify buildings**
 3. Retrofit or build *municipal structures* for renewable energy supply and energy efficiency. Install solar PV systems.
 4. Require, or create incentives for, retrofit of *private buildings* for renewable energy supply and energy efficiency.
 5. Offer incentives for and facilitate residential, neighborhood and commercial *rooftop solar*.
 6. Offer *community solar* programs to enable renters/low-income persons to enjoy benefits of low cost renewable energy.

- Electrify vehicles**
 7. Replace fossil fuel *municipal vehicles* with renewable energy powered vehicles.
 8. Install, or incentivize the installation of, *EV charging* stations in public and private parking lots and convenient locations.
 9. Offer incentives and rebates for *EV and electric appliance* purchases.

- Reduce vehicle use**
 10. Reduce vehicle miles travelled (*VMT*) by planning measures and incentives to use public transportation.

TEN PROCESSES for local GHG reduction planning

- Set goals, measure, hold accountable**
 1. Set annual GHG reduction *goals*.
 2. Take *inventory* and use SMART metrics.
 3. Establish *consequences* for failure to meet goals.

- Actions and budget**
 4. Clarify *specific actions* to be taken.
 5. Assign *authority and budget*.

- Integrate actions with public priorities**
 6. Link GHG reduction plans to *workforce development*.
 7. Link GHG reduction plans to *affordable housing and utility* bills.
 8. Integrate climate action with *building codes*.

- Transparency**
 9. Embrace public *transparency* at all stage of planning
 10. Use Climate Action Plans (CAPs) for their intended *purpose of GHG emissions reduction*.

NM Listens Project

Meredith Machen, Projects Director/Education Co-Chair, projects@lwvnm.org

In anticipation of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in 2026, the National Endowment for the Humanities is awarding \$50,000 to each state to address the theme, “Creating a More Perfect Union.”

The New Mexico Humanities Council enjoyed working with us on women’s rights and elections issues in conjunction with the centennial of the 19th Amendment. We participated in panel discussions and provided educational materials for History Day, which engages high school students in exploring themes not generally covered in social studies classes. As a result of this project and webinars on voting rights, NMHC reached out to LWVNM in early summer asking us to help plan activities to address the challenges our democracy is facing. The yearlong initiative, October 2021 through September 2022, is a priority of President Biden’s administration. In his inaugural address, President Biden called for strengthening our commitment to our common purpose: “The American story depends not on any one of us, not on some of us, but on all of us--on ‘We the People’ who seek a more perfect Union.”

Representatives of three of our local leagues-CNM, SNM, and SFC- have been working together with Bethany Tabor at NMHC and Christa Slaton, NMSU government professor emerita, for about three months. We explored many options while writing the proposal and planning activities. We decided to call our project “NM Listens” because we believe that respectful, civil conversations can help people remember that our common ground is stronger than the social, political, and economic differences that have polarized our country in recent years. Civic engagement requires people to listen attentively to each other.

“This project will provide us with opportunities to increase the League’s civic engagement outreach by going beyond the traditional areas we serve, listening and learning from youth, people of color, and others who are marginalized in our democracy.”

We will be developing training materials and conducting sessions for a select cadre of paid conversation facilitators for this project. An end product will be a toolkit with some of the training materials that we can use for future conversations and forums. We will be compiling media literacy guidance to promote accurate assessments of “information” found in corporate- dominant news sources, especially social media. Working with independent professional journalists, we will reach out to local leaders, school groups, and community organizations to promote participation in these civic conversations.

This project will provide us with opportunities to increase the League’s civic engagement outreach by going beyond the traditional areas we serve, listening and learning from youth, people of color, and others who are marginalized in our democracy. We especially want to reach people who feel invisible, unheard, and left out of decision making. We will also conduct virtual forums, inviting participants from around the state to participate online using Zoom and some snazzy technology that NMHC uses.

Please contact me and/or the other project leaders: LWVCNM- Cyprian Devine-Perez, devineperezprian@yahoo.com, LWVSNM- Eileen VanWie, vanwieek@yahoo.com; and LWVSFC- Irene Epp irene.epp@gmail.com if you want to be part of this exciting opportunity to expand our civic education and engagement efforts. The participating Leagues will also be sending out more information periodically through their respective communications.

Thank you for your important contributions to Making Democracy Work!



Dispatch from a Millennial: Intergenerational communication

By Rebecca Álvarez, JEDI Committee Chair

One of the things that attracted me most to the League of Women Voters was the prospect of working together to make a difference in our democracy with a diverse and multi-generational group of women and their allies from across New Mexico. That reality is still very appealing. One of the more challenging aspects of doing this, though, is navigating the generationally different forms of communication that League members use.

As an “elder Millennial,” I have the unique perspective of having had a completely analog childhood, but also an entirely digital adulthood. That lived reality, which spans the range of differential experience represented among older and younger League members, has lent me an empathy for the intergenerational breakdowns in communications I’ve observed between my university students and some older faculty members. It has also helped me understand what different generations in the League are trying to say to each other, and has helped me be more effective as chair of the Justice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee. In order to facilitate communication between different demographics within the League, I’ve generated the following list of tips as grist for thought; you’ll note that they can apply to young and old equally.

Ways to be heard by the audience you’re trying to reach:

1) Always remember to consider empathy before saying something or hitting “send” on that email; think to yourself: What impact will that use of language have on your audience? How would you feel if someone said that to you?

2) Avoid using “us” and “them” forms of language; if you’re using the terms “we” and “they” a lot, you might be engaging in this type of discourse, which “others” the outgroups you’re talking about. See if you can clarify what you really mean without using these terms. For example, “We in the League have traditionally done X” can be reframed as “Historically, the League has done X.”

Try to frame the ideas you’re communicating by using universal language and concepts.

3) Try to frame the ideas you’re communicating by using universal language and concepts. While League members as a whole are a pretty smart bunch, try to remember who your audience is—and that they may not have the same cultural or generational reference points that you do. Not everyone has read the same books you have, or gone to the same schools. My own chagrin came a few weeks ago, when I referenced “Will Smith, the singer,” and my Gen Z student said “You mean Will Smith, the actor?”

4) A certain ex-President was infamous for referring to “the” __ (insert racial or ethnic group here)__. It will have the best impact on your audience if you try to avoid using that article before any particular group—especially if members of that group could be in your audience. For example: “the Gen Z-ers” or “the elderly” could be rephrased as “Gen Z-ers” or “elderly people.” In general, trying to include the term “people” when describing any particular group is a great idea. For example: “poor people,” “working-class people,” “people with disabilities.”

5) Be aware of generational differences in communication. For example, people older than 40 are likely to want a formal email structure, often use formal language in communication, and may not be enthusiastic about communicating by text message. Folks in the Millennial age bracket (ages 25-40 in 2021) are likely to use a lot of friendly language, exclamation points, and salutations in their emails—they may be surprised when you don’t reciprocate and possibly misinterpret your intentions. Young people in the Gen Z age bracket (under 25) may use a lot of emojis in communication and even prefer texting or Snapchat to emailing. Knowing and accepting these differences makes communication between the generations so much easier.

Action Committee Report

By Dick Mason, Action Committee Chair

Update on Redistricting

Albuquerque Community Foundation grant approved

\$10,000 through December 31, 2021 for additional work by our consultant

Citizen Redistricting Committee (CRC)

The first round of public meetings is complete. There was great participation both in person and virtual. Native Americans were very engaged.

The CRC presented their concept maps on September 16. The second round of public meetings will be from September 28 to October 8 to receive input on those maps.

The CRC will present their proposed maps to the Legislature on October 15.

The redistricting special session of the Legislature is tentatively scheduled for December 6.

For all the latest information on the CRC check their website:

<https://www.nmredistricting.org/>

For the latest action by the LWVNM-led Fair Districts for New Mexico check:

<http://fairdistrictsnm.org/>

LWVNM presented to the Courts Corrections and Justice Interim Committee on August 10.

The League arranged a presentation on redistricting. The participants included Justice Chavez on the progress of the Citizen Redistricting Committee (CRC), the All Pueblo Governors Council, and the Navajo Human Rights Commission as well as Dick Mason for the League and Mario Jimenez for Common Cause. Also, UNM Professor Gabriel Sanchez presented on his project to evaluate the CRC process.

Issues in the 2022 Legislative Session

This will be a 30-day session and the Legislature is limited to dealing with the budget and items designated by the Governor.

Budget: There is a projected 1.8 billion in new revenue. We are told that the Legislature does not want to utilize these revenues to expand existing programs. That is to avoid the boom & bust cycles that have haunted New Mexico in the past. For the same reason the Legislature does not plan any major reduction in taxes. Expect the revenues to be used on one-time expenses and to increase reserves.

Other issues: The Legislature is concerned about their lack of input on how federal relief funds are utilized. However, it is unclear if they can effect a change since the Governor would veto the bill. We believe the Governor will put voting issues on her list of items that can be heard. We expect that there will be a bill to make permanent the reforms that were passed during the 2020 session to deal with the pandemic.

LWVNM 2022 Action Calendar:

December 6 Estimated start of the special session on redistricting; may be sooner
December 11 Advocacy Workshop – 10 a.m. to noon, virtual, focus on the budget process
January 13 LWVNM Virtual Legislative Prep - at 5:30 p.m.
February 2 LWVNM Evening Reception - 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. – Location to be determined
February 3 League Day 9:45 a.m.-noon Welcome from Land Commissioner Stephanie Garcia Richard and 2 additional speakers - one on budget issues, possibly one on Independent Redistricting Commission Constitutional Amendment

2022 Session Dates: This is a 30-day session.

January 4-January 14 Legislation may be pre-filed;
January 18 Opening day (noon)
February 2 Deadline for introduction of legislation
February 17 Session ends (noon)
March 9 Legislation not acted upon by governor is pocket vetoed
May 18 Effective date of legislation not a general appropriation bill or a bill that does not have a specified effective date
July 1 Appropriation bills become effective

Program Report

By Kathy Brook, Program Chair

The Tribal Law Study Committee, chaired by Rebecca Álvarez, has been meeting regularly and is tentatively planning an informational meeting for all Leagues on Zoom on Saturday, October 16, at 11 am. The plan is to record the session for those who may not be able to attend live. There will be consensus meetings at a later date.

The board has discussed the possibility of concurring with LWV of California's position (<https://www.lwvc.org/our-work/positions/position-criminal-justice>) on criminal justice, but wants feedback from local Leagues before making a decision on this topic. (Local meetings are being planned now.) The California position "supports a criminal justice system that is just, effective, equitable, transparent, and that fosters public trust at all stages, including policing practices, pre-trial procedures, and sentencing." It also supports reliance on evidence-based research in decision-making, a focus on humane treatment and rehabilitation, elimination of systemic bias, and collaboration between government and the community. Click on the link above to find the full statement of the position. The existing LWVNM positions relating to criminal justice (<https://www.lwvnm.org/positions.html#judiciary>) include selection of judges, funding, alternatives to incarceration, legal aid, the death penalty, and juvenile justice. There is some overlap between the NM and California positions but they focus on different features of the justice system.

Tribal Law Study Update

By the Tribal Law Study Committee

The Tribal Law Study Committee continues to meet and discuss progress, activities, and issues. Formal interviews have been conducted with

- Angel Charley (Ka'waika), Executive Director of the Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women
- Amber Carrillo (Pueblo of Laguna), Executive Director of the All-Pueblo Council of Governors
- Tricia Tingle, Director of Tribal Courts at the Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Abigail Webb, Grant Writer/Manager with the Board of Regents at Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute

Papers have been drafted on

- Background on tribal law, sovereignty, and New Mexico tribes
- Tribal criminal justice and jurisdictions
- Education funding and delivery
- Economic development
- Health care funding and delivery

There may be an additional paper on voting and elections, and possibly a brief paper on environmental issues. Overarching issues we've identified

- Lack of sufficient consultation/collaboration with tribes at the state level
- Inadequate funding of treaty-affirmed services
- Conflicts/gaps between tribal, state, and federal laws

Tribal sovereignty: Nations within a nation

Native American lands and peoples are considered sovereign (independent and equal) nations before the law in their dealings with one another and with the government created by the Europeans who appropriated and colonized their lands.

“Sovereignty is a legal word for an ordinary concept— the authority to self-govern. Hundreds of treaties, along with the Supreme Court, the President, and Congress, have repeatedly affirmed that tribal nations retain their inherent powers of self-government. These treaties, executive orders, and laws have created a fundamental contract between tribal nations and the United States. Tribal nations are located within the geographic borders of the United States, while each tribal nation exercises its own sovereignty.” [1]

The system and history of treaties between the national government and the tribes and nations govern the relationship. Tribally recognized Native Americans have the right of citizenship in their tribe, the state in which they reside, and the United States.

Treaties take precedence over state laws as they are approved under the Constitution of the United States. The US government and the states must negotiate with the tribes and nations as equals, nation to nation. These treaties lay out the specific relationships between the U.S. and the tribes in terms of lands, law, education, health care and other areas. Historically, many legal treaties have been broken or not fulfilled by the U.S. and this fact must be acknowledged. Currently, treaties that were not fulfilled or not enforced in the past are being re-recognized in various jurisdictions across the U.S.

Tribes set up their own systems of self-governance; these systems can and do vary among tribes. They are not uniform. In some cases, leaders are chosen by election; in others they are chosen by more traditional methods, such as councils of elders. The Bureau of Indian Affairs created a model constitution, which some tribes follow; it is not a mandate. The Navajo Nation has no written constitution but does have a tribal code. Several Pueblos have orally transmitted and tradition-based rules for governance. [1]

Indian Law Basics

“**Federal Indian law**” is the body of United States law – treaties, statutes, executive orders, administrative decisions, and court cases – that define and exemplify the unique legal and political status of the over 550 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes; the relationship of tribes with the federal government; and, the role of tribes and states in our federalism.

Federal Indian law has three fundamental legal principles:

- a) American Indian and Alaska Native tribes that are recognized by the federal government are independent sovereign governments, separate from the states and from the federal government.
- b) Unless Congress provides otherwise, the sovereignty of federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes generally extends over their federally recognized geographic territory (e.g., reservations, allotments, trust and restricted Indian lands, and other Indian country), including over the activities and conduct of tribal members and non-tribal members within that territory.
- c) The sovereignty of federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes is inherent and exists unless and until Congress takes it away.” [2]

“**Tribal law**” means the body of non-Federal law that governs lands and activities under the jurisdiction of a tribe, including ordinances or other enactments by the tribe, and tribal court rulings.” [3]

List of NM tribes, pueblos, and nations [4]

Pueblo of Acoma
 Pueblo of Cochiti
 Fort Sill Apache Tribe

Pueblo of Isleta
Pueblo of Jemez
Jicarilla Apache Nation
Pueblo of Laguna
Mescalero Apache Tribe
Pueblo of Nambe
Navajo Nation
Ohkay Owingeh
Pueblo of Picuris
Pueblo of Pojoaque
Pueblo of Sandia
Pueblo of San Felipe
Pueblo of San Ildefonso
Pueblo of Santa Ana
Pueblo of Santa Clara
Pueblo of Santo Domingo
Pueblo of Taos
Pueblo of Tesuque
Pueblo of Zia
Pueblo of Zuni

References

- [1] National Congress of American Indians, “Tribal Nations and the United States: An Introduction,” National Congress of American Indians, Washington DC, 2020.
- [2] Native American Rights Fund, “Federal Indian Law and Policy Affecting American Indian and Alaska Native Education,” Native American Rights Fund, 2000.
- [3] Legal Information Institute, “<https://www.law.cornell.edu>,” [Online]. Available: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/25/162.003>. [Accessed 23 August 2021].
- [4] New Mexico Indian Affairs Department, “<https://www.iad.state.nm.us>,” [Online]. Available: <https://www.iad.state.nm.us/pueblo-tribes-and-nations/>. [Accessed 22 August 2021].

Spent Nuclear Fuel Storage Safety Update

By Karen M. Douglas

• LWVNM Directors Karen Douglas and Bobbi Merryman, both nuclear engineers, presented an informative Webinar to LWV state presidents on July 17 providing background regarding the LWVNM Spent Nuclear Fuel (SNF) Storage Safety Position approved at the 2021 LWVNM Convention. As many of the League members in other states who are interested in SNF Storage Safety had schedule conflicts, the edited recording was distributed in August and posted on the LWVNM News webpage for subsequent viewing by the state League presidents and radioactive waste contacts.

• In July bipartisan Congressional initiatives on SNF storage and disposal were championed by both Rep. Mike Levin, Democrat from California, where the nation’s most problematic SNF remains in corroding canisters with rising a sea level, and Rep. Danny Davis, Republican from Illinois, with eleven nuclear reactors, the most of any state. This effort emphasizes the national urgency to select, characterize, and license a final geological repository for disposal of SNF rather than the continuous and indefinite storage, whether in 77 Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installations in 34 states or in 2 NM/TX CISF locations. Progress on the Yucca Mountain repository, which was ready to receive a Construction and Operation License in 2010 following decades of study and characterization, remains unfeasible due to political opposition. LWVNM would like LWVUS and, more immediately

League leaders in California and Illinois, to concur with the LWVNM SNF Storage Safety Position to be able to advocate for congressional legislative initiatives. However, interested LWVC leadership has not yet been identified. Our goal is adoption of the LWVNM SNF Storage Safety Position at the 2022 LWVUS Convention.

- NM Litigation initiated in July by AG Hector Balderas challenging the legality of NRC Licensing of Consolidated Interim Spent Fuel Storage (CISF) on the basis of the 1987 Nuclear Waste Policy Act is expected to meet with dismissal in September as both Interim Storage Partners/TX and Holtec/NM candidate storage facilities are private corporations. Both the Department of Justice and the NRC filed motions to dismiss the NM challenge.

- Holtec responses to the May 2021 Requests for Additional Information, due to NRC by August 30, must address 69 inadequacies in the Nuclear Safety Analysis. Satisfactory responses could result in construction license issuance by the NRC in January 2022 with anticipated Spent Fuel Storage operations initiating in 2024.

- The Final Environmental Impact Statement for the TX/Interim Storage Partners CISF was issued on July 29. The NRC issued the Construction Operation license on September 13.

Local League News

Los Alamos

by Barbara Calef, Co-President

At last the Los Alamos League was able to celebrate the centennial of the passage of the 19th amendment, just one year late. On August 14 we participated in the Los Alamos Rodeo Parade dressed in white, wearing our purple and yellow sashes, and carrying banners. Then on August 21 our centennial exhibit, "Women's Votes, Voters' Voices," opened in the Step Up Gallery in Mesa Library. The exhibit covered the history of suffrage as well as the history of our local and state Leagues and was well received by the community.

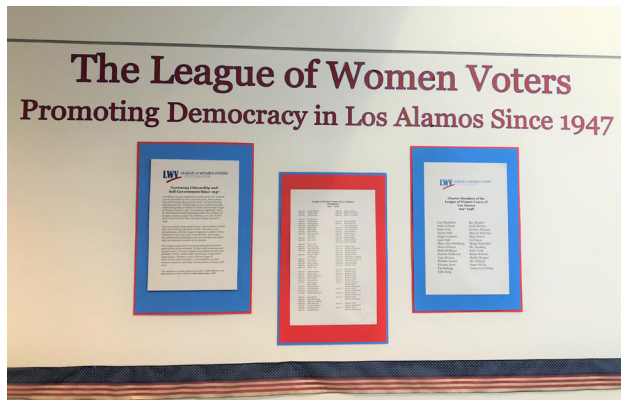
As part of the celebration, we listened to talks about the history of the suffrage movement by Meneese Wall and Sylvia Ramos Cruz. There was also a Chautauqua performance by Deborah Blanche, impersonating Nina Otero-Warren.

During Lunch with a Leader in August we learned about the wide-ranging responsibilities of Newport News Nuclear BWXT (N3B), the contractor hired by LANL to clean up waste at the Lab. Their task is to protect water quality, ship out waste from the Manhattan Project and the Cold War Era, and clean up the land. Amanda White, the Watershed Monitoring & Technical Services Program Manager for Tech2 Solutions, the subcontractor that supports the N3B Water Program, explained in detail the procedure for monitoring and reducing contamination of surface water at LANL.

The Los Alamos League is preparing to educate voters who will be casting ballots in the local election this year.



League members gather at the end of the Rodeo Parade : David Izraelevitz, Ellen Mills, Adelaide Jacobson, Karyl Ann Armbruster, JJ Mortensen, Barbara Calef, Becky Shankland, Colleen Olinger, Rebecca Chaiken, Akkana Peck, Hedy Dunn. Courtesy photo.



LWVLA History in the LWV Centennial Exhibit. Photo by Barbara Calef

We have sent out questions for Vote 411 and our printed voter guide to the candidates for school board and UNM-LA Advisory Board and have scheduled a candidate forum for October 6. In anticipation of the decennial redistricting, the League sent a letter and map to the Citizen Redistricting Committee requesting that Los Alamos County be considered a community of interest. The County has historically been divided into three senate districts and is currently divided in two.

Santa Fe County

By Jody Larson, SFC Liaison

Voter Services

LWVSFC members have stepped up to take care of business for our upcoming elections. For the Voter Guide and the forums, we need to account for the mayor's position as well as four city councilors; two members of the Board of County Commissioners; two members of the Santa Fe Public Schools board, and two members of the Santa Fe Community College board. In addition, the town of Edgewood has one Commissioner's position open, and the Pojoaque School Board has two.

To date, the board has approved the questions for our Voter Guide. The Santa Fe New Mexican has offered to partner with us in providing technology and an indoor space for the moderator and candidates for the mayoral forum so that we can Zoom the forum but have the moderator and candidates face-to-face (properly spaced, of course). We are exploring options for the other forums, including other potential partners.

Meanwhile, our voter registration events are ramping up, with tabling currently being scheduled for the Santa Fe Farmer's Market and three other venues around Santa Fe. The High School Civic Engagement Project is very active, with its members exploring the possibility of a forum for the SFPS school board candidates.

Action and Advocacy

The LWVSFC Board recently approved our matrix, which links issues in local governments to our positions and our internal resources, identifies the responsible local governments, and captures our priorities for possible advocacy and other action during the current year. One of the high priorities is the city's Midtown Campus project, about which we recently submitted a detailed list of questions to both the project manager and other city staff. Our concerns include general transparency as well as financial accountability for the time being, with land use issues awaiting further development.

We are also following the city's CHART project (Culture, History, Art, Reconciliation and Truth), which came into being at least partly in response to the toppling of the obelisk on the Plaza last summer. A series of conversations will take place and the League hopes to have good participation from our members.

In response to a request for assistance, we are exploring the possibility of supporting the Santa Fe County Clerk's expressed need for increased funding for her office. We have asked her to tell us what she has done within the county's normal funding processes.

Other programs

Our Civil Discourse project is on hiatus because of other priorities for many of its members, many related to the

election season. Our Outreach Circle, a new relational organizing platform, will help us keep members informed of events, voting information, and legislative updates. Our technical administrator is managing the nuts and bolts of our local effort. Other Leagues around the country are enjoying success with this program. In this way we hope to engage more members and perhaps attract new ones, by supplementing older methods that may not have as much pizzazz these days.

Events/Speakers

Professor Maryam Ahranjani spoke on “The Constitution, Women and True Equality” on Thursday, September 9 on Zoom. She teaches criminal law and procedure, constitutional rights, and education at UNM School of Law.

Professor Elizabeth Reese spoke on “Power, Access, & Representation in America’s Tribal, State, & Federal Sovereigns” on Sep 17 on Zoom.

Think New Mexico staff presented its Education Reform Legislative Agenda on Zoom on September 29. This program was open to League members anywhere in New Mexico. See our website, LWVSFC.org, for upcoming events in October and later months, as well.

Southern New Mexico

Eileen VanWie and Kathy Brook

A major activity for LWVSNM in August is a strategic planning meeting. This year Kim Sorensen generously agreed to facilitate and Priscilla Parrish took notes for us. We had a two-hour discussion of our priorities for the year, drawing especially on our JEDI strategic plan. The priorities identified were Voter Service, Affordable Housing, New Members (recruiting and mentoring), Education (funding and multicultural learning), NM Listens (with attention to outreach to the community), and use of social media. We have also held a new member orientation and two general meetings in a hybrid format. In August our speaker was Tim Hand, former deputy secretary at the Public Education Department and current chief of staff at Las Cruces Public Schools (LCPS), discussing education and the pandemic. In September, Lt. Governor Howie Morales spoke to us about a variety of public issues including education.

The Southern New Mexico Suffrage Alliance presented Voter Expression, not Voter Suppression, an engaging and informative webinar, on August 28. Featured speakers included our local county clerk and deputy clerk, the NM secretary of state, the national CEO of LULAC, the national board chair of AAUW, an Indian law activist, and a representative of Tortugas Pueblo (in Doña Ana County). The recording of the event is available on YouTube. Our most recent op-ed pieces for the *Las Cruces Sun-News*, the *Las Cruces Bulletin*, and KRWG’s website address democracy in local elections and redistricting.

Several members attended the Citizen Redistricting Committee meeting in Las Cruces and, in advance of the meeting, LWVSNM sent an email to various community leaders encouraging their participation.

LWVSNM is focused this month on collecting candidate responses for VOTE411, for our traditional printed voter guide in English, and for a voter guide in Spanish. We will also be co-hosting candidate forums with KRWG in September and October for the Las Cruces municipal elections (using ranked choice voting) and the LCPS Board of Education.

Central New Mexico

Karen Douglas and Donna Sandoval, Co-Presidents

LWVCNM is pleased to announce that Karen Wentworth accepted the vacant 1st VP/Voter Guide position she had been filling since June 2021 in an off-board capacity. Karen had championed hardcopy Voter Guide activity previously and assumed responsibility for the online Vote411 guide previously managed by Mary Wilson, which will cover the four CNM Counties in 2021: Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, and Valencia.

Unit Meetings featured Fred Nathan, Jr. founder and Executive Director of Think NM, during August with a focus on the November elections as the subject of both the September and October presentations.

During July and August LWVCNM discussed the possibility of hybrid Luncheon Unit meetings beginning in September but continued pandemic restrictions have limited the venue to Zoom. CNM will reevaluate the situation as pandemic precautions vary.

Social media activity came to the forefront for CNM following outside intrusion of a unit meeting presentation on July 8 by Independent Monitor Dr. James Ginger, who discussed the national focus on police practices. The intruder posted offensive remarks in chat during the presentation and, when not addressed during the presentation, subsequently voiced his frustration on social media outlets.

Karen Wentworth, Trish Lopez (social media expert who posts part-time on Twitter and Facebook), Audrey Brunner and Sofia Wolinski, two seniors from Albuquerque Academy (interns who post on Instagram), Starlyn Brown (website coordinator), and Ashley Benning (posting on Facebook) met in August to re-energize CNM social media activity. Additional discussion regarding publicizing Vote411 will be scheduled when it goes live during the second week of September.

There has been a recent focus on violent crime in Albuquerque. Governor Lujan Grisham deployed supplemental NM Police to Albuquerque to support the Albuquerque Police Department, which had experienced many recent vacancies in uniformed officers. The Governor also revised the call to the 2022 NM Legislature to include Public Safety during the 30-day session.

In response to the proposal for LWVNM to concur with LWV California position on Criminal Justice Reform/ Policing Practices CNM has scheduled a panel discussion on criminal justice reform to be held via Zoom on November 9 at 6 p.m. Interested LWVNM members are welcome to attend.

The CNM Natural Resources Committee initiated advocacy by prompting Co-Presidents Sandoval and Douglas to sign the petition to Mayor Tim Keller enforcing a ban on retail use of thicker plastic bags. The City's ban on plastic bags was reinstated on August 1 but there was continued use of the thicker plastic bags. The petition had already been signed by 19 organizations with a deadline of August 27.



League of Women Voters of NM
6739 Academy Rd. NE, Suite 124
Albuquerque, NM 87109

Please consider helping your local League or LWVNM to pay for our voter guides and candidate forums. You can send a tax-deductible gift by check to your local League or to LWVNM. See www.lwvnm.org for more information and links to our local Leagues. Thank you for making democracy work!

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that helps the public play an informed and active role in government. At the local, state, regional and national levels, the League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Anyone 16 years of age or older, male or female, may become a member. The League of Women Voters never endorses candidates for office or supports political parties.