



# 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.*

### **The President's Corner**

*By Hannah Burling*

*LWVNM President: [president@lwvnm.org](mailto:president@lwvnm.org)*

Here we are, in the last weeks before the mid-terms, at a time when our election system is under attack. What can we do to defend democracy at this astonishingly volatile juncture?

A button being sold at the LWVUS national convention in Denver this year read, "Keep calm and vote".

The League is now working with the Democracy Project, spearheaded by New Mexico First. We are a part of the team working on engaging voters in the election process, which this year means reassuring voters as well as informing them.

Polling places need workers, voters need accurate facts, and misinformation needs to be squelched. The League has the experience, the volunteers, and the resources to combat this. Now is the time for facts, for nonpartisanship, and for civil discourse.

I'm sure that many of us have already volunteered as poll workers.



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What else you can do:

- Find LWVNM on social media and follow us. Share our posts on Facebook, retweet on Twitter, watch our TikTok videos, see us on Instagram. Amplify the accurate information in our Get Out the Vote campaign. Ensure that people know how to find Vote411 online.

- Our videos about the security and privacy of your ballot are being shown on PBS and are available on social media. Our radio PSAs are going out in Spanish, English and Navajo.

- Take a photo of yourself with a

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banner for our #I Vote Because drive and send it in.

- We have our new platform, OutReach Circle. Download it from the app store onto your phone and then search for New Mexico. When LWVNM comes up, follow it. You can share these posts with your contacts.

Thank you for all that you do. An especial thank you to Judy Williams and our team of Voter Guide volunteers as well as our Vote411 contractor, Maia Pugh, who is boldly leading us into the wilds of social media.



## Action Report

By Akkana Peck, Action Co-Chair

The Action Committee met on September 2 to discuss ongoing projects.

The committee will be switching to Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. as a meeting time, since a lot of people have trouble making it on Fridays. However, during the next legislative session we'll revisit that decision.

**Reproductive Rights:** Ann brought us up to date on a meeting discussing reproductive issues and whether our state legislature should codify the right to abortion, or other laws addressing reproductive justice (a term we'll be hearing a lot more in the near future). There are other related issues that might be candidates for bills, like geofencing (a way that law enforcement can track which phones go to a particular place, like an abortion clinic); and the problem of Crisis Pregnancy Centers or CPCs, which are faith-based establishments that present themselves as though they're medical centers, but instead of offering abortions, they give out an experimental medication that they say reverses the effect of the abortion pills. We don't yet know any specifics about bills we might see in the next session.

**Tax Policy:** Dick described a meeting that he, Kathy and others attended last week that discussed ways to make our tax system more progressive while still providing more revenue.

**Redistricting:** There's a lot going on. A poll of NM voters showed that 73% want an independent redistricting commission, while only 12% are opposed. So, if we could get the constitutional amendment on the ballot, it would almost certainly pass.

**Voting/Elections:** There's been a lot of discussion on voting bills for the 2023 session, whether there would be one huge omnibus bill like the one in 2022, or a lot of separate bills. It's looking as though there will be separate bills, and we hope it'll stay that way. Hannah and Dick will be meeting with the Secretary of State's office to discuss what bills they want to see.

**Outreach Circle:** Hannah encouraged everybody to go to the app store for their phone (either Apple or Android), install the Outreach Circle app, set up an account, then sign up with LWVNM (which should be the only thing that shows up if you search for New Mexico). During the session, things happen really fast at the Roundhouse and Hannah thinks this will be a much better way of alerting people when things happen, or of prompting people

to contact their legislators.

There was some discussion of our 2023 legislative priorities -- it's early still, but we're likely to care a lot about bills related to reproductive justice, voting, and modernizing the legislature. LWVNM's Natural Resources Committee will be renamed the "Environment Committee."

## **Voter Services**

*By Judy Williams*

It's been a busy quarter! LWVNM has produced our online Voter Guide, [Vote411.org](http://Vote411.org). Countless volunteer hours by members of all the local Leagues and LWVNM went into this endeavor. We were fortunate to obtain funding for a project coordinator, Maia Pugh. She worked with the entire team to upload data, troubleshoot and all the rest.

Another major project was the production of Voter Guides for the 12 counties that serve Native American populations: Bernalillo, Cibola, Luna, McKinley, Otero, Rio Arriba, Sandoval, San Juan, Santa Fe, Socorro, Taos and Valencia. We piggybacked on the CNM and Santa Fe Leagues to use their already-created Voter Guides in four counties. We obtained a grant to print guides for the other eight counties.

At the end we faced the challenge of delivering them to the far-flung parts of New Mexico. Many volunteers stepped up to distribute them. The biggest job was shouldered by "Mobile" Dave Larson, Jody's husband. He drove to Gallup, Grants, Aztec and Española. Karen and Steve Wentworth drove to Alamo in Socorro County. Linda Miller's brother and sister tag-teamed to get them to Mescalero in Otero County. John and Bekki Cook of Santa Fe took a road trip to Taos.

The League is known for its volunteer efforts, and we have people ready to do any job, any time. We appreciate the Thornburg Foundation for its long-term support. LWVUS also provided us with a grant.

## **Redistricting Report**

*By Dick Mason*

Dr. Gabe Sanchez of UNM collaborated with Redistricting Partners and Dr. David Cottrell of the University of Georgia to produce a comprehensive evaluation of the 2021 redistricting in NM. The report was released on September 24th and was followed by a webinar co-hosted by the LWVNM-led Fair Districts for New Mexico and New Mexico First.\*

Some key findings:

1. Survey respondents were asked to provide an "overall" grade for the performance of the legislature in New Mexico during this cycle of redistricting. Only 17% of respondents believed that the state legislature deserved an A or B, with a majority (56%) giving the legislature either a D or F.
2. A poll of likely voters found that 77% of respondents support "creating an independent New Mexico redistricting commission that would directly, without the legislature's involvement, draw the lines of legislative and congressional maps."

A majority of New Mexican voters support this reform, regardless of demographic or political identity. These findings were consistent with what the interview participants conveyed, with consensus among experts interviewed that it is necessary to move toward a truly independent commission with binding decisions on district maps.

Fair Districts for New Mexico and its 41 partner organizations plan to introduce a joint resolution in the

2023 session. The joint resolution needs to pass both chambers by a simple majority to go on the 2024 ballot. We need all of you to let your legislators know they should vote for the joint resolution. IT IS TIME TO LET THE PEOPLE DECIDE.

\* Copies of the 59-page report, its 3-page Executive Summary and a recording of the October 4th webinar are available on the Fair Districts for New Mexico website: [www.fairdistrictsnm.org](http://www.fairdistrictsnm.org)

## ***Spent Nuclear Fuel Storage Safety Report***

*By Karen M. Douglas*

LWVNM initiated a draft “Nuclear Issues Study Proposal” following the LWVUS Convention in June. The California League then drafted an alternate and broader energy study proposal with the intention of placing nuclear energy in their Renewable Energy Committee. (Nuclear energy isn’t renewable but is the greatest GHG-free U.S. energy source.) However, the California and Pennsylvania Leagues’ bylaws don’t permit studies to be introduced outside of annual conventions (their next occur in 2023), thereby eliminating the opportunity for revising the LWVUS Position during the 2024 LWVUS Convention. The LWVNM bylaws are more flexible and could support a study by the state League leading to the adoption of a new position with which other state Leagues could concur prior to the LWVUS Convention in 2024. Seventeen states participating in the nuclear issues deliberations now await a decision by LWVUS about whether they will allow this approach.

The US Department of Energy distributed the results of the Consent-Based Siting for Spent Nuclear Fuel (SNF) Consolidated Interim Storage Facilities. LWVNM had responded to the request for public comment in March and the results were distributed to the NM SNF Storage Safety Committee for consideration.

On July 28 the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, chaired by Senator Heinrich, addressed legislation sponsored by ranking member Barasso to ban imports of Russian uranium (Russia is the fourth largest world supplier) due to the Ukraine invasion. The U.S. does not currently have sufficient trusted sources and is dependent on Russian conversion and enrichment for reactor fuel in currently operating nuclear power plants. Russia also provides 50% of world enrichment capability.

The NM Interim Radioactive and Hazardous Materials Committee, which met in Clovis in August, included a presentation by Ed Mayers, HOLTEC Program Director for NM CISF, addressing railcar transportation safety and transport cask design. LWVNM SNF Storage Safety Director Karen Douglas was among the speakers testifying, and provided a brief capsule of the provisions of the LWVNM SNF Storage Safety Position.

## ***Program: Administration of Justice***

*By Kathy Brook*

As you may recall, last winter local Leagues were asked to discuss the LWV California position on Criminal Justice to recommend whether the LWVNM board should concur with the position. Based on the feedback received, the New Mexico board did concur and a subcommittee of the board convened to discuss how to blend our existing positions related to the justice system with the California position. At the September board meeting, the new Administration of Justice position was approved and will soon be available on the LWVNM website. Some board members have identified areas not addressed by the position and will be discussing the possibility of further study of justice issues in the future.

Many thanks to the subcommittee consisting of Barbara Calef, Eileen VanWie, Meredith Machen, Jody Larson, and Karen Douglas and to the local Leagues who provided feedback.

## **Action Committee: Taxes and Budget Subcommittee**

*By Kathy Brook*

The LWVNM Taxes and Budget Subcommittee has been following the work of the Interim Committee on Revenue Stabilization and Tax Policy. Thanks go to Laura Riedel who has shared her notes on those meetings and provided a chart of tax reform ideas based on expert recommendations and her observation of what legislators might be interested in. These include broadening of the gross receipts tax (GRT) base by eliminating exemptions to the tax; eliminating direct business tax pyramiding; reducing the GRT rate; implementing dynamic scoring in assessing tax efficiency and effectiveness; and increasing fuel taxes to support infrastructure and economic development needs.

League subcommittee members also participated in the September 1 meeting of the Fairness Project.

The speakers reported that we could expect to see more paid media and op-eds soon on Constitutional Amendment 1 concerning the Permanent Fund. Bill Jordan of NM Voices for Children discussed potential tax changes such as a doubling of the child tax credit; a possible minimum corporate income tax; repeal of GRT exemptions; and a possible real estate transfer tax (in place of an effort to raise the property tax). There was also discussion of creating more funds where the state could “tuck away” money (for example, to support developmental disabilities, behavioral health, and communities adversely affected by the energy transition).

## **New Mexico Listens Project Update**

*By Meredith Machen, LWVNM Projects Director*

In October 2021, the NM Listens project officially began. Over the previous summer, the League’s project leaders worked with the New Mexico Humanities Council (NMHC) to craft a proposal for funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The project was designed in response to President Biden’s call to all Americans to do their part in creating “A More Perfect Union.” NEH gave the Humanities Council in each state the opportunity to design their own program to promote democratic values in advance of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, which we will celebrate in 2026.

NMHC came to LWVNM because of their respect for our capacity to promote civil discourse and practice the principles of a functioning democracy. Over the years, we have worked with NMHC in other capacities. Most recently NMHC helped us create resources and lectures to promote the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment in 2020, recognizing women’s voting rights and contributions. While the League has worked on civic issues since 1920, NM Listens has increased our capacity to facilitate, educate, learn, and advocate with an ongoing commitment to civil dialogue and civic engagement. Over the yearlong grant period, we reached out to individuals and communities throughout the state with whom we had not previously collaborated.

We held small and large in-person listening sessions as well as Zoom webinars. Statewide projects range from panel discussions on Democracy and Elections, to the NM “HERstory” Symposium, to interviews with relatives of victims and federal and state officials working to address the Missing & Murdered Indigenous People epidemic. The various programs provided learning opportunities for the public to hear experts discuss topics that rarely get discussed in depth. League members joined participants from around the state.

The project gave flexibility for local Leagues to create different approaches to accomplishing the goals. In common with Southern New Mexico, the NM Listens team in Santa Fe County chose a path that emphasized listening to learn. The opening presentation by scholar Estévan Rael Gálvez emphasized the complex, blended histories of our state. During the rest of the year, NM Listens leaders from LWVNSFC arranged community meetings in Edgewood, a rural village in Santa Fe County, and public meetings with LGBTQ+ groups and food distribution volunteers. In each case, the events served as ways to amplify and learn from those whose voices are seldom heard.

Middle and high school lessons incorporating women into NM history courses are being prepared in conjunction with the implementation of NM's new Social Studies Standards. Students will conduct primary and secondary research and write profiles of women, some of which will be added to those included in <https://www.nmhistoric-women.org/women/> Some of the statewide and Santa Fe County events are available at: <https://nmhumanities.org/NMHC.php?p=271>

The Southern New Mexico League worked with diverse groups of people who shared their perspectives about what is working and not working in our democracy; and proposed actions that would strengthen our democracy. LWVSNM members were trained as facilitators to create safe spaces for listening to learn, encouraging participants to share honestly, and writing records of the conversations. The groups reached were beginning sociology students at NMSU, high school seniors, leaders of Tortugas Pueblo, and members of the Las Cruces Green Chamber of Commerce.

Each group dialogue brought new understandings about democracy and civic issues. The university students, meeting via Zoom in February and March, felt comfortable sharing diverse points of view on complex issues in small breakout groups. The long list of civic issues of concern included mental health, hunger, homelessness, law enforcement, and access to education. In May an in-person meeting was held with high school seniors and their government teacher. Selected student and League facilitators focused on listening and recording the students' ideas. Major civic issues that arose there were voter apathy, minimum wage needs, the two-party system not working, and mental health needs.

In June leaders of Tortugas Pueblo shared how the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 destroyed Spanish settlements in Northern New Mexico, which forced Spaniards to march south. Isleta Puebloans followed. These Pueblo members joined with the local Manso Indians and stayed in the Las Cruces area. The Pueblo people celebrate traditions and do not want to be federally recognized. We respect their wishes to retain their sovereignty. When Pueblo leaders asked about the League, we described our nonpartisan policy, mission, and public services. The Pueblo leaders described some of their civic issues, including encroachment on their land by the City of Las Cruces and the need for funding to update their infrastructure and develop their property and buildings.

In August, League representatives attended a Green Chamber of Commerce (GCC) mixer and GCC members wrote answers to two questions on a survey about actions needed to strengthen our democracy and about their civic concerns. The issues raised reflected current events, including women's rights, LGBTQ rights, immigration, homelessness, poverty, education, and the economy.

The project leaders faced many challenges (including technology issues) and created new approaches to expand civic engagement. The project required continuous analysis, flexibility, and revised plans, but it reinforced our belief in the value of listening and creating safe spaces for diverse ideas to be shared. It also suggested that League members see themselves as learners, collaborators, and facilitators, rather than solely as educators and organizers.

While the NEH funding has ended, the NM Listens concept continues. NM Listens fosters collaboration and helps us build relationships with diverse groups around the state. NM Listens highlights the value of listening to multiple perspectives as a way of expanding civic engagement, building and strengthening partnerships, and increasing our capacity to promote civil discourse, learning, and understanding.

The Humanities Council is making a short video on NM Listens featuring interviews with the project leaders and clips from our activities, which we may be able to use to solicit funds for future activities as well as to promote the project. The logo is trademarked to the League of Women Voters of New Mexico, so with or without funding, the name and graphics are owned by the League.

NM Listens supports the mission of the League to empower voters and strengthen democracy, as well as our

commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI). The goals of the project deserve expansion. Participation by more LWVNM members is invited as we develop more ways to encourage civic and community engagement. Get in touch by writing [projects@lwvnm.org](mailto:projects@lwvnm.org). We're listening!

NM Listens Leaders: Meredith Machen, LWVNM Projects Director and Eileen VanWie, LWVSNM Co-President; Irene Epp and Ricann Bock, LWVSFC Listens Leaders.

## ***Reproductive Justice Report***

*By Ann LePage*

Since the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* by the U.S. Supreme Court, women in our country face a reality of oppressed rights and discrimination. The national and New Mexico Leagues of Women Voters have voiced strong opposition to the Court's decision and its resultant health care issues.

Fortunately, in New Mexico abortion is not illegal, but the New Mexico Supreme Court has not ruled that it is a right. Many groups here are working to establish a woman's right to self-determination. The groups include but are not limited to the Tewa Reproductive Justice Committee, the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, the United Methodist Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the New Mexico League of Women Voters, and the ACLU.

To date there are six abortion clinics in three counties in New Mexico: Bernalillo, Santa Fe and Doña Anna. They do not all provide surgical abortions, but they all provide health care including medication for abortions. Both the Native Health Clinics and the Indian Health Centers have historically suffered from underfunding; the Hyde Amendment restricts access to abortion by denying federal funding for abortions.

In a meeting with the Southwest Women's Law Center, the spokeswoman put forward their focus for legislative action. Because they believe that a "positive" law (i.e., abortion is a protected right) requires a bargaining process, abortion proponents may end up with less than they want. Therefore, they advocated proposing multiple bills to protect data privacy (prohibiting geo-fencing, i.e., not allowing entities to gather data by putting a field around an area to collect private information); provider protection; and greater access to women's health care facilities, especially in rural areas. Additionally, they want to raise awareness of the true nature of the Crisis Pregnancy Centers (CPCs). CPC organizations operate facilities that try to attract pregnant women who want an abortion. They often advertise themselves to give the impression that they are neutral health care providers or even abortion providers. Not only are they not health care providers, but they are anti-abortion. They approach women going into abortion clinics and use shame and lies to influence them not to go their appointments.

In a Zoom meeting with the ACLU, the spokeswoman told the attendees that securing reproductive rights, including access to contraceptives, will be a long fight. Tell your senators and representatives that you want them to vote for legislation for our rights. To help the various clinics (see the list below) send them letters of support or financial help. Additionally, urge our legislature to fund health center improvements and additional sites.

Abortion Acceptance of New Mexico, 522 Lomas Blvd NE, Albuquerque 87102

Planned Parenthood, 701 San Mateo NE, Albuquerque, 87108

Planned Parenthood, 730 St. Michael's Dr., Ste. 4B, Santa Fe, NM 87505

Women's Reproductive Clinic, 5290 McNutt Rd., Ste. 103, Santa Teresa, NM 88008

Full Circle Health Center, 210 W. Las Cruces Ave., Las Cruces, NM 88005

Las Cruces Women's Health Organization, 2918 Hillrise Dr., Las Cruces, NM 88011

# Local League News

## **Santa Fe County**

*By Jody Larson, SFC Liaison*

The Santa Fe League, now 150 members strong, is focused on multiple activities this fall. Of course, the Voter Services and Communications committees have been working on our Voter Guide and voter information publications; the latter was an insert in the Santa Fe New Mexican on September 16, and the former will appear in the same newspaper on October 1. Vote411 is being updated and should go live on Monday.

We are collaborating with our local NAACP Voting Rights Committee on a canvassing project. We are working with NOW volunteers providing voter registration and information at the Santa Fe Place mall. Our recently updated How to Vote flyer will be distributed by the Food Depot, a local church, and a food pantry. We have also printed door hangers and yard signs and have created several election materials in English and Spanish. They are being distributed to community-based organizations, including youth groups. Our high school Civic Engagement project continues work on a “Why Vote?” presentation.

Together with the *New Mexican*, we hope to hold three candidate forums in October: the candidates for NM State Representative 46 have confirmed, the candidates for Congressional District 3 have indicated approval and are negotiating with us, and we have contacted the staff for all of the gubernatorial candidates.

Our annual Legislative Luncheon with all of the state Senators and Representatives from Santa Fe County will take place on January 11 at La Fonda.

Arrangements are nearly concluded for the first of two webinars with new local resident and member, Terry Root, who was part of the IPCC group that won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007, together with Al Gore, for their efforts to educate about climate change and lay the foundations for addressing it. We will invite all local Leagues to join the webinars, which will update us on this existential threat.

Our Action and Advocacy Committee continues to monitor several high-profile issues in the city, including development of the Midtown property (former College of Santa Fe campus) and the CHART process, for which the final report was published recently to decidedly mixed reactions from the public and from the city’s Governing Body. The Board of County Commissioners recently introduced a draft ordinance on short-term rentals and received mostly negative comments at its first public hearing.

Our local League’s “NM Listens” project will present a performance of “Save the Bees,” written by Democratic NM State Senator Bill O’Neill with input from his friend, Republican State Senator Cliff Pirtle. The project will also present a youth forum in October about the importance of the youth vote and of heeding younger voices. After this, the grant expires.

Our two interns keep our social media sites roaring along. In the future, we may consider hiring a “content generator” and social media coordinator for a few hours a week, to keep these accounts active and current. We have found such outreach beneficial to existing members, and instrumental in attracting new members.



## **Central New Mexico**

*By Karen Douglas, CNM Co-President*

Voter Guide activities and distribution challenges continue for the LWVCNM four county region (Bernalillo, Sandoval, Tarrant, and Valencia) - the Tarrant County Clerk will not accept LWVCNM calls and The Sandoval County public library system won't display Voter Guides as they are perceived to be partisan. Voter Guide proofreading was completed on September 28.

Election plans have also included requests for candidate forums. Mary Henrie Smith capably managed the September 28, 2022, Valencia County Candidate Forum with Gina Mahfouz, LWVCNM Voter Services Chair as timekeeper. A second forum is scheduled for October 3, 2022.

Completed LWVCNM Voter Registration Events:

- Democracy Coalition Rally – Saturday, September 24;
- Cuidando Los Ninos – September Fall Open House on Tuesday, September 20; and
- National Voter Registration Day Tuesday, September 20, 2022, Alvarado Square, Bernalillo County Government Center, Albuquerque.

The September LWVCNM general meeting featured representatives from Bernalillo and Valencia County Clerks' offices discussing the upcoming election. The October 13 general meeting will offer Trip Jennings/NM in Depth and Amy Linn/Searchlight NM, both online journalists, providing insight and recommendations regarding mis- and disinformation in public media. The November 10 general meeting will feature Kerry Bass, Executive Director of the Center for Electoral Quality and Integrity, presenting "International Standardization of Election Processes."

The September 17 new member reception offered the first opportunity for new members to meet the LWVCNM Board since the pandemic began in the spring of 2020. Board members discussed their portfolios and opportunities for new member involvement.

APD Forward and the City of Albuquerque/ Department of Justice (CABQ/DOJ) Consent Decree progress has been marked by adjustments lowering the number of paragraphs (there are 276 measurable paragraphs in the Consent Decree) requiring quarterly reporting due to continued APD compliance. The External Force Investigation Team (EFIT) Federal Court hearing on October 5 will include testimony regarding the 3rd and 4th EFIT quarterly status reports with CABQ & DOJ response and opportunities for AMICI testimony. The September 22 Valley Community Policing Council presentation addressed the downtown CABQ corridor and will include both the civic and cultural benefits featured downtown and the current crime level which deters visits by many CABQ residents and visitors.

The CABQ Climate Action Plan (CAP) release September 2022 (the 2021 CAP may be viewed at <https://cabq.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c9133274376ca07b064336927&id=b6136ccd30&e=e9c74d2b72>) was followed by the September 28th community involvement Energy Efficiency webcast. Dr. Jeanne Logsdon, [jlogsdon@unm.edu](mailto:jlogsdon@unm.edu) LWVCNM Director for Environmental Issues, can provide additional insight.

## **Southern New Mexico**

*By Kathy Brook and Eileen VanWie, Co-Presidents*

**Voter Service** In conjunction with PBS station KRWG, candidate forums are underway for legislative races in our area as well as for the only contested Doña Ana County Commission race and the sheriff's race. League

members serving as co-moderators worked with KRWG content director Anthony Moreno to develop questions for the candidates. In addition, we are working with the Las Cruces Bulletin and Camino Real Media to publish printed Voter Guides in English and Spanish for Doña Ana County. League members Karena and Stew Oberman provide valuable services to the County Clerk throughout the year in organizing voter registration activities including weekly registration tables at the Las Cruces Farmers and Crafts Market in September and National Voter Registration Day activities at high schools, Doña Ana Community College, and NMSU. They also arrange for voter registration at local naturalization ceremonies, the most recent being on September 9.



Cecilia Tellez and Kathy Brook offer voter registration at Sunland Park. Photo by Eileen VanWie

Finally, for the first time, the League had a registration table at the Ardovino's Farmers Market in Sunland Park, NM in close proximity to the Texas and Mexico borders. Flyers about the election are being prepared for distribution with utility bills in the southern part of Doña Ana County.

**General Meetings** Since few SNM members viewed the movie early in the summer, the August general meeting featured *Suppressed and Sabotaged*, followed by a discussion of the issues raised. In September, we benefited from Heather Balas's presentation on ways to improve elections

**Election Security** In September SNM Co-Presidents spoke with members of the Coalition of Conservatives in Action about election security. In addition, the SNM board has been encouraging members to attend Doña Ana County Board of County Commissioners meetings to provide public input on the League's view that elections in the county and the state have been efficiently and effectively administered.

**Other Activities** The local education committee held its first meeting to review the existing position to determine areas requiring updates. SNM Co-Presidents and Hannah Burling held a Zoom meeting with potential League members from the Alamogordo/Otero County area to discuss how they might be involved with the League or create a unit with an existing League. Four of them have already joined the LWVSNM

## Los Alamos

By Barbara Calef, Co-President

Nine League members marched in the annual rodeo parade this year, reminding the spectators to register and vote in the midterm elections.

Sara Mason, Group Leader for the Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) of New Mexico, presented "The Climate Challenge" at the August Lunch with a Leader meeting. Citizens' Climate Lobby is an international, nonpartisan, grassroots organization with over 200,000 supporters. The organization trains and supports volunteers to build relationships with their elected representatives in order to influence climate policy. CCL recommends passage of the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, which would institute a carbon fee on fossil fuels and return the funds to households as a dividend. They believe it would incentivize an explosion of clean energy while sending money to households to spend. The latest version of the bill was introduced in the House in 2021. CCL seeks

volunteers to lobby members of Congress to support the bill.

The Voter Guide questions for local offices were chosen during the August board meeting. The Voter Guide was published on October 6 and distributed to every household in the county. LWVLA held two candidate forums. The first, for the County Council candidates, was via Zoom on September 29. Over 100 people watched it. The second forum, for the other local offices, was held on October 3 and watched by about 60 people.



Rebecca Chaiken and Charlie Sartor register voters at the LA Farmers' Market. Photo by Barbara Calef

Barbara Calef joined County Clerk Naomi Maestas and Elections Manager Victoria Martinez to receive the County proclamation of September as Voter Registration Month. On September 17 at Bandelier National Monument, Voter Services Director Lynn Jones attended the naturalization ceremony for fourteen people from eight different countries and assisted in registering the new voters. The League also registered voters at the farmers' market on September 22 and October 6.



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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](http://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.*