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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.

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Changing of the Guard at State Convention: Past President Meredith Machen (left) with current President Judy Williams.

President's Corner



Greetings, fellow League members! The May Convention was a very interesting and productive event. First, we were welcomed by Santa Fe City Councilor and fellow League member Signe Lindell (printed in this issue).

All of our positions were approved, as were the bylaws revisions. In addition, the delegates approved three new studies: transfer of federal lands, nuclear waste storage, and health care cost issues. I hope you will get involved in one of these studies, described in this issue.

As you may know, I was elected president of LWVNM at the May Convention. Since many of you don't know me, I'd like to introduce myself by way of a capsule history. Vermont was my home until I graduated from college. I then joined the Peace Corps and lived in Brazil for two years. Upon my return to the States, I worked in the Poverty Program in Atlanta, then for the Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C. After attending graduate school at Brandeis University, I worked on Medicare and Medicaid national research programs before moving to Miami, FL where I

My goals for the League during my term as president are to work on some of the great studies we are starting, and to reach out to you, the members, more effectively.

started and managed a health services research firm. Miami is where I joined the League. I moved to Santa Fe 13 years ago, connected with the local League, and eventually served as president. In New Mexico I have worked on land use, natural resources and health care issues in addition to participating in League efforts to educate and engage voters. Joining the League is the absolute best way to get to know and become involved in the community.

My goals for the League during my term as president are to work on some of the great studies we are starting, and to reach out to you, the members, more effectively.

The New Mexico League is not an entity in itself – we are made up of the four local Leagues, and we need the help of members from all of them. I hope you will sign up for the state level studies and the action and advocacy group.

I would like to hear from each of you about how you think the League is doing, how we can improve, and how we can make better use of the talents of our individual members. Call me or email me! I have a Twitter account and I might start using it. I'm on Facebook.

We live in interesting times, and because of it I feel compelled to comment. The League is a nonpartisan organization, and you all know what that means – we do not support or oppose candidates for political office, nor do we support or oppose political parties. But we are a political organization; we do speak out on issues. Our policies are progressive, and that has always been the case. We can't shy away from advocacy or education just because someone might accuse us of being biased. We do not need to be defensive about our positions; we must work together to use them.

Best, Judy

Judy Williams, President, LWVNM
president@lwvnm.org



To subscribe to the "Action" mailing list (low-volume), the subscribe address is

lwvnmactionssubscribe@yahoogroups.com

When you get an email back from the list, hit your "reply" button, and you'll be in. Only use "Reply" if you want everyone on the list to see your post; otherwise, just copy and paste the email address of the person to whom you are replying. Please be careful to post non-partisan messages of general interest only.

LWVNM Study Reports/Updates:

PNM INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN

PNM has completed its 2017-2036 Integrated Resource Plan. The purpose of the plan, which is required by the PRC every three years, is to identify “the most cost-effective resource mix that would meet the projected electricity demands of PNM’s customers over the next 20 years and to develop a four-year action plan that is consistent with that resource mix.” (*PNM 2017-2036 Integrated Resource Plan: Balancing cost and reliability while reducing the impact on the environment.* July 3, 2017).

The primary findings are that retiring PNM’s entire share of the San Juan Generating Station (SJGS) in 2022 and exiting its 13 percent share in the Four Corners Power Plant in 2031, when the current coal contract ends, is the most cost-effective path to savings for customers. The analysis recognized that heavy fixed costs in coal and those coal-fired power plants don’t make sense in today’s dynamic energy environment. Costs of other energy sources, such as wind and solar, have been dropping steadily, and are expected to continue to do so. The current and foreseeable future show low natural gas prices as well. Thus, the report says, flexibility in energy sources is needed.



San Juan Generating Station

The primary sources will be renewables – nuclear (from the Palo Verde plant outside Phoenix) and gas will continue as baseload sources, meaning they run all the time and other sources fill in as available. Nuclear reactors cannot be ramped up and down and while gas plants can be, although they require adjustments. PNM will replace its Valencia gas plant purchase when it expires in 2028.

PNM also has the ability, which it likely intends to use more, to buy and sell energy on the open market, and is considering joining the California Energy Imbalance Market (EIM).

PNM is considering building new transmission lines so it will have more sources from which to buy energy. This represents a move away from the fixed costs of coal-fired power plants.

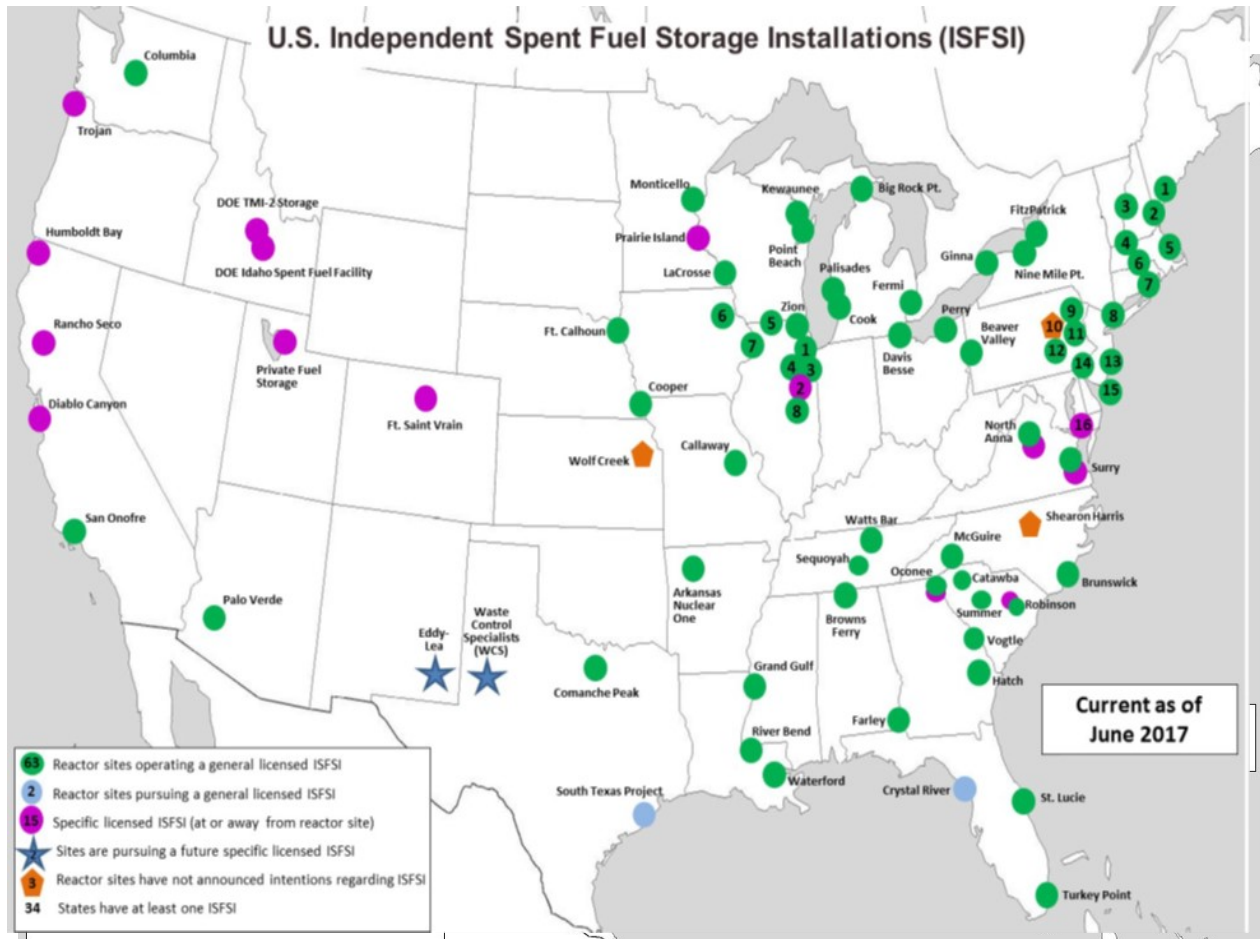
PNM is issuing a request for proposals to study the current state of the art and options for energy storage. This is an important factor going forward. A further issue to consider is the lack of adequate transmission lines from the wind energy fields in eastern

New Mexico to the population centers. PNM is considering building new transmission lines so it will have more sources from which to buy energy. This represents a move away from the fixed costs of coal-fired power plants. PNM does, however, plan to exercise what it says is its right to recoup these costs, also known as stranded costs.

Well-paying jobs in the Farmington area will be lost when the SJGS is closed. PNM says it will support workforce retraining and economic development programs. However, in this writer’s opinion, a concerted effort at all levels of government will be required to make sure it happens. Many of these jobs, both in coal production and plant operations, are held by Navajos. Perhaps the League can help by advocating for such steps.

—By Judy Williams

NUCLEAR STORAGE IN THE US—Where we are and where we may be going



Current Status—where we are now

Nuclear power reactors generate spent nuclear fuel (SNF), which is considered highly radioactive waste in the US, but is reprocessed for subsequent reuse by some countries. Spent fuel pools located at each of the 99 US reactor sites are steel and concrete structures housed in the reactor building storing SNF below 20 feet of water to permit cooling and decrease radiation levels. Following SNF cooling, the SNF is transferred to dry casks licensed by the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) for removal from the reactor building.

The dry casks are concrete and steel cylinders. They may be placed adjacent to the reactor building or at a separate remote site also licensed by NRC for SNF storage. These dry cask storage facilities are termed Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installations (ISFSIs); there are currently 74 ISFSIs in 37 states (see diagram above) throughout the US. Radiation protection and security personnel are assigned to each ISFSI location.

Where we may be going— Interim Storage. CISF Applications, Yucca Mountain consideration

Plans to consolidate the SNF into one or two interim storage facility locations in NM or TX are underway. Both Eddy-Lea Energy Alliance (ELEA, Carlsbad/Hobbs, NM) and Waste Control

Specialists (WCS, Andrews, TX) have submitted Consolidated Interim Storage Facility (CISF) applications to the NRC. The WCS application is currently suspended due to financial considerations, but the ELEA application review/consideration by the NRC is progressing. The ELEA application is for authorization of 100 years of operation and would permit acceptance of all US SNF from all 74 current ISFSIs. Dry casks of SNF would remain at the CISF location until a Permanent SNF Geological Repository was operational.

The Permanent Geological Repository would be operated by the U.S. Department of Energy with licensing and regulation by the NRC. The original review included geological characterization of three locations in the U.S. (Yucca Mountain NV, Deaf Smith County, TX, & Hanford, WA) but Congress limited it to only the Yucca Mountain (YM) site in 1987. Nevada Congressional representatives opposed this decision and, in 2010, the Federal Administration halted progress on YM consideration. States with nuclear reactors had paid \$21.2B (April 2015) into the Nuclear Waste Fund for the removal of SNF to a permanent geological repository and sued the Federal government for restart of YM consideration. Transfer of SNF to one or two interim storage facilities in New Mexico and/or Texas would alleviate this litigation.

The 2018 proposed federal budget allocates US Department of Energy (DOE) funding for a restart of the YM consideration, which could lead to NRC issuance of a Construction and Operating License within five years. However, the Nevada delegation is still opposed and nuclear industry officials would need continuation of current strong bipartisan Congressional support to overcome this opposition.

LWVNM NUCLEAR WASTE STORAGE STUDY

LWVNM approved the Nuclear Waste Storage Study Proposal (Spring La Palabra) during the May 2017 LWVNM Convention.

The Nuclear Waste Storage Study Scope will include the following four tasks with LWV member involvement:

1. Review research and current literature for determination of safety and environmental concerns regarding extended storage of spent nuclear fuel from commercial nuclear reactors. Write articles explaining the review for La Palabra.
2. Participate in LWVEF Google Group for exchange of information and concerns with other state Leagues. LWVNM member responsibilities would include serving as moderator and webmaster; enrolling nuclear professionals as technical data reviewers and LWV members to screen information.

For the Online information exchange the LWVNM Study Group will:

- distribute basic information regarding nuclear power and spent nuclear fuel;
 - post fact sheets and glossary for League member reference as needed;
 - distribute new information regarding SNF storage options and status changes;
 - ensure that League member questions are answered.
3. Revise and publish The Nuclear Waste Primer, a Handbook for Citizens—revised edition published in 1993 *with a LWVEF grant from the DOE*. LWVNM member responsibilities would include: conversion (pdf to Word with correction of errors), update of nuclear statistics, and addition of recent advancements, editing, distribution, and promotion.

4. Coordinate local League meetings for nuclear issues presentations and subsequent consensus meetings.

The Nuclear Waste Study Committee will meet in late July to consider submitting a proposal to DOE for a new LWVEF Grant and to review the status of our other activities. LWVNM members are welcome to join the committee and participate in this 2017-19 effort.

LWV members with current involvement include:

LWVNM Board Members/Advisors – Judy Williams, Barbara Calef, Meredith Machen, Dick Mason;

LWVUS Advisors – H. Saunders, LWVUS Liaison and LWV IL member; N. Mann, Nuclear, Washington DC;

NM Participants - Kathy Taylor/LWVLA; Laura Atkins, LWVNM & LWVSFC; Maj-Britt Eagle/LWVSFC; Karen Wentworth/LWVCNM; Karen Douglas/LWVNM & LWVCNM, Marjorie Burr/LWVGLC.

Other interested State LWV Leaders – TX: S. Gosslee, T. Kleuskens; IL: L. Kratz; IA: M.R. Bragg; MI: L. Hoff

—By Karen M. Douglas, LWVNM Nuclear Waste Storage Study Committee Chair

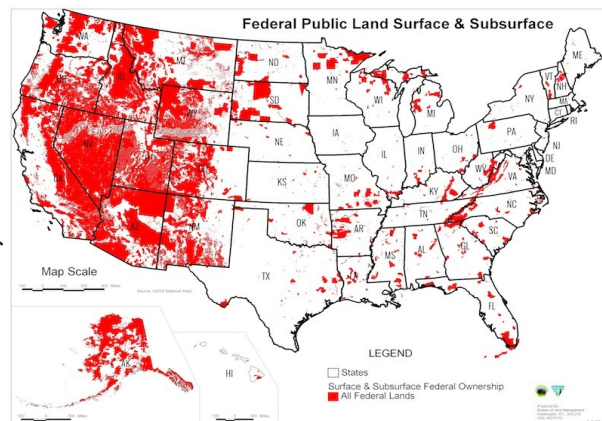
FEDERAL PUBLIC LANDS TRANSFER STUDY

The study of the transfer of federal public lands was approved at the 2017 State Convention. The first step is to investigate the constitutional arguments for and against mandated transfer. Here is a quick summary garnered from several articles that will be posted on the LWVNM website. The next step will be to examine the history of federal policies related to land use. If you are interested in joining the study, please send e-mail to bfcalf@gmail.com.

The federal government owns about 28% of the land in the United States. Most of the land is managed by the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service, or the Department of Defense. While every state contains some federal property, the largest holdings are in the western states. In New Mexico 35.4% of the state's 77,766,400 acres are federally owned.

The federal government obtained title to lands beyond those claimed by the original thirteen states by means of either purchase or treaty. Most of New Mexico was acquired by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican-American War. The remainder was acquired from Mexico through the Gadsden Purchase.

Over the years there have been calls for transferring the land still held by the federal government to the states. The arguments refer to the U.S. Constitution as well as subsequent events in the history of the nation.



There are two primary constitutional clauses cited in the debate about the ownership of federal public land: they are referred to as the enclave clause and the property clause.

Article I Section 8 Clause 17, the enclave clause, says:

To exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession of particular states, and the acceptance of Congress, become the seat of the government of the United States, and to exercise like authority over all places purchased by the consent of the legislature of the state in which the same shall be, for the erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dockyards, and other needful buildings;

This clause allows the federal government to acquire property from a state or states for specific, essential government uses, most notably to create the capital. Proponents of transfer argue that Congress has jurisdiction only over the District of Columbia and other places purchased by Congress with the consent of the state legislature for the specified purposes.

Article 4 Section 3 Clause 2, the property clause, says:

The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

Supporters of federal land ownership point out that over the years the Supreme Court has interpreted the property clause to mean that Congress has the discretion to determine whether to dispose of or retain federal property. The federal government did convey nearly a billion acres directly to settlers, miners, railroads, and others in addition to grants of land to the states.

However, federal policy was never restricted to disposal. The Continental Congress reserved mineral rights on federal lands before the Constitutional Convention. During the 19th century federal lands were withdrawn from disposal for national parks and, eventually, for the National Forests.

Proponents of transfer focus on the last phrase, “or of any particular State” to signify that the clause means to restrict Congress to make only rules and regulations needed to carry out the compact between the newly established states and the federal government. They argue that the intention was that the lands should be sold and that those that remained unsold would be surrendered to the states.

They also argue that some of the language in the enabling acts, the statutes enacted by Congress detailing the requirements for admission to statehood, has been misinterpreted.

The Enabling Act of 1910 for New Mexico includes the following provision, which is typical:
Sec. 2. Meeting of delegates; mandatory provisions of constitution.

B. that the people inhabiting said proposed state do agree and declare that they forever disclaim all right and title to the unappropriated and ungranted public lands lying within the boundaries thereof and to all land lying within said boundaries owned or held by any Indian or Indian tribes the right or title to

forever disclaim all right and title to the unappropriated and ungranted public lands lying within the boundaries thereof and to all land lying within said boundaries owned or held by any Indian or Indian tribes the right or title to which shall have been acquired through or from the United States or any prior sovereignty, and that until the title of such Indian or Indian tribes shall have been extinguished the same shall be and remain subject to the disposition and under the absolute jurisdiction and control of the congress of the United States...

Section 2.B. refers to two separate categories of land. There are the unappropriated and ungranted public lands; and there is the land owned or held by any Indian or Indian tribes. The obligation to “extinguish” title refers to Indian lands, not to public lands.

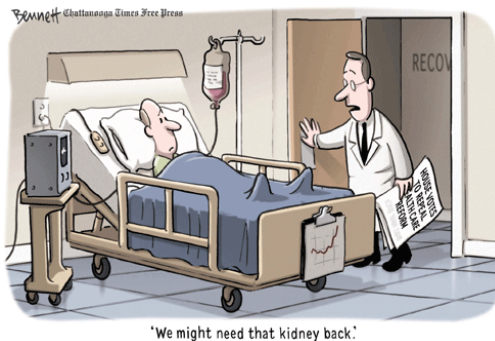
The allusion to extinguishing the title of Indians or Indian tribes was only added to enabling acts after the Dawes Act of 1887 was passed as part of an effort to assimilate the Indians. The act provided that the government would divide tribal lands into allotments to be given to individual Indians, whose tribal land titles would then be terminated. The reservation lands remaining after the allotments were to be sold on the open market.

Transfer proponents erroneously assert that the state disclaimers of rights to unappropriated and ungranted lands are void because the federal government was obligated to “extinguish” its title to those lands.

The equal footing doctrine is the principle, included in the Enabling Acts, that all states admitted to the Union enter on equal footing with the thirteen states already in the Union in 1789. Transfer supporters often refer to the equal footing doctrine as evidence of Western states’ right to title to federal public lands because most federal lands east of the Mississippi were released. However, the Supreme Court has interpreted the doctrine to mean that the states are equal in political standing.

—By Barbara Calef

HEALTH CARE STUDY REPORT



Akkana Peck will be leading a one year study on the LWVNM state health care position. In particular, we want to look at issues of cost and access as they affect patients: things like transparency in pricing, cost-shifting and "surprise billing," bankruptcies as a result of health care costs, and the effects that might arise from a repeal of the ACA (Obamacare”).

LWVNM already has a good health care position, so we don't need to do a full study as we would if we were writing a whole new position; we'll merely look

at a few points our current position doesn't address.

The study will be starting up soon, and participants are welcome! Contact Akkana, akkana@shallowsky.com if you want to be involved.

—By Akkana Peck

NM LEGISLATIVE REPORT: IMPROVING THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

The League has convened two meetings of “good government” groups to discuss ways of improving the transparency and effectiveness of the New Mexico Legislature. The participating groups are the LWVNM, Common Cause New Mexico, New Mexico Foundation for Open Government and New Mexico State Ethics Watch.

Many ideas were discussed, but it was agreed that we should first focus on three issues that would increase transparency:

- End the use of “dummy bills”. These are bills filed before the filing deadline but with no content. They are titled, “Relating to Public Peace, Health, Safety and Welfare. Content may be added to a dummy bill later, but often the title is not changed and the content is often not posted. The dummy bills are then heard in committee and may even have a floor vote. This practice needs to end.
- Reform the way the Legislature deals with amendments to bills and committee substitutes. Amendments are often debated and voted on before the public has a chance to see them. We need to assure that the amendments are posted online 24 hours before they are debated. This also applies to committee substitutes.
- Always post the committee and floor agendas the night before and follow those agendas. Many committees already regularly post their agendas the night before and try to hear the bills that are scheduled to be heard. But some committees do not always post their agendas and many do not hear the bills that are scheduled to be heard. Also, the House and Senate floor leaders should work to act on the bills in the order scheduled.

Other discussion points included improving the effectiveness of the Legislature. The four groups will have further discussion on those issues. The League will schedule meetings with the legislative leadership and the four groups to discuss the three priority issues and to see what changes can be made.

LWVNMAction-subscribe@yahogroups.com

Correction from last La Palabra

I am always glad to learn new things about the legislative process. In the Spring La Palabra, I reported that House Joint Resolution 10 (I incorrectly labeled it SJR10) – Rescind Prior Constitutional Convention Applications was passed and was now going on the 2018 ballot.

That is incorrect. It is now in effect without going on the 2018 ballot. My mistake was in assuming that all Joint Resolutions related to ballot questions. Live and Learn.

A reminder that the LWVUS opposes the convening of a U.S. Constitutional Convention because the issues dealt with cannot be limited. If 34 states call for the convening of a Constitutional Convention, then it must be convened. We were approaching the required 34 states and that is why this legislation was so important.

--By Dick Mason, Co-Chair Action Committee

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM PROJECT REPORT: FOCUS ON PROBLEM-SOLVING COURTS

LWVNM received a grant from Common Cause to work on issues of Criminal Justice. We are seeking a committee of members from each local League to accomplish the tasks that will further the goal. Please email me at mermachen@cybermesa.com if you would like to join the committee.

Our goal is to promote measures that provide treatment and rehabilitation of offenders while decreasing incarceration and recidivism. Expansion of problem-solving courts, alternative sentencing, and other evidence-based programs that serve society are cost-effective investments.

We would like to see an integrated system rather than silos of programs to deal with interrelated behavioral health and corrections issues. This will require collaboration among all three branches of government as well as community organizations.

Activities will likely include:

- Research and prepare information on the benefits and best practices of problem-solving treatment courts and alternative sentencing.
- Work with the NM Administrative Office of the Courts to engage problem-solving court judges and staff, experts, and champions to provide statements, testimonies, and suggestions for improvement to build a case for increasing the funding and adopting constructive policy changes.
- Consult with key judges and legislators.
- Develop fact sheets to promote understanding of current programs and treatment, and awareness of what is still needed in individual communities. Provide data on locations, numbers served, criteria for accepting participants into the courts, numbers needing services, funding, etc.
- Help local Leagues plan panel discussions and community conversations.
- Create a list of resources and a glossary for the LWVNM website and link to legislative reports, documents, and legislation from various sources.
- Select, summarize, and share model practices and legislation from other states with staff at the Administrative Office of the Courts, the NM Association Counties, and with key legislators, primarily with the Courts and Corrections Criminal Justice Sub-Committee and Health and Human Services Committee. We want to see where momentum can be built to promote justice reinvestment through community rehabilitation. (For instance, North Dakota is allocating \$7.5 million to expand the availability of and access to community-based behavioral health services for people in the criminal justice system. Check out sections 9 and 10 <http://www.legis.nd.gov/assembly/65-2017/documents/17-0523-05000.pdf>)
- Work with the NM Association of Counties to promote adoption of the “Stepping Up Resolution” in more counties to increase commitment to using behavioral health services across



the state (Currently about seven counties, including Bernalillo, Santa Fe, Dona Ana, Sandoval, have passed it.)

<https://csgjusticecenter.org/mental-health/county-improvement-project/stepping-up/>

Information on the project will be disseminated through local newspaper op eds, radio interviews, in articles in *La Palabra*, and reports posted intermittently on the LWVNM website. In addition, the reports will be shared with other Leagues and organizations around the country.

—By Meredith Machen, *Special Projects Director*

Sig Lindell's Welcoming Address to the State Annual Convention 2017

For almost 100 years the League of Women Voters have been a pillar...fighting for something that is at the heart of our democracy – access for Americans to exercise that most American right.

The right to step into a voting booth and cast your ballot, making your voice heard in how our country, from the highest reaches of the federal government to the city or town hall right down the street, makes decisions.

Something so crucial to the health of our country, and our communities, and something that is so sorely lacking that the fight has only grown more important over time.

Voter turnout and engagement is sometimes stunningly low, and we don't always know what to do about it. But we know how crucial it is, because at the root of the idea that the people should have the ultimate power in this country's decisions is the idea, and the responsibility, that they will take that power and use it wisely, in an educated and informed manner, to lead the country forward in the way that is the best for the largest number of Americans.

So in addition to welcoming you to Santa Fe, which I am so excited to do, I also want to urge you to keep this long march moving forward!

There are certain non-governmental organizations in the history of this country, which stand out for their contributions to our history and to our ability to sustain this democracy.

The ACLU and their epic legal battles in the Supreme Court, the NAACP and their fight for racial justice, the SDS in opposing the Vietnam War— they've left their mark.

And I am 100% sincere when I say that the League of Women Voters, for their work to win the franchise for women, to the efforts to reform elections today, to the time and research that goes into voter guides that help our voters show up and cast an informed vote, and for a dozen other activities that have helped shape this country for the better, has more than earned a place on that short and distinguished list.

Thank you all for being here and please enjoy your meetings and enjoy Santa Fe!



Local League News

LWV CENTRAL NM

During our May celebration of the founding of the LWVCNM, 42 of us attended the Vortex Theatre's performance of *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Several friends and members followed up with a casual dinner at the Range Restaurant. Not only did we have a great time, we also made a contribution to our LWVCNM Ed Fund. We are continuing to plan engaging activities that include fun and food!

In June, well-known speaker, UNM Political Science Professor Gabriel Sanchez, discussed redistricting concerns, which many believe could be the next hurdle to overcome. League members seek redistricting through a non-partisan, independent commission with broad philosophic representations from across the state. I am happy to report that LWVCNM has also planned our next year's calendar. Many interesting ideas with local speakers have been scheduled through June of 2018. From voter rights and campaign finance reform; health and social issues including reproductive rights and medical ethics, our members will hear from a variety of informed sources.

Voter Services Chair Michelle Meaders has noted that for the upcoming Albuquerque Mayoral race, LWVCNM members Diane Goldfarb and Judith Binder will moderate forums organized with APD Forward and the Albuquerque Tea Party, respectively. We understand that all eight of the contenders have reviewed our information sheet and have agreed to participate on July 18th. The APD Forward Forum will take place on September 6th at the African American Performing Arts Center.

4th Vice President George Richmond is

seeking funds for our Voters' Guide for the election for Mayor and City Council of Albuquerque. Also, Nexus Brewery in Albuquerque will donate 10% of all food sales on August 22 to the LWVCNM Education Fund.

Beginning in August, our board meetings will be held at the new Sutin, Thayer & Browne offices at 6100 Uptown Blvd. Many thanks go to Anne and Sandra Browne for their help with these arrangements. Sandra was elected president of our League in 1995 and then again in 2003.

Membership Chair Donna Rigano has noted our steady growth as we continue to attract new and returning members. Of note, I found that there are five League families within 200 yards of my home! With this in mind, we've begun to promote Zip Code Parties throughout our neighborhoods. These afternoon get-togethers can inspire companionship and the sharing of ideas of how local Leagues can become more visible. One of the themes discussed was how to encourage younger people to join the League; organizing a MEETUP in a public location received a lot of interest among those who were present.

We look forward to an exciting fall and winter.

—By Judith Binder with Leah Ingraham,
Co-Presidents

LWV LOS ALAMOS COUNTY

At Lunch with a Leader in March NM Supreme Court Chief Justice Charles Daniels began by thanking the League for helping citizens make informed choices (and avoid uneducated choices). As a judge, he himself is relegated to being a "political eunuch" who cannot speak out on political issues. Judge Daniels described the study that led him to propose the constitutional amendment on bail reform which passed in the election last year. He also asked for the support of League members for adequate funding for

the judicial system in the state.

Having learned about the closing of the Public Health Office (PHO) in Los Alamos, the LWV Los Alamos board approved a letter to the County Council, which Becky Shankland read at a Council meeting. The letter urged the councilors to take action to provide continuity in the services formerly provided by the PHO. The Council subsequently added funds to the budget for that purpose.

Sandra Fish, a reporter for New Mexico in Depth spoke at LWL in April about the deficiencies of our state government, noting the problems with the way the executive and legislative branches operate. She said that the legislative process is “pretty poor” compared to the practices in Colorado and Florida. She also complained about the excess of pomp and circumstance, which wastes valuable time during the sessions.

Fish concluded her talk with several recommendations for citizens as well as legislators. She said we should converse with people we might not agree with to find common ground on issues. The major issues are poverty, economic development and education.

Los Alamos recently held a bitterly contested election on a \$20 million recreation bond for the county. Following the election, two leaders resigned their posts in the GOP, citing personal attacks from acquaintances who disagreed with them. In her Co-President’s Message, Becky Shankland wrote in part,

“Confrontation is the antithesis of democracy’s need for open debate where all views are heard and the community counts on a sensible outcome. To have these attacks result in the resignation of two of our respected, hard-working political leaders is tragic.

What citizens will be courageous enough to volunteer for political leadership if they and their families become targets simply because

of their views? Listening respectfully to differing views is how we work toward solutions--confrontation just hardens opposing opinions.”

—By *Barbara Calef & Rebecca Shankland*
Co-Presidents

LWV GREATER LAS CRUCES

It’s been a busy summer for the LWVGLC. Connie Lee, Bonnie Votaw, Gwen Hanson and I attended the state convention.

Rosario Olivera, the Chief Behavioral Health Officer of La Clinica de Familia gave an informative presentation at the June Dinner with a Leader meeting. She started with an overview of the services and programs La Clinica provides and followed up with the enormous challenges they face hiring qualified therapists and meeting the needs of their clientele.

The 50th Anniversary Event planning is off to a great start thanks to Marjorie Burr’s leadership. It’s going to be BIG! The first planning meeting took place June 14th with 8 of us around the table sharing ideas and getting excited.

Susan Schmugge and Vicki Simons are the new Observer Corps Coordinators. The board identified five organizations to monitor: City Council, County Commissioners, School Boards, Solid Waste, and Recycling. Members will report to the membership about significant issues as needed.

June 15th The Youth Engagement Committee and the Study Committee met to discuss youth collaboration possibilities and to begin planning the study on impediments to voter participation by 18-24 age group. Outreach included a table at the Boys and Girls Club Event July 15. LWVGLC members are also involved with the ongoing Affordable Housing Committee. and advocating for saving the public transit budget.

—By *Kim Sorensen, President GLC*



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Please consider helping your local League or LWVNM to pay for our upcoming 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.