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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.

President's Corner

Hannah Burling
LWVNM President president@lwvnm.org



It's an honor to be chosen to lead this organization and an especial honor to be following in Judy Williams's footsteps. I hope that over the next two years, we will see not just more members, but more engaged members, more allies and an expanded reach for the League. Susan Haase and I have just returned from the 2019 LWVUS State Leaders' Council, which was inspiring and clearly laid out the many challenges facing the League in this highly partisan political environment (see report on p. 7). Diversity, equity and inclusion are priorities for LWVUS. These will be of especial importance as we celebrate our centennial and the centennial of what we call women's suffrage, which did not bring the vote to all women. Women of color were excluded by various means at state levels and the League did not address these issues for many years.

The focus of the state leaders' council was power. Clear goals included passage of the For the People Act and improving Vote411. The League will be working on new ways of engaging students. In 2018-2019 1,045 students joined the League! In the last year, the League served more than 5 million voters, hosted more than 600 debates, and met with elected officials over 1,000 times. How do we position the organization over the next

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## News from the 2019 LWVNM Convention in Los Alamos



**The New Mexico League of Women Voters Board of Directors for 2019.** Left to Right: Diane Goldfarb, Eileen VanWie, Karen Wentworth, Becky Shankland, Meredith Machen, Kathy Brook, Karen Douglas, Susan Haase, Akkana Peck, Dick Mason, Laura Atkins, Chris Furlanetto, Pat Hawkins, Janet Blair. Seated left to right: Kim Sorensen, Barbara Calef, Hannah Burling, Suzanne Ronneau . Photo by Renny Ashleman.

### **LWVNM Leadership Changes**

*By Barbara Calef, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President*

At the LWVNM Convention the delegates adopted a change in the bylaws to permit an increase in the size of the board; they then elected a new board with six officers and eight elected directors. The officers now include the Action Chair and the Past President. There is also an unfilled position for First Vice President/President Elect. The Nominating Committee had proposed these changes for a number of reasons: to recognize the importance of the Action Chair and the need for continuity in the leadership. They also recommended increasing the number of directors from six to eight to allow for greater distribution of responsibilities.

At the board meeting that followed, Jody Larson was appointed to serve on the board as the LWVNM Archivist. During their July meeting the board appointed Dick Mason, Barbara Calef, Judy Williams, and Janet Blair to serve with Hannah Burling on the Executive Committee. According to the bylaws, the Executive Committee acts for the board between regular meetings.



Plenary session at the 2019 LWV NM State Convention

## **Convention Feedback: Directions to the Board**

*By Akkana Peck, Webmaster*

Nine convention attendees included Directions to the Board on their convention feedback forms.

Three comments related to communication. One person wanted to see better communication of events to local League media directors so the information could be published in newsletters and on social media.

Another wanted the board to explain and report its positions in La Palabra. A third just wanted to see more effective and transparent communication in general.

Several comments touched on confusion during the voting. Some documents weren't the most recent version, and sometimes the indication of changes (underlining, strikethroughs, etc.) was confusing, so delegates were uncertain about exactly what was being voted on. The board will discuss that at the next board meeting.

Someone suggested that LWVNM appoint a Director of Diversity to help guide local Leagues to recruit members more diverse in ethnicity, age, and volunteer skills.

Several people used the space to praise the convention and the LWVLA women who organized it.

One person suggested buying a new microphone. The mike used during the convention cut in and out and caused a lot of problems. The board is looking into whether buying our own microphone might be a good investment.



Los Alamos County Council Chair Sara Scott welcomes delegates at the convention's opening session.

The convention minutes will be available at:

<https://www.lwvnm.org/BDocs/Minutes/2019/Convention2019.html>

At the July meeting the LWVNM board agreed that, after the readers have edited them, the Council and Convention minutes would be approved by the board and then posted.

## **Program Outcomes from the 2019 Convention**

*By Chris Furlanetto, Program Director*

### **Positions: Additions and Changes**

Delegates to the 2019 LWVNM Convention approved the following additions and changes to our advocacy positions.

Four new positions were adopted:

- Civil Engagement/Civil Discourse
- Government/Legislature
- Natural Resources/Transfer of Federal Public Lands
- Social Policy/Immigration

Changes (since the 2017 Convention) were adopted for these existing positions:

- Government/Administration of Justice/Selection of Judges
- Government/Election Procedures
- Education/General
- Social Policy/Gun Safety
- Social Policy/Health Care
- Social Policy/Net Neutrality, High-Speed Internet, Public Access Media
- Natural Resources/Wildlife

Please go to <https://www.lwvnm.org/positions.html> for our current positions document. You can search and review the positions online or download a Word or .pdf copy.

Note: The new LWVNM position on the Transfer of Federal Public Lands has been posted on the LWVUS Clearinghouse site: <https://sites.google.com/a/leagueofwomenvoters.org/clearinghouse/natural-resources/public-lands/lwv-new-mexico-transfer-of-federal-public-lands>

We are hoping it will be adopted by concurrence at the LWVUS Convention next year.

### **President's Corner**

*from page 1*

hundred years? How do we develop a more inclusive culture? How to make our system easier to navigate?

The League is working for fair redistricting all over the nation. Here, in New Mexico, we have received a grant for a public campaign and have hired a project coordinator. We will continue to defend reproductive rights in New Mexico, support the census, and keep voting accessible. I'm thrilled to be working with such a knowledgeable, committed and courageous group.



Program Director Chris Furlanetto makes her presentation at the 2019 Convention in Los Alamos.



## **Study of Judicial Qualifications/Selection Process**

*By Suzanne Ronneau, Study Chair*

Prior to the March 2019 LWVNM board meeting, the Judicial Selection position read:

Judges of the higher courts should be appointed by the governor from a screened list submitted from a non-partisan nominating commission and be subject, at intervals, to election for retention or rejection.

At their March meeting, the board voted to approve extending the position to support increased requirements for the judges of the lower courts:



Second Judicial District Courthouse, downtown Albuquerque

Judges of the New Mexico state courts, i.e., Supreme Court, Courts of Appeal, and District Courts, should be appointed by the governor from a screened list submitted by a non-partisan nominating commission and only be subject, at intervals, to non-partisan election for retention or rejection.

Judges of limited jurisdiction, i.e., magistrate, municipal, probate and metro courts, should be qualified for their position, at a minimum having a Certificate of Good Standing from the New Mexico Supreme Court, and be elected in non-partisan elections.

However, at the LWVNM Convention in May, the delegates objected to making such a significant change without doing a study. They voted to delete the second paragraph, but amended the first paragraph to add “metropolitan courts.” The new Judicial Selection position reads:

Judges of the New Mexico state courts, i.e., Supreme Court, Courts of Appeal, District Courts, and Metropolitan Courts, should be appointed by the governor from a screened list submitted by a non-partisan nominating commission and only be subject, at intervals, to non-partisan election for retention or rejection.



Bernalillo County Metropolitan Courthouse, downtown, Albuquerque

The delegates also approved a proposal for a new two-year study on Qualifications and Selection of Judges of the Lower Courts. Suzanne Ronneau (LWVSFC, State Board Treasurer) proposed the study and will serve as study chair. Committee members are Mary Wilson, Mary Smith, Janet Blair, and Adelaide Jacobson.

*The Committee would welcome additional members, and we especially need a member from the Southern part of the State. Please contact [sronneau@bellsouth.net](mailto:sronneau@bellsouth.net) or call 505-699-7781 for more information.*

Study Plan:

- Determine the current legal requirements for qualification of judges of the "lower courts" or "Limited Jurisdiction Courts," -- magistrate courts, municipal courts, and probate courts.

- Review the positions of other State Leagues regarding legal requirements.
- Determine the adequacy of the current legal requirements to assure optimal justice for New Mexicans by interviewing judges of the lower courts, interviewing New Mexico legal scholars, interviewing attorneys practicing in these courts, and interviewing citizens having cases in these courts to the extent practicable to determine whether the current judges are doing an acceptable job. In addition, consider what other minimum requirements should be instituted (i.e. requirement for certain level of educational achievement, status as a New Mexico attorney.)
- Study whether the selection process, i.e., partisan elections, is optimal, by comparing current selection processes in other States.

#### Background:

The Santa Fe County League proposed the change in position and, subsequently, the study, when a District Court Judge appointed by the governor (from the list submitted by the Judicial Nominating Commission) was forced to run for election in the Democratic primary against three opponents. At least one of those candidates had been considered by the Judicial Nominating Commission but was not recommended to the governor. (This "not recommended" candidate won the election and is now the judge.) New Mexico's system of selecting judges for the courts, not just the higher courts, by *partisan election* was thus called into question.

*...League members found that for the "lower courts," -- magistrate courts, municipal courts, and probate courts -- the judges are not even required to have a law degree, and that many in fact do not have what in other states would be considered the minimum requirements for a judge.*

Looking more closely at the New Mexico judiciary, League members found that for the "lower courts," -- magistrate courts, municipal courts, and probate courts -- the judges are not even required to have a law degree, and that many in fact do not have what in other states would be considered the minimum requirements for a judge. However,

much of New Mexico is very rural; it may not be feasible to get attorneys to preside over courts in these areas, and it may be that existing judges are doing an adequate job.

The study should be completed in two years. The first year will be aimed at educating the committee and League members as to the current status and the positions of other state Leagues. The second year will be aimed at developing questions for consensus for an amended state position, if deemed warranted after study.

## **National Council, June 20-23, 2019, Leesburg, VA**

*By Susan Haase, LWVNM Representative*

The celebration of our 100-year milestone was tempered by the challenge to look ahead to the next 100 years. Will the League survive in an environment of changing demographics and new organizations with similar missions? What will it take to be fresh and relevant? Who do we want to be? What needs to change? What does it take to effect organizational change?

Heavy. But not as heavy as the presentation by former national President Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins, who remarked that as the first, and only, African American League President, she remembered looking out at the assembled membership in 1998 and seeing only the slightest sprinkling of brown faces in the group. And, twenty years later in June, 2019, that view hadn't changed.



So, no surprise that the overriding theme of the Council was Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Speaker after speaker addressed the fact that the League is largely composed of well-educated, older, affluent white women and we were becoming less and less representative of the population at large.

We saw a new national PR campaign designed to 1) cultivate the next generation of League supporters, 2) deepen the relationship with current League supporters, and provide an opportunity for a 3) unified cross-League campaign. Theme: She is Me. It will be a social media campaign featuring current League members (not all older and white) and their stories of engagement in fighting voter suppression, gerrymandering, and other hot button issues.

*Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are not words to be talked about and filed away unless the League wishes to be filed away with them. There's a great deal of work to be done if we don't want the past 100 years to be our last.*

Bias, Behaviors, Culture Change, Systems, Structures, Strategies and more were topics that followed. The content of the speeches has been posted at

<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/council-convention/2019-council-presentations>

Check them out!

Small group breakout sessions dealt with practical issues like get out the vote, how to deal with reporters, social media, planning strategies, and others. The power point materials from these sessions are also included on the website.

In conclusion, it became abundantly clear that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are not words to be talked about and filed away unless the League wishes to be filed away with them. There's a great deal of work to be done if we don't want the past 100 years to be our last.

## ***Suffrage Centennial: National Recognition for Nina Otero Warren, Suffragist and League Leader***

*By Meredith Machen, History Committee Chair*



Nina Otero Warren

Photo Courtesy of Bergere Family Photograph Collection, Image #21702, New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, Santa Fe, NM.

familiar names include Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Alice Paul, and Carrie Chapman Catt, head of the National Woman's Suffrage Association and founder of the League of Women Voters. Please see <https://monumentalwomen.org/suffrage-movement/>

Nina Otero was raised by a mother who was the director of the Santa Fe Board of Education in the early 1900s. Her home was a locus of political and social exchange between Hispanics and the white upper-class community of Santa Fe.

In 1908, Otero married Lt. Rawson D. Warren, a cavalry commander at Ft. Wingate near Gallup, New Mexico. Two years later she returned to Santa Fe alone, having learned that Warren had a common law wife and two children. Otero Warren obtained a divorce but continued to use her married name. She told people her husband had died and called herself a widow to escape the religious and social stigma of being a divorced woman in the dominant Catholic society of conservative, early twentieth-century New Mexico.

In 1914, Otero Warren began working with Alice Paul, leader of the Congressional Union, to fight for women's suffrage. Because of her passion, commitment, and powerful lobbying efforts, she quickly rose in the ranks of the New Mexico chapter of the Congressional Union and by 1919 she was asked to be the state leader. Alice Paul recognized the importance of having a native New Mexican leading the suffrage movement. With her social and political connections

In honor of the 2020 centennial celebration of women's suffrage, the League of Women Voters of New Mexico and friends are honoring prominent suffragists. This piece is on Nina Otero Warren, New Mexico's premiere suffrage leader. Profiles of other New Mexico suffragists will soon be available through links in our upcoming History page on LWVNM.org. Future articles in *La Palabra* will discuss the national and state League's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment centennial celebration at the Roundhouse in early February as well as Women's Equality Day, August 26, 2020.

The League successfully nominated Otero Warren for inclusion in the National Votes for Women Trail, which commemorates those who were instrumental in women gaining the right to vote in the United States. The scholars on the national advisory committee were extremely excited about including her, recognizing her pioneering suffrage work as well as her later accomplishments as a political leader and educator.

Nina Otero Warren lived from 1881-1965 and is the only New Mexican included alongside the most famous in women in the suffrage movement, which took 72 years of highly organized activism for women to win the right to vote. Fa-



and her leadership skills, Otero Warren was able to rally support from both the Spanish- and English-speaking communities.

Her bilingual and bicultural skills helped her bridge the differences between the Hispanics and the white, English-speaking population of New Mexico. She was instrumental in overcoming the opposition to women’s suffrage by church leaders and many Hispanic males, successfully persuading legislators to support women’s suffrage. She was the only woman allowed in a three-hour caucus of Republican legislators during the two-day special session Governor Larrazolo called to consider ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. On February 21, 1920, New Mexico became the 32nd of 36 states required for ratification. On August 26, 1920, New Mexico women obtained full suffrage once the federal amendment was certified as ratified.

While working on women’s suffrage, Otero Warren continued to use her prodigious advocacy skills to improve life for Hispanics and Native Americans in New Mexico. Her stellar record as Santa Fe County’s Superintendent of Instruction strengthened her candidacy for New Mexico’s single seat in the United States House of Representatives in 1922. She received the Republican nomination after beating the incumbent, Nestor Montoya, in the primary, thus becoming the first Hispanic woman ever to run for Congress. She campaigned on improving education, healthcare, and social services, but was narrowly defeated by Democrat John Morrow. Contributing to her defeat was the disclosure by her cousin, former New Mexico Territorial Governor Miguel Otero II, that she was divorced, not widowed. Her firm stance on including Spanish in the curriculum was also controversial because the federal government wanted English only in public schools.

**Sidebar**

*An appropriate historical marker will be installed at what is now known as the Alfred M. Bergere House, 135 Grant St. Santa Fe, NM 87501, where Otero Warren lived much of her life. Thanks to our nomination, a glimpse of her accomplishments and her home can now be seen—at <https://www.nps.gov/articles/new-mexico-and-the-19th-amendment.htm>. The Georgia O’Keeffe Museum owns the property and uses it as its research center. We are grateful that they are also excited about this national acknowledgement.*

In 1923, Otero Warren was inspector of Indian Schools in Santa Fe County. She advocated against sending Native American students to boarding schools off the reservation and tempered attempts to Americanize the students by including opportunities to learn about Native history, culture, and traditions.

Throughout the thirties and forties, Otero Warren held various leadership positions in the Civilian Conservation Corps and other New Deal programs. She also worked on preservation of historic buildings in Santa Fe and Taos and promoted Hispanic and Native cultures, arts, and languages.

Nina Otero Warren is now being honored as New Mexico’s most important suffrage leader. Her courage and persistence will be commemorated by a historical marker and she will be listed in the National Votes for Women Trail.

Across the country, dedicated researchers are uncovering information about how valiantly and

earnestly women fought for the vote. From colonial days onward, women struggled to have their voices and valuable perspectives recognized. Get ready to hear much more as we get closer to the centennial of the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment and national Women's Equality Day, August 26, 2020. Suffrage parades, civics lessons, traveling exhibits, a commemorative coin, television specials, galas at the national, state, and local levels, proclamations, monuments, and legislation are all in the works.

Our country is ready to celebrate this important milestone in our journey to create a more perfect democracy. Please let me know if you would like to get involved, join the History Committee, and learn more. Meredith Machen, History Committee Chair, [projects@lwwnm.org](mailto:projects@lwwnm.org).

Library of Congress and National Archives Exhibits with Nina Otero Warren

<https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/women-fight-for-the-vote/about-this-exhibition/more-to-the-movement/adelina-nina-otero-warren/>

<https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/women-fight-for-the-vote/about-this-exhibition/more-to-the-movement/?st=gallery>

## LWVNM Reports and Updates

### ***Report on the Independent Ethics Commission***

*By Judy Williams, Past President*

The New Mexico Independent Ethics Commission has been formed with five appointed members; the first meeting was held on July 1. Since then they have been taking applications for the two additional commissioners to be appointed by the commission. The next meeting will be in Las Cruces on August 2. At that meeting they will discuss the selection process as well as other business.

# Ethics



The Commission is currently working on rules for the Commission operations - jurisdiction, how it will handle cases, transparency and other issues.

The League is working with the coalition of organizations that worked on the constitutional amendment and the enabling legislation. Members include Common Cause NM, Ethics Watch, the NM Foundation for Open Government, and others. The group will carefully monitor the development of regulations to ensure that they meet the intent of the amendment and the law.

## **Report of the LWVNM Action Committee**

*By Dick Mason, Action Committee Chair*

**Proposed Priorities for the 2020 session:** Budget & Revenue; Redistricting reform; Decriminalization of abortion; and Solar Tax Credit. We plan to visit each local League to discuss these subjects prior to the 2020 session.

**Advocacy Workshop with a focus on the budget; December 7, 2019 – 10 am to noon. Room 322 at the State House; Speakers:** Amber Wallin, Deputy Director of New Mexico Voices for Children; Representative Christine Chandler, member of the House Tax and Revenue Committee; Sander Rue, member of the Senate Finance Committee.

**League Day at the Legislature:** Plans for League Day are tied to our plans for the LWV/ Suffrage centennial. We cannot confirm a date because space is not allocated until after Labor Day. We aim to have a program in the Rotunda as well as requesting 12 tables for the League and other groups that support women's rights. Right now, our target is February 5 & 6<sup>th</sup>. We are going to request that Senator Nancy Rodriguez and Representative Joanne Ferrary sponsor separate memorials recognizing the 100th anniversary of the LWV.

## **Spent Nuclear Fuel Research and Advocacy Group Report**

*By Karen Douglas, Chair*

As reported in earlier editions of La Palabra, NM/HOLTEC/ELEA Consolidated Interim Storage Facility and Texas Interim Storage Partners/WCS Consolidated Interim Storage Facility have both applied to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) for licenses to operate. The applicants are now responding to NRC Requests for Additional Information (RAI). Both NM/HOLTEC and TX/ISP anticipate NRC license approval in 2021 and expect to receive spent nuclear fuel in 2022 – 2023, following additional site construction.

- The NRC Public Comment Period for the HOLTEC\_Environment Report ended 7/30/18. LWVNM submitted correspondence detailing concerns with sections of the report. The NRC issued a Public Scoping Report addressing all public concerns in June 2019. The League's Spent Nuclear Fuel Research and Advocacy Group is now evaluating the response. The NRC will issue the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in March 2020 with a 60-day Public Comment Period, allowing additional LWVNM comments.
- Beyond Nuclear and other organizations submitted a petition regarding the HOLTEC application in December 2018. There was a subsequent hearing by the NRC Atomic Safety Licensing Board (ASLB), an independent panel of judges, in Albuquerque in January 2019. Transcripts of the hearing were posted in late January 2019. The ASLB denied an evidentiary hearing on May 7.
- Challenges to the TX/ISP Consolidated Interim Storage Facility are also underway with the Beyond Nuclear Petition hearing in Midland, TX July 2019. Hearing transcripts should be available in August with a subsequent public hearing scheduled for August 27 in Austin, TX.
- NRC Rulemaking (promulgation of new regulations) for Greater than Class C (GTCC) Waste for TX/ISP is now underway. GTCC Waste is highly radioactive waste but excludes

spent nuclear fuel rods. The 60-day Public Comment Period for the proposed rule will begin in early August. TX/ISP would be the first licensed US site to receive GTCC waste. Removal of the GTCC waste from shutdown reactor sites is required prior to environmental restoration, which must occur before the land can be re-used.

- The TX/ISP applicant is also submitting responses to the NRC RAI with the Final Round 1 of RAI responses to the NRC due in January 2020. Those responses refer to the cask handling building and concrete pad. The final EIS for the TX/ISP CISF is anticipated to be submitted in March 2021.

LWVNM has been evaluating the HOLTEC CISF license application but has not commented on the TX/ISP application. If approved, both sites would primarily employ workers in south-east New Mexico and involve emergency response resources from that area.

### ***Report on the LWVNM Redistricting Project***

From the LWVNM Redistricting Task Force

*By Dick Mason, Action Chair*

The LWVNM has received a generous grant from the Thornburg Foundation in Santa Fe to mount a public education campaign for fair redistricting in New Mexico. In addition to funding the League, the Foundation has funded two other grantees for redistricting reform work. They are: Gwyneth Doland, a New Mexico journalist and one-time head of NM Foundation for Open Government, to write a history of redistricting in New Mexico from 1980, looking for patterns of what went wrong in each redistricting session; and the National Council of State Legislatures for three projects:

- a seven-state comparison of redistricting practices;
- a map of all states with their redistricting structures;
- curriculum and training for media on how to report on redistricting efforts, and curriculum and training for legislators, with a training session for some of them.

All three of the grantees will be presenting on redistricting to the interim Courts, Corrections & Justice Committee (this is the interim committee that deals with voting & elections) on the afternoon of October 10<sup>th</sup>.

The League has engaged a consultant to assist in this project as program coordinator. Her name is **Kathleen Burke** and we are confident she has the skills needed to assist in this crucial project. You can reach her at: [redistricting@lwvnm.org](mailto:redistricting@lwvnm.org)

Akkana Peck, LWVNM webmaster, has registered [www.fairdistrictsnm.org](http://www.fairdistrictsnm.org) as the project's website. We are going to be developing content as we go along. Thanks to Akkana for acting on this so quickly.

The League wants to develop a coalition of organizations and individuals that will convince New Mexico policy makers that we need a fair redistricting process for New Mexico following the 2020 census.



## ***LWVUS on the Broadway Stage***

*By Susan Haase*

In June, after the LWVUS Council meeting, Hannah Burling and I headed for NYC, tickets in hand for “What the Constitution Means to Me,” written by and starring Heidi Schreck. Not knowing exactly what to expect as the reviews billed it as both funny and serious, I wasn’t fully prepared for how serious “serious” might be. I left with the sense that not only is it essential that civics be a required course in middle and high school, but that both the strengths and the failures of the Constitution be discussed openly at all levels.

Briefly, when she was 15, Schreck’s mother drove her around the country to participate in speech contests at American Legion Halls on the topic: “What the Constitution Means to Me”, and to illuminate a connection between the document and her personal life. The prize money she earned put her through college. The play opens with her adopting the persona of her fifteen-year-old self and taking the podium at a Legion Hall with a Legionnaire sitting in a chair on the side of the stage and serving as timekeeper. We see and hear what Schreck might have said in describing this perfect document which has guided justice in our country.

And then, after much hilarity, Schreck assumes her forty-something self and begins talking more about the connection the document has had with four generations of women in her family: women who were immigrants; women who had abortions; women who were victims of domestic violence. Their life stories involve Constitutional questions of citizenship, reproductive rights, and protection against gender violence. And the Constitution often had and has no answer.

In one disturbing example, Schreck references a Colorado woman who had a restraining order against a violent husband who repeatedly violated the order. She called the local police often, but they refused to help her. The husband killed her three children. She sued the police department for failing to protect her and took the case to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court decided she couldn’t sue the police department because it had no constitutional obligation to provide her with active protection. The theater played an audio clip from the Court’s discussion arguing on the meaning of “shall.” A woman had been terrorized and children had died, but the legal decision could turn on the interpretation of a single word.

How can this be? The Constitution was created by men who didn’t want government to DO anything. It’s a “negative rights” document – saying what government cannot do, rather than a “positive rights” document saying what government must do. The Bill of Rights, for example, guarantees citizens the right to petition their legislators for better schools or better health care, but it does not guarantee the right to a public education or health care or a job or.... And, as evidenced in the example above, women are not entitled to federal protection against gender violence. And, until women are constitutionally declared equal, legislation granting equal this or that can be repealed. And, women have not been declared equal, constitutionally. A final audio clip played for the audience was from an interview with Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Asked how many women should be on the Court to achieve the right “balance,” she replied “nine.”

For those of you who may not make it to New York anytime soon, there’s a great overview of the issues the play covers in an interview Terry Gross did with Heidi Schreck on Fresh Air: How Women Have Been “Profoundly” Left Out of the U.S. Constitution: NPR

## **Changes for Voter Registrars!**

*By Judy Williams*

The League's voter registrars need to know about some of the important new rules for voter registration. Here's a summary of the main points:

1. The Secretary of State (SOS) website has been "refreshed", so check it out, especially the Voting and Elections section.
2. The SOS is designing new voter registration forms, but you can use your old ones until they're gone.
3. The full SSN will not go on the form anymore. Only the last 4 digits are needed, even on the old forms.
4. Voter registration can now be done during early voting, starting in the 2019 municipal elections. This means people can register up to and including the Saturday before election day. However, this is available this year **ONLY** in early voting locations that have internet. This includes all county clerks' offices.
5. Beginning in 2021 same day registration will be allowed at all polling sites, including on the official election day. Sites that lack internet will have to allow people to register, but they will need to vote on a provisional ballot.
6. Online registration **CANNOT** be done during early voting.
7. Photo ID is required when people register at the voting sites. One reason is to eliminate fakes and duplications in the system. Second, an MVD driver license or MVD ID is needed when people register so they can be assigned to the precinct where their residence is located.
8. The photo ID has to reflect current location **BUT** if it doesn't, the person can use a secondary document with their current address in addition to the photo ID.
9. Other IDs accepted are a valid student ID with photo and fee statement that shows residence in the county.
10. Photo ID is not required when someone who has already registered votes.
11. Albuquerque has opted in to having elections run by the county, so 2019 will not be a city election; no photo ID will be required for registered voters.



A few other things to watch for in the future: there will be some reorganization of precincts, and an increase in their number. And in the future, New Mexico people will be able to vote anywhere in the state! Judy Williams is the point person for the League.

## Local League News

### **Santa Fe County Report**

*By Laura Atkins, Representative*

#### **Annual Meeting May 2019**

The annual meeting was held on May 8, 2019. The speaker was motivational speaker Marsha Pincus, who spoke about women and creativity in the third stage of life. We adopted the new position on the medically indigent.

LWVSFC is pleased to announce our 2019-2020 leadership team:



Back row: Pat Hawkins, Director Voter Information, Susan Haase, Secretary, Laura Atkins, VP Program and Member Services, Hannah Burling, Director/Action and Advocacy Chair, Suzanne Ronneau, Treasurer, Marcy Litzenberg, VP Administration and Finance Committee Chair, Kelly David, VP/Voter Registration Chair. Front row: Debbie Helper, Director/Membership Chair, Donna Reynolds, VP PR/Communications, Stephanie Schlanger, Director/Voter Publisher and Webmaster. Not shown are Patricia Victor, Office Manager and Danis Kelly, Arrangements Chair.

## High School Civics Project

LWVSFC initiated a high school civics project using the case study method developed by Harvard Business School professor David Moss and sponsored by the Greenwich League of Women Voters. We have identified two charter high schools as pilot sites; two teachers will attend the Harvard Case Study Civics Workshop Program in August. The Workshop will be held at Harvard University. Randi Lowenthal and Anne Culp, the new High School Voter Registration Chairs, will oversee the project.

LWVSFC recruited eight high school students to become voter registrars in April. The eight student VRA's registered 39 students to vote by the end of the school year.

**Membership:** We have 150 members as of July. Pat Hawkins hosted a new member tea at her home on June 20. Seven new members attended.

**Programs:** Our annual calendar planning meeting was held June 12. The calendar is available on the website.

On June 15, LWVSFC sponsored a public forum on short term rentals in Santa Fe. The panel included Carol Johnson, Director of Land Use; Karen Heldmeyer, LWVSFC member and former city councilor; Kurt Hill, former president of the Santa Fe Association of Realtors and owner of short term rental property; and Kelly O'Donnell, economist and author of a study on short term rentals for the city of Santa Fe.

In addition to general meetings, we are launching a Lunch With A Leader program, City Finances 101, in a series of informal discussions with the Santa Fe's elected officials and top-level staff. The first meeting was held July 17 and with City Councilor Roman "Tiger" Abeyta, Finance Committee Chair, and Mary McCoy, Finance Director, City of Santa Fe.



July parade in Las Vegas featuring women dressed as suffragists. Photo by Bart Ellison.

## Central New Mexico

*By Karen Douglas*

LWVCNM calendar planning on June 15 was very successful in identifying speakers and topics for the 18 LWVCNM unit meetings planned as part of the program activity for July 2019 – May 2020. The CNM program presentation for the June General Meeting featured a panel discussion highlighting changes for the economic picture in New Mexico. The panel moderator discussed venture capitalism with three additional speakers discussing small business interests benefiting from venture capital.

In July Albuquerque City Clerk Katy Duhigg addressed restrictions on applying for public campaign funding. About 80% of City Council candidates apply for public financing, but Albuquerque mayoral candidates usually do not apply because it is difficult



for them to attain the large number of individual small contributions required.

LWVCNM is preparing to issue the 2019 Voter Guide addressing the November election. On July 8 CNM First Vice President Mary Wilson initiated discussion about questions for candidates plus ballot initiatives. She has continued with regularly scheduled meetings to ensure the LWVCNM Voter Guide activities are coordinated. The candidate nominating petition signature verification in late August has previously resulted in candidate removal due to erroneous or falsified signatures, so submittal of the Voter Guide for publication is pending outcome of this verification.

Jeanne Logsdon is progressing with 2020 LWVCNM suffrage centennial event planning, to be held on August 29, 2020. A separate luncheon scheduled for a Saturday in February will commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the League of Women Voters and honor eight LWVCNM lifetime members. August 22, 2020 is the date for an Albuquerque City Civic Plaza event involving numerous organizations. Additional plans include promoting civics education in high schools to involve younger state residents in observance of the suffrage centennial.

LWVCNM Office Volunteer Training will be held on August 3 to introduce new volunteers to office protocol and as a refresher for current volunteers. The LWV office provides service to both members and the greater electorate for the Central New Mexico and the New Mexico State Leagues.

## ***Southern New Mexico (formerly LWVGLC)***

*By Kathy Brook, Co-President*

**Name Change** Our request to change our name to LWVSNM (approved by the LWVNM board in May) has been approved by LWVUS and we are trying to come to agreement on how to define ourselves geographically. The goal is to be welcoming to potential members outside Dona Ana County without appearing to offer services to a broader geographic area than we can reasonably provide. There has been some conversation about this via email with about 10% of our membership contributing comments. The question posed to the group offered three options: Congressional District 2 (outside of LWVCNM), 10 Southern New Mexico counties, or keeping the concept flexible/undefined.

Discussion items included the potential changes in Congressional District boundaries and the extent to which we might be over-extending ourselves with a larger area. One member noted discussions in another organization in New Mexico which defines local boundaries to cover the entire state. With the change of name, we are now proceeding through the steps to be a 501 c (3) organization.

**Board Workshop** Eileen VanWie and I recently met with Nancy-Barnes Smith, who works with local non-profit organizations. We have scheduled a workshop with her for our board on August 17. We anticipate that she will be able to help us with a variety of issues, including the formation of a development committee.

**Affordable Housing** Having done a good deal of work in recent years on affordable housing in Las Cruces, our board approved a letter to the NM Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA) in support of rehabilitation and enlargement of a facility to house very low-income residents with a preference for homeless veterans. This project was supported by the Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority (MVPHA) in light of a shortage of about 4700 affordable rental units in this area for renters earning less than \$20,000 per year. The Mesilla Valley Community of Hope is

partnering with MVPHA to provide the necessary supportive services to help tenants transition to self-sufficiency. These include case management, transportation, income support, and medical and mental health referrals.

The letter to MFA was motivated by information indicating that there was some opposition to the local project. Shortly after sending the letter, we were very pleased to learn that the project had been approved for low income tax credits.

**General Meetings** Recent meetings have featured Carrie Hamblen, executive director of the Green Chamber of Commerce in Las Cruces, and County Manager Fernando Macias. Ms. Hamblen was able to share her experiences in support of the creation of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument, which recently celebrated its fifth anniversary. She also offered insights on the efforts of local businesses to promote the monument. Mr. Macias provided a good introduction to our efforts to update our position on county government as he explained the challenges of working with elected officials who are responsible for county departments.

## **Los Alamos Report**

*Barbara Calef, Co-President*

In recent months the Los Alamos League has focused on waste reduction. In planning for the state convention, we strived to provide appropriate quantities of healthy food served with recyclable dishes and utensils. Jody Benson, one of our board members, has been working with the Zero Waste Team and students to learn the facts about waste in the grocery store, local restaurants, and the schools in order to come up with effective ways to reduce waste in the community. In May members of the Zero Waste Team, a subcommittee of the County Environmental Sustainability Board, spoke at Lunch with a Leader about recycling and composting, and Jody reported on what she had learned so far.

The Laboratory has been expanding recently and there is a serious housing deficit in the county. When we spoke to the manager of the Holiday Inn Express last fall, she told us that summer students working for the Lab often stayed there, unable to find other accommodation. At the June Lunch with a Leader Terry Priestley, the chair of the Planning and Zoning Commission, spoke about the site plans that have been submitted to the P&Z recently. Developers intend to build 44 townhouses, 70 affordable apartments, 150 market rate apartments, 70 affordable apartments, and 80 affordable senior apartments in Los Alamos. Another 161 market rate houses are planned for White Rock.

If all of those units are actually completed and occupied, the population of the county will increase significantly. In response to a question, Priestley said that the P&Z is not responsible for the impact on the schools. Several League members commented that the schools are not allowed to plan for a hypothetical increase in student population.

The LWVLA website is being upgraded to MyLo (My League Online) through LWVCA. This will make the webmaster's job easier and will enable people to join, make donations, and renew memberships online.

Several members of our League have been reading the extensive LWVLA files stored in the

Los Alamos County Archives. We have been reminded that our League was formed in 1947. At that time it had 56 members; men were allowed to be associate members; membership dues were \$2 a year.

At the most recent meeting the LWVLA board voted to waive any fee for students who wish to join the League. We plan to begin a campaign to draft new League members in the high school and UNM-LA in an effort to diversify.

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*A photo gallery from the 2019 LWV NM Convention in Los Alamos*



Photos by Janet Blair



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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.