



La Palabra

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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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Calendar

January 17, noon: New Mexico Legislature Convenes
January 21, 11:30-3:00: LWVNM Board meeting, Albuquerque
January-February-Program Planning
Local Leagues Examine LWVNM Positions and New Studies
February 8, 5:30-7:30: Legislative Reception, Garrett's Desert Inn
February 9, League Day at the Legislature
February-March: School & College Board and Bond Elections
March 11: LWVNM Board meeting, Santa Fe, 11-3
March 12-18: Sunshine Week
March 18, noon: New Mexico Legislature Ends
May 20-21: LWVNM Convention, Santa Fe



President's Corner



In the wake of a very unusual election, and with what is arguably the least experienced administration that we have seen in our lifetimes coming into power at the national level, it is time to sharpen our focus and redouble our efforts on our key goals at the local and state levels. This is an extraordinary time both in our nation and around the world. Respect for tradition and the rights we assumed were established are facing unprecedented challenges. I am reminded daily that the work that the League does is more urgently needed now than ever. Along with Leagues across the nation, we will be using our well researched positions to advocate for safeguarding programs that are essential to the strength of our democracy.

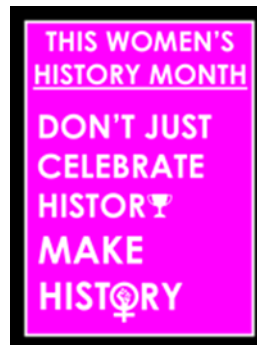
Our challenge has never been greater. We must re-fight hard-won battles in order to preserve the rights and values that we assumed were woven into the fabric of our democracy. But deep in my heart, I believe that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was right that “The *arc* of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards *justice*.” The majority of Americans will not tolerate racism, bigotry, misogyny, and mean-spiritedness. As League members, we must promote a greater understanding that democracy requires civility and compromise in order to reach a higher good. We remember the selflessness of those who fought so hard for women’s right to vote, for civil rights, for universal health care, for immigrant rights, and we will resist any erosion of those hard-won rights. Our collective commitment to sound governmental policies in the public interest will help them prevail.

In League,
Meredith Machen
LWVNM President
Voter Services Chair

Women’s History Month Celebration

March 10, 2017, noon to 1:00 p.m.
State Capitol Rotunda

This is a non-partisan, educational, news, and celebratory event.



Topics

- Ongoing women’s rights issues such as equal pay, pregnancy discrimination, and reproductive rights that need to be addressed in the NM state legislature as well as the nation-wide direction of the Equal Rights Amendment.
- Celebration of our strides in acquiring power, through activism and the vote, to develop policies and carry forth an agenda that focuses on women, children, and families.

Arrangements

Space along the East Hall has been reserved for five tables.

Organizational banners may be hung on the railing above the Rotunda. To assure placement, banners need to be brought to the office of Anna Anaya, Room 211, State Capitol, before 8:00 a.m. to be put up by staff. Contact anna.anaya@nmlegis.gov, 505 986-4575

Speakers (tentative list)

An officer from National NOW, Eleanor Chavez, Nina Martinez, Michelle Lujan Grisham, state legislators, Martha Burk, Pamela Herndon, Sylvia Ramos (ERA).

Send your speaker suggestions to Judith Binder, bjudy@unm.edu



Local League News

LWV Central NM

LWVCNM had a busy October in preparation for the November General Election. Office hours were expanded prior to and during the election to offer better service to the public. Thirty thousand LWVCNM Voter Guides were distributed beginning October 11 to locations easily accessible by the public including libraries, community centers, and polling places. Andrea Targhetta, Co-Vice President, and Karen Wentworth, 2017 Voter Services Chair, were interviewed by local television stations to increase public awareness of the Voter Guide contents and online availability to ensure wider distribution.

LWVCNM Voter Services activities included continued participation and voter registration during Naturalization Ceremonies. During the Naturalization Ceremony on October 14, one organization distributed voter registration forms in Spanish. LWVCNM received approval in October to distribute the LWVCNM “Who’s Who” during Naturalization Ceremonies, which provides important information for new voters. Brenda McKenna, LWVCNM Public Relations Director, photographed the ceremony for the LWVCNM Facebook page and other publications.

Kathy Korte, Bernalillo County Clerk Training Director, demonstrated an assistive device during a UNM Speech and Hearing Department presentation to those recovering from stroke and brain injuries. LWVCNM attended the event and registered two voters. Michelle Meaders, LWVCNM Voter Services Chair, met with Brad Malone, Elections Project Coordinator, at the Bernalillo County Clerk's office on September 20th to discuss registering voters during Naturalization Ceremonies and was referred to the Rio Grande Voter Registration Alliance for additional resources. LWVCNM members Judith Binder and Yolanda Garcia registered six voters at the UNM Honors College and NexGen Academy.

Both NM Secretary of State candidates participated in the October 16 debate held at Temple Albert in Albuquerque. KNME (NMPBS) and KANW-FM (APS public radio) broadcast the event throughout northern NM.

The February 2017 APS and Central NM Community College election may have a greater voter turnout if the 2016 Albuquerque ballot initiative for decriminalizing small amounts of marijuana obtains enough signatures to appear on ballot.

On October 18, LWVCNM conducted the consensus meeting for the LWVNM Charter School Regulation Study with Meredith Machen, LWVNM President and Study Committee Chair, presenting background information and explaining the issues. Laura Stokes, a member of the Charter School Regulation Study Committee, served as facilitator, and Diane Goldfarb acted as timekeeper. LWVCNM transmitted the consensus report to the committee on October 24 for consolidation with the results of the consensus meetings held by the other NM Leagues.

Viki Harrison, Executive Director of Common Cause, addressed the October 13 luncheon unit emphasizing prior citizen involvement efforts coordinated with the League to improve voter turnout, including synchronization of elections to better serve the public. Bill Garcia, NM Public Regulation Commission Consumer Relations Director, discussed the roles and responsibilities of the PRC during the October 24 NE Heights Unit meeting and highlighted recent consumer litigation. Member questions focused on the 2013 LWVNM position regarding qualifications for elected PRC Commissioners, corruption concerns, needed changes in funding, and improving representation of consumer interests.

LWVCNM is considering adoption of the MN Empty Chair Policy for future debates. Sonia Lersten presented the draft policy during the November LWVCNM Board meeting.

Gail Owens will chair the LWVCNM committee to formulate, approve, and

implement a policy limiting partisan political activity for selected officer and director positions in the local League.

November 2016 program offerings for LWVCNM included Representative Jim Dines (District 20, Albuquerque) discussing ethics legislation. Representative Dines introduced legislation in 2016 to amend the NM State Constitution to establish an Independent Ethics Commission. The bill was killed in the NM Senate Rules Committee. Proposed Ethics Commission activities would have included publishing of all ethics complaints regarding state officials following Commission review. LWV has long supported improving ethics and transparency principles and practices in our government. In addition to the 2016 LWVUS Money in Politics Position, LWVNM has established positions on Ethics (2007) and Transparency (2011). LWVNM Vice President and Action Co-Chair Dick Mason discussed Lobbying Techniques at the November 15 unit meeting and the LWVNM Workshop “How to be an Effective Citizen Advocate at the Roundhouse” held in Santa Fe on December 10.

UNM Political Science Professor Emerita Dr. Christina Sierra spoke at the December 8 General Meeting. Dr. Sierra previously served as Director of the Southwest Hispanic Research Institute and provided a valuable perspective on the General Election and insight into the 2016 Latino vote.

-Karen Douglas, Co-Vice President

LWVSFC Report

... and the beat goes on. Well, the dust is settling on another General Election season. The LWVSFC produced another Voter Guide to rave reviews, provided poll watchers to Common Cause NM, answered myriad questions posed via telephone or website, and did public presentations on the importance of voting and why people don't vote. In short, the core mission of the League received its due attention. But, as with life in a complicated world, that wasn't all of the story.

Ongoing behind the scenes, work is in progress to develop a new budget reporting format that will be user friendly as well as to transition the LWVSFC to a 501(c)(3) organization with a

dormant 501(c)(4). Watch for alerts about a March workshop in Santa Fe with LWVUS President Chris Carson and her husband Tom. Tom has assisted Leagues across the nation with the conversion process and will be providing pivotal information about the specifics. Chris will focus on effective strategies for citizen advocacy.

In October, LWVSFC members and guests heard a presentation by Wild Earth Guardians, which highlighted the focus on “keep it in the ground.” Post election, LWVSFC members took a break from the intense to have a bit of fun touring Santa Fe's amazing Meow Wolf art co-op. The annual Holiday Luncheon featured author/university professor Lois Rudnick as keynote presenter on the topic of Santa Fe's ability to attract truly amazing women to live and work here.

And, of course, LWVSFC members gave testimony to County and City bodies, offered feedback to City administrators, and monitored public meetings. Usual fare for a group of highly committed, well-informed volunteers.

So it is that the beat goes on. But, it can't go on indefinitely without an infusion of new energy. Consequently, a major focus for the next couple of months will be the recruitment of a new leadership team for 2017. The Nominating Committee has already begun meeting and will continue to recruit volunteers willing to devote their time and skills.

Like the old song that rings in my ears, the “drums of the League pound a rhythm to my brain”...it's the rhythm of dedication to responsible, responsive government.

-Suzanne Schmidt, President

LWVLA Report

In the wake of the election, we've been reflecting on a topic that is dear to the hearts of members of the League of Women Voters and others: the corruption of political discourse by money. The League was founded in 1920 when women got the vote. Since then, its mission has been to educate voters.

Question: How many political messages did you receive daily during the recent campaign?

Question: How many of them used a “survey” or “quiz” that concluded by asking for money?

Question: How many mailers presented a simplistic, negative version of a candidate?

Question: How many of us feel resentment that the only form of political speech that matters seems to be *money*?

The final accounting for this election is not yet available, but we can measure the total amount of money spent by looking at the Federal Election Commission’s report for the 2012 election (the total election, not just the presidential race). Politico summarized: “Almost \$7 billion was spent by candidates, parties, and outside groups.” Broken down into categories, we see that

candidates spent	\$3.2 billion
parties spent	\$2 billion
outside PACs spent	\$2.1 billion.

Politico observes that “the total number of dollars spent on the 2012 election exceeded the number of people on the planet.”

One asks what this money buys. Increasingly, it buys distorted, negative caricatures of candidates. Complex issues are reduced to simple-minded slogans. The image of politicians becomes that of attack dogs rather than thoughtful debaters.

To restore dignity and genuine debate to the political scene, the League strives to be a force that stands above money. Voter guides and candidate forums provide a level playing field where each candidate has the same number of words or the same number of minutes to respond to the same questions. Character, thoughtfulness, and ideas count—money should not.

*-Barbara Calef & Rebecca Shankland
Co-Presidents*

LWVGLC Report

As we approach the end of 2016, we do so with pride and enthusiasm for the flexibility, resourcefulness, and energy of our members. Our agenda this year has been challenging. We celebrate this fourth quarter with renewed vision and energy to carry out our mission.

Our local collaborations with community groups expanded our 2016 general election education activities, as well as enhancing our community visibility:

Dona Ana County Bureau of Elections – voter registration agent training

Dona Ana County Bureau of Elections Advisory Council – voter registration events at the large high schools in the county

Las Cruces Sun News - publication of the 2016 Voter Guide (English & Spanish Editions)

Comunidades en Accion y de Fe (CAFÉ) – provided the Spanish translation for the 2016 Voter Guide

KRWG-TV Public Media – hosted six NM Legislative Candidate Forums

Dona Ana County Government Center – hosted the County Candidates Forum

Committee activities this quarter:

Immigration Committee:

Collaboration with the Las Cruces Community-Wide Immigration Forum with community organizations representing legal, financial, faith-based, and political views

Letter sent to the U.S. Attorney Martinez regarding prosecution rates of immigrants. No response to date from the U.S. Attorney.

Youth Engagement Committee:

Meetings were held in September and October with students and teacher sponsors from two local high schools. According to Erika Graf-Webster, “the initial short-term goal is to support the High School Voter Registration Initiative sponsored by the Dona Ana County Election Advisory Council. The long-term goal is to collaborate with high schools in the development of a pilot Youth Engagement Program that can be rolled out at the middle school level.”

Affordable Housing Committee:

Members have advocated for affordable housing throughout our community. They stay informed by reading important housing documents, and attending Work Session and City Council meetings. The committee sent a letter to the Las Cruces City Council to identify the most important issues.

Our monthly meetings for the fourth quarter included:

October - Meredith Machen, LWVNM President, Unit Meeting, "New Mexico's Charter School Policies"

Consensus Meeting: LWVNM Study: Charter School Regulation

November - Juan Olvera & Beth Bardwell, "An Overview of the Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority."

December – Annual Legislative Breakfast

Our League will be collecting information about the current "Empty Chair" policy of conducting candidate forums in the future. A four- member task force has been organized to research the issue and make recommendations to the Board.

-Gwen Hanson, President

LWVNM.org
Your Go-To Website



Please check out the LWVNM website regularly for the handouts and resources. On the Action page, for example, you can find an updated explanation of the difference between advocacy and lobbying and a guide to the state legislative website. Under Member Documents is the revised Policy on Candidate Forums, amended by the Board to allow for more participation by candidates whose opponents do not attend.

Convention information will be posted as soon as it is available. Many thanks to Akkana Peck for doing such a fine job keeping our website up to date.

**LWVNM Board Nominations
for 2017-2019**

**SUBMIT A
NOMINATION**

All LWVNM leadership positions are open to nominations by members. Priority positions to fill are the following:

Treasurer

Communications (preferably, but not necessarily, on board)

Voter Services (on or off board)

Issue Specialists (on or off board)

Membership (on or off board)

Please consider nominating yourself or a fellow member (with permission) to further our work. Be a part of a committed group of individuals making a difference in New Mexico. See job descriptions at LWVNM.org in the Member Documents section and send ideas to the Nominating Committee at nominations@lwvnm.org.

Many thanks from your Nominating Committee.

Peggy Howell, Chair, LWVCNM
Becky Shankland, LWVLA
Ardyth Norem, LWVGLC
Diane Goldfarb LWVCNM and Dick Mason, LWVCNM, LWVNM Board Members

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



lwvnmactionssubscribe@yahoogle.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. Thank you for your interest and cooperation.

New Mexico

A Role Model for the Country



While there are numerous areas where our state clearly must do better, here are two areas where our state serves as a model for the rest of the country.

Voting Participation and Elections Administration

We are proud that in NM our elections were well run and that we did not face any problems connected with voting rights, voter access, or voter intimidation. Under Brad Winter, the Secretary of State's office conducted the election in a fair and transparent manner. We look forward to working with Maggie Toulouse Oliver, the new Secretary of State, the NM Legislature, and our good government partners on expanding voter registration opportunities and improving campaign finance regulation and ethics. Many thanks to all of the League members who helped with our voter education efforts through voter guides, candidate and issue forums, and who worked to get out the vote.

Respecting Immigrants and Diversity

Another area in which New Mexico serves as a model for the country is our commitment to fair policies for immigrants. We have a long history of diverse cultures and are the only state in the union where Spanish is an official language. Most New Mexicans will not tolerate bigotry, bias, or harsh stances on immigration. We understand the important roles immigrants play in our economy and their contributions to the vibrancy of our communities. We understand the immense obstacles and hurdles for obtaining citizenship or legal residency, and the myriad and complex challenges immigrants face daily. The sanctuary policies that some of our cities and counties have adopted serve as models of courage for communities across the country. Throughout the state, we have school and college administrators making sure that all students feel safe, so they can focus on learning. Strong policies prevent staff from supplying information regarding students' immigration status or cooperating with federal immigration officials who enter campuses without warrants. We have policies whereby police refrain from enforcing federal immigration laws, which are not their responsibility. We have mass support for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which grants some qualified young people without legal residency status the ability to work and temporary relief from the fear of deportation. Since Congress has failed to address comprehensive immigration reform, the onus falls on our state and local governments and our residents to oppose the criminalization and marginalization of our fellow New Mexicans.

-Meredith Machen

LWVNM Board Adopts Charter School Regulation Position

Many thanks to all of the League members who participated in the Charter School Regulation Study and consensus meetings. The position, printed below, was adopted by the Board during their November 12 meeting in Socorro. It will be used for advocacy during the 2017 Legislative Session and will be a component of the existing LWVNM Education position when ratified at Convention, May 20-21, 2017, in Santa Fe.

Charter School Regulation (2016)

The League of Women Voters of New Mexico believes that every student should have access to a high quality, publicly funded education regardless of race, ethnicity, family income, or geographical location. The League believes in accountability, transparency, and equity in the use of public funds for education.

Charter schools are discretionary programs intended to fill unmet needs and/or to test innovative instructional strategies to produce quality educational outcomes. Policy makers must ensure that adequate funds are available for traditional public schools and define how charter schools fill unmet needs. Appropriate instructional and support services must be provided in all public schools to meet the diverse needs of individual students.

Regarding the mission of charter schools, the LWVNM believes the following:

A charter school should not be authorized unless

- its mission would serve a need the traditional schools cannot;
- funds are available;
- there is a demonstrated need based on student population projections.
- New Mexico should provide flexibility and supplemental funding for magnet programs and career academies within traditional public schools.
- Charter school innovations demonstrated to be effective should be disseminated to improve the traditional public education system.
- The state should establish a closure policy revoking the contract of a charter school that fails to meet minimum academic, financial, and organizational standards for two consecutive years or for two of the three most recent years.

For the sake of assuring accountability and transparency and minimizing the fiscal impact, LWVNM recommends the following:

- A charter school's finances should be available for public scrutiny, and budget processes should be similar to those for school districts, which require the public to be provided with an opportunity for input into decision-making.
- Charter school governing council members should adhere to standards and best practices as delineated by the NM School Boards Association.
- The school funding formula should be equitable so as not to advantage charter schools over traditional public schools.



- NM should develop an effective performance-based accountability system for charter schools focused on increased proficiency, academic growth, and college/career readiness standards to ensure that charter schools demonstrate positive student outcomes. Charter schools that do not meet the established benchmarks should be put on time-limited improvement plans and not allowed to increase enrollment until they have met the benchmarks.

LWVNM believes that public funding for virtual schools should be less per student since the schools do not require brick and mortar facilities.

-Meredith Machen

LWVNM earns 2016 Common Cause NM “Best in Government” recognition for “outstanding leadership in the fight for open and accountable government in New Mexico



Pictured from L to R: Olga Pedroza, LWVGLC; Diane Goldfarb, LWVCNM; Carol Tucker-Trelease, LWVCNM; Becky Shankland, LWVLA; Chris Furlanetto, LWVSFC; Karen Douglas, LWVCNM; Yvonne Flores, LWVGLC; Meredith Machen, LWVNM; Heather Ferguson and Viki Harrison, Common Cause NM

Common Cause NM filed an amicus curiae to support the League’s successful NM Supreme Court case, which validated the legislature’s ability to consolidate school board and municipal elections as approved by the voters in two separate constitutional amendments. Common Cause is our partner in advocating for ethics and campaign finance reform, reducing the influence of money in politics, instituting fair redistricting practices, and making improvements in elections. We’re honored and look forward to even closer collaboration in the 2017 session! Thank you, Common Cause NM!!

Recap—Advocacy Workshop



On December 10, 2016, the League of Women Voters of New Mexico sponsored its Annual Workshop: *Effective Citizen Advocacy at the Legislature*. Well over 100 attendees met at the State Capitol to learn how to approach legislators, craft an effective message, and plan their time wisely. The speakers were Senator Majority Leader, Peter Wirth, D-Santa Fe, District 25; Representative Jimmie Hall, R-Bernalillo, District 28; and a professional lobbyist, Minda McGonagle of McGonagle Public Relations. After making their presentations, the panel answered questions from the audience that touched on numerous topics.

Ms. McGonagle explained that a bill may originate with constituents or associations within the public sphere who have an idea about how to solve a problem of public policy. Lobbyists work with the Interim Committees as well as the Legislative Council Service to research options and help legislators draft bills. Pre-filing begins in mid-December.

Here's a very simplified explanation of the process of passing legislation. Once a bill is drafted for a sponsor, it is assigned to two or more committees where it is discussed and where testimony is heard. In each committee, a decision is made to either (1) pass the bill and send it on to the next committee, (2) amend the bill by changing some wording, (3) table the bill (where it may die or be revived), or (4) vote no. Should language be changed, the bill must be voted on again before it goes to the next committee, which repeats the process. Once passed by committees, it goes to the chamber floor where the same decision options are available. Either the same bill goes through the committees of the other chamber and on that floor, or it can die along the way. Should there be contention between the House and the Senate versions, the bill would be sent to a Conference Committee composed of three members from each chamber, who work to resolve the differences. The Conference Committee meetings, formerly "mysterious," are now open to the public. The final bill must be passed by both chambers before it goes to the governor.

Senator Peter Wirth – Thanked the League for sponsoring advocacy workshops, as they help participants become more effective citizens. He listed his Top 10 Tips for getting a bill through the Legislature.

TOP 10

1. Don't be scared of the Roundhouse. Walk wherever you want or need to go! Talk to members on the House or Senate Floor or in their offices.
2. It's tough to pass legislation, so watch discussions and monitor the progress of bills.
3. Determine the method your legislator likes to use to communicate. Does s/he prefer e-mail, telephone, or a one-to-one chat? Use that method.
4. Should the legislator say s/he'll support your bill, MOVE ON. Trust that it can happen!
5. Understand that Santa Fe constituents will not be as effective lobbying a legislator from Las Cruces as someone from there.
6. Be courteous! Your bill is just one of thousands.
7. Don't expect your bill to pass the first time you bring it up.
8. Remember that, in both chambers before we start proceedings, you can go "on the floor" to visit with your legislator.
9. When it's something you care about, come to committee meetings and be prepared to speak. A room packed with people causes legislators to "stop and pay attention."
10. Count your votes and stay targeted; you need six votes for a bill to move forward with a "do pass." Figure out whom you need to meet with – in his/her office or on the floor. And, let your group know when you have a commitment.



Representative Jimmie Hall explained the very political Capital Outlay process and the difficulty of making decisions on which projects to support. He mentioned that various proposals for improving the process are being considered. For now, legislators from rural areas get together to prioritize their portion of the funds. Legislators from urban areas have their own projects. This time, it will be important to recognize critical statewide projects, such as water management and the needs of the population that lives west of I-25, where many don't have electricity and running water. Governor Martinez divides the available capital outlay funds in three, with about 1/3 each going to the House, Senate, and the Executive. After the list of projects is developed, the governor still has line item veto power. Because the fiscal situation is so bad, certain projects will go stagnant in order to fund critical projects such as highways.

Rep. Hall explained that the budget must be balanced each year, and revenues from the extractive industries, which fund much of government, are way down. The legislature this year more than ever has a hard job ahead of them prioritizing what to fund or cut.

Attendees were given excellent handouts that are posted on the Action page of lwvnm.org.

-Judy Binder, LWVCNM



L-R, panelists Minda McGonagle, Representative Jimmie Hall, Senator Peter Wirth

Notification of LWVNM Biennial Convention

May 20-21, 2017, Santa Fe

The Santa Fe County League invites League members from around the state to attend the 2017 LWVNM Convention, May 20-21. Convention delegates will consider a program for study and action, elect officers and directors, adopt a balanced budget for the next two years, consider revising the bylaws, and transact such other business as may be presented.

On May 19, there will be an informal evening reception to welcome attendees. A luncheon will open the convention on Saturday at noon, followed by the first Plenary Session. Henrietta Saunders, CFA, Treasurer of the League of Women Voters of the United States and the League of Women Voters Education Fund, and liaison to LWVNM, will be our luncheon speaker. The banquet speaker for Saturday night has yet to be decided. Both the Saturday luncheon and banquet are open to non-members.

Sunday's Plenary Session will begin at 8:30 am and conclude at approximately at noon. The LWVNM Board meeting with new officers will commence shortly thereafter.

Hotel reservation and convention registration information and much more will be in the Spring *La Palabra*.

Please let your chapter president know if you would like to be a delegate. We need your voice. We also welcome any member who wants to attend all or part of the Convention as an observer.

-Meredith Machen, President



League Day at the Legislature 2017 February 8 & 9

**Legislative Reception, Wednesday, February 8, 5:30-7:30 PM
Garrett's Desert Inn, 311 Old Santa Fe Trail***

Adequately Funding Essential Services

James Jimenez, MPA, Executive Director, New Mexico Voices for Children

James Jimenez joined New Mexico Voices for Children in 2013 and became Executive Director in 2016. He also serves as an adjunct professor at the University of New Mexico's School of Public Administration. In both positions, he draws from his considerable experience working in state and city government. Jimenez served as the Chief of Staff under Governor Bill Richardson from 2006 to 2008, and as Cabinet Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Finance and Administration from 2003 to 2006. He has also served as City Manager for the city of Rio Rancho. Jimenez volunteers for several nonprofit organizations.

League Day, Thursday, February 9, 10:30 AM to Noon

State Land Office, Morgan Hall, 310 Old Santa Fe Trail

Educational Funding Issues and Priorities

Dr. Veronica García, Superintendent, Santa Fe Public Schools

Veronica García's decades of work within the state's K-12 education system range from teacher to principal to superintendent and to New Mexico's first Cabinet Secretary of Education. In this position, she successfully advocated for the Pre-K Act, K-3 Plus, rigorous academic standards, college and career readiness programs, and accountability systems to improve teacher quality and student learning. Prior to returning to Santa Fe Public Schools recently as Superintendent, she was the Executive Director of New Mexico Voices for Children, Superintendent of Albuquerque Public Schools, and Executive Director of New Mexico Coalition of School Administrators.

Reproductive Rights

Julianna Koob, Legislative Advocate, Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains and ACLU

Julianna Koob has fought to advance the rights of women and children for the past 25 years, beginning as a domestic violence shelter crisis advocate and later becoming a legislative advocate fighting for the rights of girls and women to make their own healthcare decisions and be treated equally and fairly. She is particularly proud of her work to get legislation passed to increase equity for girls in school sports programs and to require equitable pay for women. In addition, she worked to defeat multiple pieces of legislation that would restrict access to abortion.

Garrett's Desert Inn is offering us a special group rate of \$60 single plus \$10 for each additional person (plus tax) for double queen, king, or single based on availability. Deadline for this rate is January 18 with the group code "Swing Vote" for February 8 and surrounding dates. The parking fee of \$8 is waived for your stay and/or for the League Reception. Reserve by calling 1-800-888-2145 or 505-982-1851. Group rate is not available online.

The 2017 Legislative Session – Advocating for Adequate Revenues

The 2017 session of the New Mexico Legislature convenes on January 17. This is a 60-day session and that means all issues can be considered, unlike the 30-day session when only budget items and those matters prioritized by the governor can be considered.

With many new representatives and with the Democrats regaining the majority, the beginning of the session in the House should bring many changes in Committee assignments and maybe even a restructuring of House committees. The new Speaker of the House is Rep. Brian Egolf (D-Santa Fe). If the leadership follows tradition, we will not know the committees and their membership until after the beginning of the session.

The Senate also has many new members and a new Majority Leader, Senator Peter Wirth (D-Santa Fe). Again, given tradition, this means new Committee assignments will not be known until after the beginning of the session.



A major priority for the League of Women Voters in this session will be advocating for new revenue sources to fund essential services. Since 2005, there have been a series of drastic tax cuts and tax giveaways, mainly benefiting the wealthy and corporations. During this same period, we have seen cuts to vital services such as education, health care, services to children and families, criminal justice, and so forth. This has got to stop: we need new revenue generated from sources that can afford it, the wealthy and corporations.

LWVNM and its Partners

We are a member of the Fairness Project, a coalition of advocacy and other groups, that is putting forth a number of revenue generating proposals. Among the proposals are: a reversal of the tax cuts given to the wealthy in 2005; extending the gross receipts tax to internet sales; a freeze, if not repeal, of the 2013 corporate and manufacturers tax cuts; and an increase in the tobacco and alcohol tax.

We will also be working closely with Common Cause on campaign financing reform, an independent ethics commission, expansion of voter rights, and other election issues. Building on the League's victory in the New Mexico Supreme Court, the League will be supporting legislation that will enable consolidation of nonpartisan elections. This should result in greater voter participation.

As a member of the NM Coalition for Choice, we will be working together to support legislation that will expand access to reproductive and contraceptive services.

As a member of the Health Care for All coalition, we will be working together to defend the gains made by the federal Affordable Care Act.

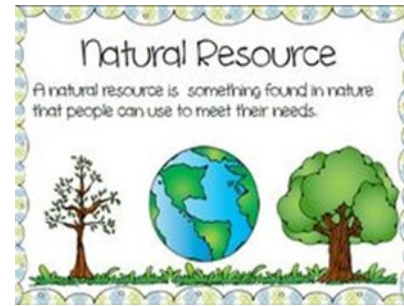
We are a member of New Mexico Death Penalty Action and of New Mexico Safe. We will be working with these two groups to defeat counter-productive criminal justice legislation.

The League will start generating our Legislative Tracking sheet soon after the filing date of December 15 and will publish our final legislative priorities by January 15. You can keep up by checking on <http://www.lwvnm.org/Action/>. There is a link on that page that allows you to join our Action listserv. That listserv provides regular updates on the League's advocacy action.

-Dick Mason, Action Co-Chair

Natural Resources Report

PNM Resources, Inc., is required by New Mexico law and PRC regulation to conduct a public planning process every three years. It is known as the Integrated Resource Plan process. The goal is to identify the most cost-effective energy portfolio going forward, using a “20-year resource planning horizon.”



Through a series of public meetings beginning in July and ending in November 2016, PNM led attendees through a briefing on their planning process, explaining what goes into the process and the tools they use to model various scenarios and create the three-year plan. PNM will prepare a draft report, which it files with the Public Regulation Commission in July 2017. Before that, PNM will convene public meetings in early 2017 to discuss the draft. PNM has posted a great deal of analysis and the supporting materials used for planning on their website:

www.pnm.com/irp

The goal of the process is to examine various power source scenarios to determine which mix of energy is the best fit for the future. PNM is assuming that two of the units at the San Juan Generating Station (SJGS) will shut down by 2018. PNM will consider whether to shut down the two remaining units of SJGS by 2022, although they are assuming operation through the summer of 2022. A second scenario will examine the operation of SJGS beyond 2022.

The final meeting in November was possibly the most interesting. It allowed us to peek behind the curtain (think about the Wizard of Oz) to see the gears and wheels – the primary modeling software resources. For the analysis, PNM reviews reliability and grid standards, energy resources, including renewables, supply, demand, and prices. In order to build various scenarios, PNM uses various tools to assess the balance among cost, risk, and environmental impact. Tools include price spreadsheets, a capacity expansion model, hourly dispatch needs over time, and future costs of various portfolios. They also assess storage needs and developments.

The end result is to be the optimal energy portfolio to meet demand at all hours. PNM must have sufficient baseload (which is something that is always available). The baseload has historically been supplied by coal and nuclear power; now, natural gas is taking over much of the coal baseload. Until there is sufficient storage, PNM may not be able to take advantage of all available solar and wind energy. PNM believes the optimum portfolio produces the lowest cost to revenue. They will include capital expenditures in their modeling and build these into electricity rates.

PNM expects to schedule briefing meetings in January-February to discuss analysis and findings. Sometime in the spring, the PRC will discuss the draft report. Things to look for in the proposed plan will include the mix of renewables, storage assumptions (apparently, advances are coming rapidly), costs to customers, and environmental impacts of the proposals.

-Judy Williams, Natural Resources Co-Chair

Study Committees, Positions, and Advocacy-Oh My!

The value of being part of a huge organization of intelligent, caring, and committed individuals cannot be over-estimated.

Positions of the League of Women Voters are derived only after careful study

and member consensus. Once a study topic is approved, a committee conducts thorough research and produces reports providing facts, areas of concern, and ways that governmental policies might address the issues. From this research, the study committee creates consensus questions. Members in each of the local Leagues meet to discuss the questions and explore areas to find where there is consensus on principles. Once we have adopted positions, we use them for action and advocacy. Please see the job description for a Study Committee Chair at <http://lwvnm.org/board.html/>

Positions adopted by delegates at the national conventions are used by Leagues at the local, state, and federal level. For most of the national League positions and background information, go to <http://lwv.org/content/impact-issues-2014-2016-online-edition>. As we reported in the summer *La Palabra*, several new positions were approved by delegates at the LWVUS Convention 2016, including Money in Politics, the Constitutional Amendment Process, Redistricting, and Behavioral Health. These are available now at <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/new-and-updated-lwvus-positions-adopted-2016> and will be published online in the **LWV Impact on Issues 2016-18**. Whenever looking for League documents for members, it's easiest to go to <http://forum.lwv.org/>.



I have a lot of excitement in my life. I used to call it tension, but I feel much better now that I call it excitement.

The **League of Women Voters Clearinghouse** contains research conducted by League members as well as positions. Anyone can download and print the documents, but only League members may

submit documents. The purpose of the Clearinghouse is to share League positions among some 800 national, state, and local Leagues and with the public. Leagues can see how other Leagues have approached a tough issue and may find useful study materials. Leagues can also gain inspiration for program planning. Go to <https://sites.google.com/a/leagueofwomensvoters.org/clearinghouse/home>. While not comprehensive, the League positions and studies available through this site (including most of LWVNM's) are extremely interesting and valuable. "Google" is another great way of finding League positions, reports, study documents, and testimonies.

Please read over the current positions of the League of Women Voters of New Mexico from the link here from the left side of the home page: <http://lwvnm.org/positions.html>. Even if you don't want to propose a study yourself, we would like to hear suggestions if you see any position that is in need of any revision. Please write to leaders@lwvnm.org.

Let's give homage to all of those hard-working, dedicated members who have made a difference through study and advocacy for close to a century! Thanks for being a part of this remarkable organization.

-Meredith Machen



**League of Women Voters of NM
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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.