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The League of Women Voters of New Mexico, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The President's Corner

By Hannah Burling

LWVNM President: president@lwvnm.org



Since LWVUS withdrew recognition from LWV of Nevada, questions have come up about being nonpartisan. As a starting point, the LWVUS policy states that the League of Women Voters does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. Our state position, which goes into more detail, can be found here: <https://www.lwvnm.org/documents.html> under Policies.

In practice, what does this actually mean? We all have our own political opinions. We all have freedom of speech. But in order to be effective when we speak for the League, we voice the League viewpoint, which begins with our mission of empowering voters and defending democracy.

We do not only empower voters who agree with our positions. We empower all voters. We offer voter information and registration, voter guides, issue forums and all of our voter education efforts to everyone. We cannot do this effectively without credibility, integrity and civility.

The League has its positions, based on a thorough study of issues and agreed on via consensus or concurrence. We advocate for policies based on these. Do we support or oppose bills? Yes, we do. Do we criticize government policies?

Yes, we do.

But we do not criticize or support political parties or candidates.

The League envisions “a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate.” When everyone participates, we can do a better job to ensure a government that

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VIRTUAL LEAGUE DAY AT THE LEGISLATURE

Thursday, February 18, 2021

Zoom link to follow on Constant Contact

10:30 am: Welcoming comments from LWVNM President Hannah Burling

10:45 – 11:30 am: Redistricting Reform Legislation by Edward Chavez, Former New Mexico Supreme Court Chief Justice

Justice Chavez was Chief Justice of the New Mexico Supreme Court. He was appointed to the Supreme Court by Governor Bill Richardson and served from 2003 to 2018. Justice Chavez oversaw the litigation concerning the New Mexico House Redistricting maps in 2011 and was the co-Chair of the 2020 New Mexico First Redistricting Task Force. He received his undergraduate degree from Eastern New Mexico University in 1978 and his J.D. from the University of New Mexico School of Law in 1981.

11:30 am – 12:30pm: Taxes and Funding for Essential Services by Amber Wallin MPA, Deputy Director, New Mexico Voices for Children

Ms. Wallin oversees New Mexico Voices for Children’s research and policy work. She also manages the KIDS COUNT program and does policy research on education, tax and budget, hunger, and economic issues. She joined NM Voices in 2012 as a Center on Budget and Policy Priorities Fellow, after which she was a Research and Policy Analyst. Ms. Wallin has worked in the public sector at the municipal, state, and federal levels, working in the government department at New Mexico State University and the budget department at the city of Las Cruces prior to joining the Voices team. She received her MPA from NMSU.

President's Corner

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works for everyone.

We can’t achieve that vision by publicly saying we’re fighting with one party or another. We can’t do that by pointing out a political party’s mistakes or a candidate’s less than stellar behavior. Doing our job effectively, our job of educating the public and advocating for our positions, requires a different approach.

Karen Wentworth, currently co-president of the League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico, once said, “We are the people who color inside the lines.” Because of the integrity of our process, we’ve made it successfully through our first century and we’re beginning our second.

Report of the LWVNM Action Committee

By Dick Mason

Virtual League Day: We are planning a virtual League Day on February 18th from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm. We will have presentations on Taxes & Revenue and on Redistricting Reform. See separate article.

How we operate during the session: I believe that there will be limited opportunities for in person testimony at the Legislature. It is clear that the State Capitol will be closed to the public. We have to anticipate that all committee meetings will be virtual. That means we will most likely have to adapt our advocacy work to the new normal. There have been glitches in the process during the interim committee meetings. The advantage of virtual meetings is that we may be able to expand our lobbying group to include those who can't easily make the trip to Santa Fe. As we learn more about how the session will work, we will be posting the information on our website, please check it on a regular basis.

Issues during the session: The focus will be on the budget shortfall. Because of the shortfall, the legislators may be more open to diversifying our revenue sources, including increasing the distribution from the permanent fund for education. I assume there will be legislation to decriminalize abortion. And we will be supporting redistricting reform legislation. See separate article on redistricting. We will also be supporting legislation on health care, education, civil rights and a LWVNM- led bill on making GIS and other data used in elections more readily available.

As we learn more about how the session will work, we will be posting the information on our website. Please check it on a regular basis.

Webinar on LWVNM Advocacy during the session: January 14, 2021 at noon. Action Chair, Dick Mason will be presenting on League issues and advocacy for the session. You will receive a Constant Contact message with the details.

Action Committee Zoom meetings and the Action Listserve: We will be restarting our regular Zoom Action meetings. If you are interested in participating, please sign up for the LWVNM Action Listserve. You can do that by going to: <https://www.lwvnm.org/Action/>

2021 Session Dates: This is a 60-day session, so all issues can be considered.

January 4-January 15: Legislation may be pre-filed

January 19: Opening day (noon)

February 18: Deadline for introduction of new legislation

March 20: Session ends (noon)

April 9: Legislation not acted upon by the Governor is pocket vetoed.

June 18: Effective date of legislation other than general appropriation bills or bills carrying an emergency clause or other specified date

July 1: Appropriation bills become effective.

Redistricting Reform is a Priority for the LWVUS and the LWVNM

By Dick Mason, Action Committee Chair



FAIR DISTRICTS FOR NEW MEXICO

Dick Mason, the LWVNM project leader for Fair Districts for New Mexico, has been participating in the New Mexico First Redistricting Task Force. The task force was co-chaired by former New Mexico Supreme Court Chief Justice Edward Chavez and former New Mexico Appeals Court Judge Roderick Kennedy. The task force issued its recommendations on December 14.

The recommendations include setting criteria that meet all of the traditional and emerging best practices for fair redistricting. These include not favoring any political party and not considering the address of the incumbent office holders.

The task force also recommended the creation of an Independent Redistricting Committee to oversee the drawing of the district maps that will then be submitted to the legislature for approval in 2021. The Committee will also be responsible for coordinating public input.

The LWVNM convenes the Fair Districts for New Mexico (FDNM) project. FDNM will be leading the effort to pass legislation that will encompass the task force's recommendations. Senators Mark Moores (R-ABQ) and Jerry Ortiz y Pino (D-ABQ) have agreed to be the lead sponsors in the Senate. We expect additional Republicans and Democrats from both chambers to sign on as co-sponsors.

Please check www.fairdistricts.org for the latest updates.

Program: Election Procedures Position Amended

By Chris Furlanetto

Election Procedures (Adopted 1969; revised 1999, 2001, 2007, 2018, 2019, 2020)

After voting in September to add to the Election Procedures position on primary elections, it was decided to revisit the vote at the November meeting because board members were not given adequate time to consider the concurrence as required by the LWVNM Concurrence Policy. Subsequently, each local League was given an opportunity to discuss the issue. Local League leaders were sent the proposed changes as well as pros and cons for the added language.

At the November meeting, the Board reviewed each local League's responses and again voted to make the changes. The current position with the new language in bold follows:

Election Procedures (Adopted 1969; revised 1999, 2001, 2007, 2018, 2019, 2020)

The League of Women Voters of New Mexico supports:

1. Protection of the right of every citizen to vote;
2. Verifiable and auditable procedures to guarantee the integrity of all statutory methods of voting in New Mexico;
3. Funding to meet the requirements of the law and to serve the needs of the voters to ensure that elections are conducted accurately, fairly, and efficiently;
4. A centralized voter registration and election management system;
5. Statewide uniformity in early voting for all elections;

6. An all-inclusive system of voting that allows all registered voters to participate in the primary election, **so that**
 - **voters who are not enrolled in a major political party may vote on one ballot per primary without having to enroll in that particular party; and**
 - **voters enrolled in a major political party can vote only on the ballot of their party;**
7. More direct citizen involvement in the candidate selection process for special elections to fill a vacancy;
8. consolidation of elections in New Mexico;
9. methods that increase voter participation, including automatic voter registration and same-day voter registration;
10. systems that improve the election experience and provide ease of ballot access including vote-by-mail, supplemented by secure ballot drop boxes and accessible voting centers;
11. amending the State Constitution to allow run-off elections in the case of non-partisan elections.

Vote411

By Diane Goldfarb, Director of Voter Services

Vote411 was LWVNM's major voter services project in 2020. We did the online voter guide for both the primary and the general elections, covering ballots for the entire state for the general election. Local Leagues continued to put out printed voter guides as well.

In New Mexico there were 47,683 visits to our Vote411 website from 36,067 individuals. The visits were from towns across the entire state from Aztec to Tularosa to Zuni. Nationally, LWVUS reported that there were more than 6 million users, up by 1.5 million from four years ago. They also reported that 57% of the users were female and that more than half were between the ages of 18-44.

All our local League voter guide editors and their volunteers worked diligently on Vote411 and did an outstanding job. We also had a great crew making follow-up calls to candidates. The publicity committee got out flyers, press releases, radio spots, newspaper ads, and social media ads. Thanks to all of these people, we felt we had a good product.

There were some difficulties to be sure, both from the perspective of the voter and from that of the persons responsible for putting the guide together. Our committee compiled a list of recommendations that was submitted to LWVUS. Vote411 is going to be revised for future elections, and we hope to have some input into those revisions. Our hope is to continue with Vote411 for local elections in 2021.

Thank you to everyone who helped make Vote411 a success in 2020!



First Call to LWVNM Convention

By Hannah Burling

The 2021 Convention of the League of Women Voters of New Mexico will be conducted via Zoom on April 24 and 25. The Convention will adopt a program, elect a board of directors, adopt a budget for the next two years, and consider revising the bylaws. If you are interested in serving on the LWVNM board, please contact the Nominating Committee at Nominations@lwvnm.org.

Each League is entitled to a number of delegates proportional to its membership (details can be found in the LWVNM bylaws available at <https://www.lwvnm.org/bylaws.html>). In addition, all LWVNM board members except the local League presidents are automatically delegates. Finally, there is a slot for one delegate to represent LWVNM's members-at-large. Additional attendees are always welcome.

The business meetings will be held in the mornings on April 24 and 25.

Please let your League board know if you would like to be a delegate. All League members are invited to join the meeting, but only delegates will be able to vote. Mark the date on your calendar! Complete details will be published in the spring issue of La Palabra.

In Memoriam – Carol Tucker Trelease

By Diane Goldfarb

Former LWVNM Board member Carol Tucker Trelease passed away unexpectedly at her home on December 9, 2020. A member of CNM, Carol joined the local board in 2011 where she served as both 1st Vice President and as Secretary. She was Secretary of LWVNM in 2013-2015, and League members will remember how she opened her lovely home for numerous events.

Carol was a passionate political and social activist, most especially for women's reproductive rights and social justice. Moving to New Mexico as a young wife, Carol began a career with Planned Parenthood as a volunteer, eventually rising to become CEO of Planned Parenthood of the Rio Grande, a position she held for more than 20 years. She was later Executive Director of the Nirvana Mañana Institute, a foundation making grants for a sustainable population.

Her involvement in community work was extensive, and she was honored by a number of organizations, including awards from Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains, the Albuquerque YWCA, and induction into Silver Horizons New Mexico Senior Hall of Fame.

Carol was preceded in death by her husband Richard Trelease, and she is survived by three daughters and four grandchildren. A lover of classical music, Carol will be remembered with a memorial concert at St. John's Cathedral in Albuquerque at a future date.



Carol Tucker Trelease with her "Walk the Talk Award, 2019. Photo by Janet Blair

Spent Nuclear Fuels Storage Safety Update

By Karen M. Douglas

Consolidated Interim Storage Facilities for Spent Nuclear Fuel

The Spent Nuclear Fuel (SNF) Storage Safety Committee was tasked with review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Interim Storage Partners (ISP) application for a Consolidated Interim Storage Facility (CISF) for SNF. LWVNM interest in the ISP application for a CISF is based on the proximity to New Mexico. The proposed ISP CISF would be located on the TX/NM border 5 miles from Eunice and 15 miles from Hobbs; many NM residents and facilities would be involved in emergency response activities as well as employment at the facility. SNF shipment would also be transported through NM.

Although the Federal Register Notice of the Public Comment Period appeared on May 8, discussions and negotiations with both LWVUS and LWVTX delayed review by the SNF Storage Safety Committee. Between September 1 and November 3, the committee members reviewed the EIS and produced a 22-page commentary that was submitted to the NRC on November 3. Committee members contributing to this review effort included Laura Atkins/SFC, Alex Burr/SNM, Paul Karas/CNM, Karen Wentworth/CNM, and Karen Douglas/CNM. Extensive editing by Barbara Calef/LA, and Judy Williams/SFC, with finalization by LWVNM President Hannah Burling, resulted in a clarified and professional submittal. The commentary was also submitted to LWVUS and LWVTX for information purposes.

The NRC meetings for public comment regarding the ISP EIS were all webinars due to social distancing precautions during the pandemic. LWVTX testified during the October 1 public meeting, and the LWVNM SNF Storage Safety Advocacy Statement (approved by LWVUS in December 2019) was entered as testimony during the October 6 public webinar. Transcripts of both meetings, including the LWV statements, are now available on the NRC website www.nrc.gov.

Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board – Final Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel

The annual Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board (NWTRB) meeting was held on December 2 and 3 and was open to the public. The NWTRB is an independent federal agency established by Congress to conduct ongoing technical and scientific evaluation of activities undertaken by DOE to manage and dispose of spent nuclear fuel (SNF) and high-level radioactive waste (HLW). The 1987 Nuclear Waste Policy Act limited domestic SNF disposal sites to Yucca Mountain, NV. When the effort to finalize characterization of the site as a permanent geological repository reached an impasse due to political resistance, efforts were redirected to other potential SNF disposal options. This is particularly important to the League as the LWVUS has opposed siting the permanent geological repository for SNF at Yucca Mountain (Position on Nuclear Waste in Impact on Issues) and no other national alternative for SNF disposal has been evaluated.

NWTRB is currently cooperating with other nuclear energy-producing nations to identify the optimal spent nuclear fuel (SNF) disposal options and the participating technical organizations are evaluating three potential host geologies:

- Crystalline geology (Granite): Crystalline/granite geology is widely available in the US.
- Salt: Salt is widely available in the US, but has a high probability of human intrusion. Prior domestic tests for this geology were performed for the transuranic waste currently at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant.
- Argillite (Clay): Argillite is also widely available in the US and can be used with bentonite clay as part of an Engineered Barrier System (EBS).

Shale/Volcanic Tuff has also been studied--the US site selected in NV, Yucca Mountain, is volcanic tuff.

Research continues for deep boreholes, which are widely available in the US, but with this design it would be more difficult to retrieve SNF.

Surplus Plutonium Shipment to Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP)

Kathy Economy/CNM has initiated a separate committee for LWVNM members interested in the proposed shipment of surplus plutonium to WIPP. Kathy is a hydrologist; she has worked on nuclear waste issues at WIPP (a repository in salt) and Yucca Mountain (a proposed repository in volcanic tuff) since 1992. She reported on the National Academy of Science (NAS) “Review of the Department of Energy’s Plans for Disposal of Surplus Plutonium in the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (2020)” for LWVNM to interested LWVNM members in November. The surplus plutonium issue arose when Congress denied approval of the Mixed Oxide Fuel program, which would have burned the plutonium as fuel elements in domestic nuclear reactors.

LWVNM members who would like to join Kathy’s committee should contact her at katecono@gmail.com.

Observer Corps Training for LWVNM

By Karen Douglas

LWVNM conducted the first Observer Corps training session for members from the four local Leagues on September 21. Mary Henrie Smith, JD and active LWVCNM member, presented the Open Meetings Act (OMA), referencing the 8th edition of the OMA Compliance Guide issued by Attorney General Hector Balderas in 2015. Smith highlighted sections of the guide including:

- rolling quorums,
- permissible closed vs. open meetings,
- “Sunshine Law” transparency requirements,
- requirements for meeting agenda availability, and
- criminal penalties levied for violation of the OMA.



Jenn Wong and Jennifer Waggoner, LWV San Francisco, offered the Observer Corps Fundamentals presentation from the June 2020 LWVUS Caucus “Making Democracy Work in the Criminal Justice System.” Wong and Waggoner, who train all LWC observers, including interested members of the public, discussed the LWVC observer coverage of the Police Commission and introduced sections from the LWVUS “Observing your Government in Action” booklet stressing openness, transparency, and accountability. Other Observer Corps activities mentioned included:

- LWV of San Mateo County, CA evaluating Spanish language access during government meetings;
- LWV of Seattle, WA observing City Council meetings, judges adhering to new bail practices, and School Board coverage;
- LWV of Wake County, NC observing the state legislature and legislative committees; and
- LWVUS official Observer Corps to the United Nations and the Commission on the Status of Women.

LWVSNM Co-President Kathy Brook and Beth Bardwell discussed the long-standing Observer Corps coverage for Doña Ana County and preference for detailed reports informing interested LWV members.

LWVCNM Co-President Karen Douglas highlighted the government meetings attended by LWVCNM Observ-

ers in Albuquerque and Bernalillo County and introduced the recommended Observer Checklist, Observer Job Description, Observer Report contents, and Observer Tips provided by LWVCA and modified by the local NM League Observer Coordinators (Barbara Calef, Los Alamos, Kathy Brook, Southern NM, Chris Furlanetto, Santa Fe County, and Karen Douglas, Central NM).

The training session concluded with a question and answer session and thank you to the LWV trainers for generously offering their time and expertise. Some useful links from the training session for the LWVUS UN Observers and LWVUS Facebook page are provided below:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LWVObserverCorps>

<https://www.lwv.org/united-nations-observers>

NM Ethics Commission Update

By Judy Williams

The logo consists of a red square with the word "ETHICS" in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters at the top. Below it, the words "in NM" are written in a smaller, white, bold, sans-serif font, with "in" in lowercase and "NM" in uppercase.

The Commission has finalized the Governmental Code of Conduct and is now rolling out training for all government workers. They have recently met with county commissioners and managers. The Commission has also made a presentation to the legislature.

Training of local officials is required, not by the Ethics Commission Act but by the Government Conduct Act. The Commission staff, which is small but mighty, is preparing its annual report to the governor and legislature.

During the training sessions the Commission staff emphasizes the two major organizing principles: 1) All of the property government employees and politicians use in their work belongs to the public, not to them. Nothing they obtain or use while in office belongs to them. All the provisions of the Governmental Conduct Act emanate from this principle. 2) Disclosure protects representative government.

The Commission has filed a lawsuit “to shine a light on dark money.” The suit alleges that the Council for a Competitive New Mexico violated disclosure provisions of the Campaign Reporting Act. Despite spending more than \$130,000 on political ads and calls prior to the primary election, the organization has repeatedly refused requests from the Ethics Commission and the Secretary of State to disclose the funding sources for these activities.

The Ethics Coalition, composed of the good government watchdogs (including the League), will try to monitor the legislative session to maintain transparency; they will also work to prevent attempts to weaken Ethics Commission legislation to repair or clarify the statute.

It will be a challenge to observe the session or influence legislation since the public will not be allowed to be physically present.

Running/Managing/Conducting the 2020 General Election

By Barbara Calef

Conducting an election during a pandemic is tricky. Here is an account of how it worked in one county clerk's office.

The Los Alamos County Clerk's staff was divided into three teams. Only one team worked in the office at a time so that, if one member became infected, they would not all be required to quarantine. In addition, they needed to understand and execute the stipulations of the Temporary Election Changes Bill (SB4), passed during the June Special Session. They did an outstanding job!

Of the 12,401 ballots cast in the election, 6,088 were cast during early voting; 5,146 were cast by mail; 1,162 were cast on election day. In addition, there were five qualified provisional ballots. (A few provisional ballots were rejected because the voters had not registered in time.) The Absentee Ballot Board, consisting of eleven poll workers, began processing the ballots on Friday, October 30, continued on Monday, November 2, and completed the task at 10 p.m. on Election Day. We thought we were finished then, but we were wrong.

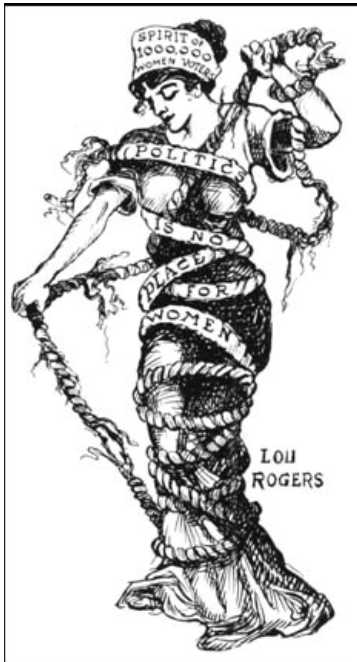
As a result of SB4, Naomi Maestas, our county clerk, was required to appoint a special Post-Election Board. The five-person board met on Friday, November 6th, to conduct a review of 50 paper and/or mailed ballots that had been received by 7 p.m. on Election Day, but not tabulated. There were also a number of provisional ballots to review. Most of the ballots could be run through the tabulator, but a few of them and the five provisional ballots that qualified had to be hand-tallied. This was not very time-consuming; the Absentee Ballot Board had hand-tallied over 200 absentee ballots. The findings of the Post-Election Board were submitted for review and acceptance at canvass.

During the canvass process, three members of the Canvass Board reviewed and verified the accuracy of the election results from the early and absentee locations, as well as the election day vote centers. But there was more! Following every general election, various precincts throughout the state are selected by lottery to perform a Post-Election Audit of the tabulators used in the election. Because Los Alamos is so small, with only 21 precincts out of 1,925 in the state, the county had not been chosen for the audit in many years. However, on November 20 Maestas learned that she needed to appoint a Post-Election Audit Board to sort through the 12,401 ballots, find the 719 ballots from Precinct 11, and hand-tally the votes for President and Vice-President, U.S. Senator, and NM Court of Appeals Position 3. After working for six hours, the thirteen members of the board completed the task. The results exactly matched the machine tapes, proving the accuracy of the machines.



The Centennial and Election 2020

By Meredith Machen, Special Projects Director



This year we not only commemorated the 100th anniversary of the greatest expansion of American democracy through the recognition of women’s right to vote, but we also witnessed unparalleled participation by and for women in the election. More people voted than ever, braving long lines and hours of waiting in masks, socially distanced. More women and minority candidates won races than ever before. However, progress on the long journey toward true equality of opportunity will take ongoing, organized efforts and decades of work to achieve. Having more women leaders of diverse backgrounds and experiences in New Mexico’s Congressional and legislative seats and appointed offices should help us address some of the enormous challenges ahead. The pandemic has disproportionately affected women, who comprise the majority of frontline healthcare and sanitation providers. Many women have had to pivot from their careers to being their children’s at-home learning coaches, jeopardizing careers and family income.

This troubled time is a warning that the continuum of progress will not last without valiant civil and civic efforts such as those League members make every day. We must stick to our principles and convictions in pushing leaders to make equality their overarching mission. Whether helping to craft or promote good legislation, the

League and our non-partisan partners help build awareness and rally support so that causes that make a difference ultimately prevail! Parity in representation by women and proportionality in representation by people of color in leadership positions are the goals. Here’s to perseverance!

You can see many League members in the “Women in NM Slideshow” and other items of interest at this link <https://www.cabq.gov/culturalservices/the-womens-vote>

There was a lot of effort to get out the vote through the centennial celebration. I think this LWVNM Special Project helped to improve turnout and the recognition of the significance of what women fought for and are still fighting for.

History Committee Update

By Meredith Machen, History Committee Chair

As we end this centennial year with all of its weirdness, we’ve made great progress toward our goal of investigating the work of significant New Mexico suffragists and historic sites and making lasting tributes. The best gift from engagement with numerous organizations around the country who have been telling the stories of women’s courage throughout our history, is the shared recognition that WE must educate the public about protecting and expanding human rights here and abroad.

The fabulous History Committee has succeeded in getting several suffrage biographies written and in participating in numerous events, many of which were virtual due to the pandemic. We now have several sites in New Mexico entered or about to be entered into the National Votes for Women Trail. Soon we will have three large steel historical markers installed around the state, courtesy of the Pomeroy Foundation of New York. Each application involves a multi-step process including research that is vetted by scholars and advisory groups and obtaining permission from property owners and relevant governmental entities.

Three members worked especially hard on this aspect of the project. Eileen VanWie shepherded the creation of the marker for Pioneer Women's Park, which has been delivered to Las Cruces and is awaiting installation. Jeanne Logsdon has received all of the approvals necessary for a marker honoring Julia Brown Asplund to be installed at UNM at a public event in the future. Sonya Berg is in the final stages of getting a marker in Las Vegas for US Senator Andrieus A. Jones. It took a lot of convincing to get a marker for this suffrage champion and may end up being the only suffrage marker for a man in the country.

I was able to get Nina Otero-Warren's home in Santa Fe included on the National Park Service entry for NM and the 19th Amendment, and the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum has received approval from the Historic Santa Fe Foundation to change the name of the home from A.M. Bergere to Otero-Bergere House on the National Register of Historic Sites. (A Pomeroy marker was approved but does not meet Santa Fe's historic standards.)

Women of different ethnicities, races, religions, and political persuasions worked for decades on the shared goal of getting the vote for half of the population. They could not have done it without male allies, debates, marches, letter writing campaigns, and advocacy at governmental meetings and behind the scenes. Today we need to work with people of different perspectives on building common ground and healing the partisan divisions. The stories of the valiant suffragists remind us that social change can take decades of organizing and activism before progress is achieved. The human spirit is energized by just causes and emboldened by examples of courage.

The centennial has been extended until August 2021! Keep an eye out for collaboration by women leaders across the country, and stay tuned for information about marker installations accompanied by some of our profiles in courage. Thank you.

Local League News

Santa Fe County

By Judy Williams, SFC Liaison

The Santa Fe League has 181 members now.

Our virtual holiday party featured the Food Depot, with Jill Dixon speaking. In addition, we raised more than \$2,800 for the Food Depot! Dixon spoke of the heart-rending stories of people who are suffering food insecurity during the pandemic. She mentioned the anxiety and long lines after the COVID-related closings of Smith's, Walmart and Target, at least two of which accept EBT cards. The Food Depot serves nine Northern NM counties.

Our letter to the editor urging open meetings and transparency in the City Health and Safety Task Force was published on October 20 to follow up on the longer letter sent to the Mayor and City Council earlier in the month. On November 5 we sent a letter to the Mayor and City Council regarding the proposed Culture, History, Art, Reconciliation and Truth (CHART) committee resulting from the monuments controversy. The letter drew from our transparency and civil discourse positions. Thanks to Jody Larson for drafting these letters!

On October 21 Early Childhood Education and Care Department Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky and her two assistants, Deputy Secretary Jennifer Duran-Sallee and Jovanna Archuleta, Assistant Secretary for Native American Early Education and Care, presented on the progress made by the newly formed department as well as the services available to Santa Fe County residents.

Heather Ferguson, Executive Director of Common Cause NM, presented the “Election Debriefing 2020: What Worked, What Didn’t and What to do Next” on November 18. Personal invitations were extended to outgoing County Clerk Geraldine Salazar, Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse-Oliver, and incoming County Clerk Katharine Clark.

The League’s Voter Services program created and distributed nearly 8,000 election flyers describing how to register and how to vote. In-person voter registration continued at the farmers market and other locations; 432 registrations were done this way. The help line fielded 130 calls about how and where to vote. There was much confusion among voters.

Finally, the Voter Guide was printed in the New Mexican and was very well-received. We distributed copies to all the early polling places.

Los Alamos

by Barbara Calef, Co-President

The LWV Los Alamos Voter Guide was delivered by mail with the Los Alamos Daily Post to every household and business on October 1. We received 300 extra copies that were distributed to the vote centers. The League also held two candidate forums via Zoom. The final count of ballots cast in the 2020 General Election totaled 12,401, representing a turnout of 81% of eligible Los Alamos County voters.

On October 8 League members dressed as suffragists, masked and socially distanced, greeted the seniors who were collecting their meals at the two senior centers in the county, reminding them to vote. In White Rock, they also helped to distribute sample ballots for the election.

Liddie Martinez was the speaker at the October Lunch with a Leader. Martinez was appointed to the NM Economic Recovery Council in April by Governor Lujan Grisham. The bi-partisan 15-person council is composed of business leaders drawn from across the state to discuss how to meet the challenges of the pandemic. The council depends on guidance by the CDC and the Hopkins Medical Advisory Team. “It’s been a ton of work,” Martinez said, but also one of the most rewarding non-paying jobs she has held.

The Economic Recovery Council has been working on the final draft of their roadmap for recovery. When it has been approved by the governor, Martinez looks forward to receiving feedback from the public. After all, she sees her role as that of an advocate for the community.

The speakers in November were members of the Racial Justice Action Advisory Council (RJAAC, pronounced R-Jack for short), which was formed a few months ago. The members, who are Caucasian, Native American, Black, Asian, and Hispanic, decided to make decisions based on consensus. A number of sub-groups have formed representing the interests of various members. They focus on LANL, Los Alamos Public Schools, Los Alamos County, Facilitation and Organization, Communications, the BIPOC Caucus, and Environmental Justice. The group may be new, but they have already made significant progress since the County Council has voted to partner with them to promote racial equity in our community.

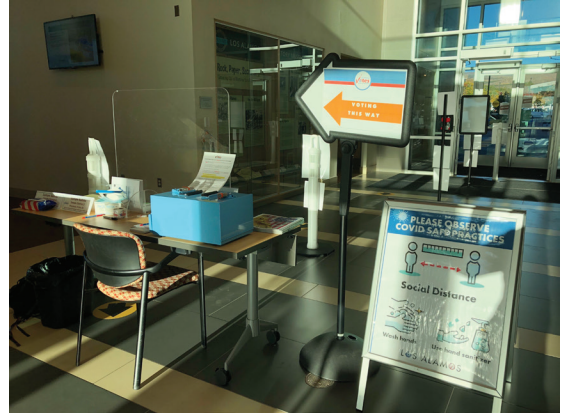


Suffragists from left to right: Cas Mason, Becky Shankland, Hedy Dunn, and Addie Jacobson. Photo by Lisa Larson.

The Los Alamos League wrote to the County Council and also published a letter in support of a resolution presented by one of the councilors. The resolution asked Congress to enact a Constitutional Amendment to regulate campaign finance, directed particularly at regulating corporate donations. The resolution passed by a vote of 6-1 during the November 10 Council meeting.

At the December 1 meeting the LWVLA Board voted to approve consensus questions for the Digital Privacy Study. The Study Committee has held a series of meetings to look at how digital services and platforms used by Los Alamos County can potentially impact the digital privacy of county residents. The consensus meeting will be held on January 4.

A November 17 presentation to the County Council by Kelly Beierschmitt, the Deputy Laboratory Director for Operations, revealed that the Laboratory no longer feels a need for a new bridge over the Rio Grande or to build more offices at LANL. Instead, LANL is planning to build teleworking hubs in Los Alamos, in Rio Arriba County, and in Santa Fe, where remote workers can attend meetings or have computer access while working mainly from home. This decision will relieve the intense pressure on the County to build housing for thousands of new workers being hired by the Lab.



Greeter's station at Vote Center in Los Alamos.
Photo by Barbara Calef

Central New Mexico

By Karen M. Douglas, Co-President

The LWVCNM Board approved closing the League office following the general election due to the NM Coronavirus spike, intending to review the decision at their December board meeting.

Many helpful volunteers assisted in producing the LWVCNM Voter Guide for the general election. Jeanne Logsdon chaired the Voter Guide Proofreading Committee this year. Printing was delayed until the Bernalillo and Sandoval County Clerks approved distributing the Voter Guide to the voting convenience centers, ensuring a sufficient number would be printed. Lani Desaulniers managed the CNM Voter Guide distribution with guidance from Andrea Targhetta, and many CNM members arrived in shifts Thursday and Friday October 15th and 16th for delivery to locations in all four CNM counties: Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, and Valencia. Distribution required a new approach as so many traditional distribution locations were closed due to the pandemic.

The LWVCNM October 3rd Annual Meeting was rescheduled from May 2020 in hopes of increasing attendance.

- Attendance – Board member calls resulted in attendance exceeding the quorum required and better than at prior 2020 Zoom meetings. LWVCNM membership has now increased to 222.
- Election of Officers followed with new officers including Kathy Economy/2nd VP, Jennifer Black/3rd VP, Denny Blood/Treasurer; Linda Adcox-Kimmel and Lani DeSaulniers as new Directors. Karen Wentworth, Karen Douglas, Mary Wilson, and Ashley Benning, will continue serving CNM. Andrea Tar
- Approval of Bylaws/Policies followed including approval of a more restrictive Nonpartisanship Policy.
- The annual meeting included the JEDI Presentation: Irene Epp (LWVNM JEDI coordinator), Rebecca

Alvarez, and Katie Christianson discussed ideas to promote LWV membership to a broader audience including young professionals, young mothers, and other cultures not currently well represented in CNM.

APD Forward monthly meetings have resumed. The recent Independent Monitor's Quarterly Report harshly criticized APD for excessive Use of Force with lagging discipline. Judge Browning, the Federal Judge supervising Independent Monitor Dr. James Ginger, announced that he will convene a Public Hearing in early December.

The November 13 LWVCNM General Meeting featured Professor Peter Kierst, UNM Principal Lecturer of Constitutional Law and Theory presenting “Through a Constitutional Lens: The 2020 Election”. For the December 10 CNM General Meeting, Rachel Kleinfeld presented “Year-end Reflections: The Fragility of Our Democracy.” Kleinfeld is a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, where she focuses on issues of rule of law, security, and governance in post-conflict countries, fragile states, and states in transition.

Southern New Mexico

By Kathy Brook and Eileen VanWie, Co-Presidents

Voter Service and legislative priorities have dominated the agenda over the past three months. In addition to participating in VOTE411.org, we published a printed voter guide covering candidates on Doña Ana County ballots – about 15,000 copies of the English version distributed largely through the Las Cruces Bulletin and about 8,000 copies of the Spanish version



Las Cruces Artist Bob Diven attracts attention to the LWVSNM information table. Photo by Eileen VanWie

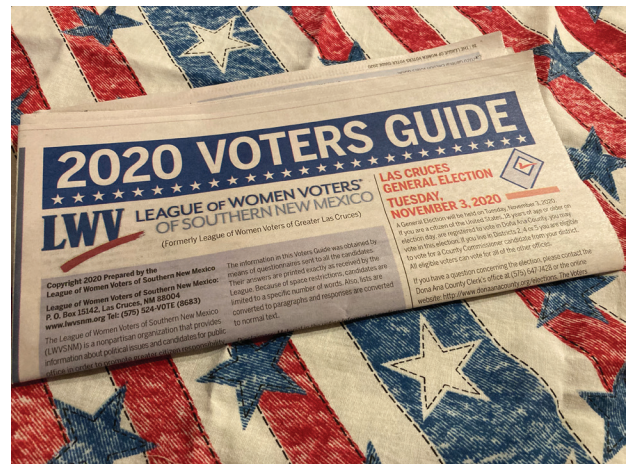
included in the free Camino Real paper. Additional copies were available through the public library, city and county government buildings, and at our information table at the Las Cruces Farmers and Crafts Market on two Saturdays in October. For the October 17 market, Eileen enticed local artist Bob Diven to LWVSNM Voter Guide. Photo by Kathy Brook provide chalk art focused on voting.

We talked about the voting process via Zoom with members of the NMSU Residence Hall General Assembly and with Pi Sigma Alpha, the honorary society in political science. In addition, we submitted op-eds to our local newspapers on the absentee voting process and how to be an informed voter. Beyond the election, we will be continuing to write op-eds concerning League issues – the first being on the availability of broadband.

Our general meetings featured Bobbie Green, president of the local NAACP, discussing voting and other issues in October and member discussion of potential legislative issues in November. In December we were pleased to have almost all of the state legislators whose districts include Doña Ana County join us for a discussion of their priorities as well as those of LWV. The meeting with legislators was also attended by some members of the Southern New Mexico Suffrage Alliance

Two local committees (other than voter service) have been especially active. First, our ad hoc JEDI Committee has developed a strategic plan which has been submitted to the board for review. The plan addresses issues related to attracting new diverse members as well as strategies for supporting democracy by reducing poverty and mitigating its impact in Southern New Mexico. Second, and related to the JEDI plan, our Affordable Housing Committee has begun meeting with various providers of affordable housing in Doña Ana County to update information addressed in the committee’s 2012 study.

With Julie Wojtko, the LWVSNM nominee for the Harvard Case Study program, Eileen spoke to the Academy for Learning in Retirement about the Equal Rights Amendment. Later Eileen and Kathy spoke to the group about the history of LWV and about current activities of the League.



LWVSNM Voter Guide. Photo by Kathy Brook



League of Women Voters of NM
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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 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.