CALL TO COUNCIL 2006

Santa Fe, NM

The League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County is pleased to host LWVNM Council 2006.

Where: Montezuma Lodge #1 431 Paseo de Peralta, Santa Fe.

When: Saturday May 13, 2006, 9:30 a.m. - mid-afternoon

Who: All LWVNM members are invited to attend as observers.

Delegates: The President of each local League or an alternate, plus one additional member of each local League; a delegate representing Members-at-Large; and all State Board Members.

Cost: $20 for lunch and registration.

Tentative agenda:

9:30-10:00 a.m. Registration and refreshments

10:00-11:45 a.m. Business meeting
• President’s Greeting
• Linda Moscarella, MAL from Taos, former member of National Board of Directors, will speak about The Liberty and Security Network
• Formal Council Meeting
• Treasurer’s Report
• Presentation and adoption of Budget
• Reports from committees/local Leagues (as time allows)

11:45-12:30 Lunch

12:30-1:15 Speaker: TBA Immigration and Naturalization

1:15-3:00 p.m. LWVNM Board meeting
President’s Message

This Spring Issue is your formal CALL TO COUNCIL 2006 of the League of Women Voters of New Mexico. Our bylaws state that a meeting of the Council must be held in the interim year between Conventions:
The Council shall be comprised of the following delegates: the Presidents of the local Leagues, or an alternate in the event that the President is unable to attend; one delegate chosen by each local League, each state MAL unit and a MAL representative to be selected by the State Board; and all the members of the State Board.

All League members are invited to attend as observers to the business of Council, which is to adopt a budget and transact other business as presented to it. Our program will include a speaker to address immigration issues— at Convention 2005 a one-year study of immigration issues was added to our 2006-2007 program. We will also hear from our representative on the Liberty and Security Network, about New Mexico’s role in this network, an outgrowth of the League’s Local Voices Project.

Can it be nearly a year since the 2005 Convention? Just see what we’ve done. The annual reports from committees and local Leagues in this issue are testimony to our accomplishments. For example:

- Sustainability and Death Penalty study presentations were made to all four Leagues by the Los Alamos League members who proposed the studies at Convention. Newsletter articles on those issues were presented to further inform the membership;
- All local Leagues held forums for their municipal, school board, and other elections and many published Who’s Who and election materials;
- The State League sent copies of the Voters Key to all libraries around the state;
- In October the Las Cruces and Albuquerque Leagues presented public forums on Health Care. National advocates joined NM speakers to inform attendees;
- Election Reform measures were followed through task force and legislative meetings;
- Members participated all year in coalitions on Natural Resources, Education, Health Care, Campaign Finance Reform, and other local and state issues;
- At League Day at the Legislature LWVUS President Kay Maxwell joined us as our luncheon speaker in Santa Fe and we then visited our Legislature and Governor;
- We celebrated National Sunshine Week March 12-18 to call attention to our rights to information from government – city, state, and local; and (just announced),
- Our own Mary G. Wilson was nominated to be the next National League President. The election will be held at the 2006 LWVUS Convention in Minneapolis from June 10-13. Delegates from all Leagues are selected to represent local Leagues and state Leagues. Members and friends are invited to attend as observers.
- Thank you for this year. Now, let’s attend Council to begin our work for next year.

CALL TO COUNCIL: Saturday, May 13, 2006, at the Montezuma Lodge #1, 431 Paseo de Peralta in Santa Fe. A short Board Meeting follows Council adjournment.

Marilyn Morgan

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Board Meeting Summary

January 14, 2006

- Distributed business cards for lobbying.
- Approved 2006 Budget Committee, which has representatives from all four local Leagues.
- Finalized plans for League Day and for Kay Maxwell’s visit.
- Announced Linda Moscarella (MAL) as New Mexico volunteer representative on the LWVUS Liberty and Security Network in answer to LWVNM President e-mail request to membership.
- Reminded Leagues that LWVUS Program planning suggestions due to LWVUS by March 1.
- Announced Sunshine Week (March 12-18) plans for Santa Fe and A/BC Leagues.
- Deferred to Action Committee determination of possible League support for IDAs, a report presented by Johnnie Aldrich.

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Liberty and Security Network

In December, each State League president was asked to provide a member to represent the state in this ongoing dialogue. I sent a call via e-mail lists to League members asking for volunteers. Linda Moscarella responded and she has agreed to represent New Mexico. She will update us on this project at our Council on May 13.

Marilyn Morgan

The Program has three parts: protecting civil liberties, engaging communities in homeland security, and educating our communities on why we are under threat and what can be done.

- **Phase One.** Local Voices, a grant program, engaged 10 groups in discussion and a report, which was intended to influence Congress before the PATRIOT ACT was renewed. Recommendations were not successful so the project was extended.

- **Phase Two.** How is Homeland Security working in each state at the grassroots? How are the funds allocated being used? Who is in charge? Do the people know what to do or whom to call? This is the next information being sought.

- **Phase Three.** The Rand Corporation is preparing three short papers on the history and nature of the threat and various alternatives to overcoming terrorism. Local Leagues will be enabled to hold forums and a series of dialogues in “assumption-based decision making.”

Linda Moscarella, MAL
The League of Women Voters has been an active champion of openness in government throughout our history. State and local Leagues continue to be active in the open government arena, observing government meetings, lobbying for improvements to state and local sunshine regulations, and obtaining government documents under state freedom of information acts.

Recently the League joined with several organizations to present a national dialogue on open government and secrecy. This teleforum was beamed by satellite to the UNM Continuing Education Center in Albuquerque. Few people knew of it—some Law Library and UNM Library people and League members attended. Timing and lack of advance publicity on the event are probably reasons why, so I hope that next year we will see to it that information (isn’t that what this is all about?) is disseminated broadly and that the public will learn about FOIA and more.

Other events were held in Albuquerque/Bernalillo County, Sandoval County, and Santa Fe County. They were excellent. Congratulations to all who participated. On Friday, March 18, the last day of the week-long event, the PBS (Channel 5) weekly news magazine NOW aired a one-hour special about government secrecy. Representative Heather Wilson spoke in one segment.

Our nation’s federal and state access laws are only as good as we, the people, insist that they be. Whether laws are labeled open government, freedom of information, open records, open meetings or “sunshine,” everyday people have the right to know what their government is doing. Knowledge of what is legally accessible and how to obtain such data is essential to keeping our rights alive. “Let the sun shine, let the sun shine, let the sun shine in.”

Marilyn Morgan

League Day at the Legislature, January 31, 2006

I saw democracy in action last month. At times, the process is unwieldy; at others, frenetic; occasionally, boring. The process also can be confrontational, in a civil sort of way. League Day at the Legislature proved to me that the democratic experience is alive. (Its “wellness” is another issue.)

During the morning, the 40-50 attendees of the informational meetings were briefly greeted by LWVUS President Kay J Maxwell who left for a joint legislative session at which she was introduced. We who stayed heard two presentations on bills the League would support—the first on the principal health care bill, then Ben J. Luce, Director of the Coalition for Clean, Affordable Energy, gave us an orientation to the natural resources bills. Both presenters were called upon to field some hard, intelligent questions from the audience. Leaguers asked penetrating, to-the-point questions intended to deepen our understanding of the specific legislation being touted.

President Maxwell, in her splendid luncheon speech, expressed the League’s perception that our democracy is troubled, even endangered. Under her leadership, LWVUS is launching a year-long initiative called “The Democracy Agenda.” I was inspired by her positive assurance that Leaguers can make a difference as we remain firm in our efforts devoted to voter empowerment and citizens’ rights. In a democracy, citizens have the responsibility to point to weaknesses in our government—and to participate actively in its betterment.

In the afternoon, I prepared the fact sheets in my folder by writing a brief note to each southwest NM legislator and placed each group of copied sheets in order from the fourth floor to the first. (This means that I had to wait only once for the elevator, which seems always to move with the slowness of the democratic system itself.) In every office I found cheerful secretaries and legislative assistants who seemed happy to receive the League recommendations and I saw other constituents and lobbyists seeking the legislators’ attention. In the bustling crowds of the hallways, I overheard earnest conversations, usually about government.

None of our League-supported legislation was being heard in committee that afternoon, so I sat in on committee hearings of other bills of interest. Again I saw democracy in action. Legislators and the voters listened to each other (usually), asked questions, and seemed genuinely interested (for the most part) in “getting it right” for New Mexico. I am told that every legislative session day is so frenzied and that the constant coming and going is the norm, especially in the short session. The intensity of it was exhausting.

Exhausting and exhilarating at the same time, I hasten to add. Just to watch democracy in action is thrilling.

Thanks, LWVNM President, Marilyn Morgan, and Action Committee Chairs Dee Watkins and Richard Mason, for the hours of your lives that you gave to making League Day at the Legislature so very memorable.

Johnnie R. Aldrich

The League of Women Voters of New Mexico Supports the Protection of Genetic Information

- Against unlawful uses
- In the areas of:
  - Employment
  - Recruiting
  - Housing or Lending Decisions
  - Public Accommodations and Services

For more information, contact Dede Eckles (505) 823-9120.
**Highlights of 2005**

**Federal Drug Policy: A Help? or a Hindrance?**

The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) requests comments on the dispensing of controlled substances for the treatment of pain, following the withdrawal of a document “Frequently Asked Question” regarding prescription pain medications. Health Care professionals expressed their concern about the loss of this “agreement” with the DEA. Dr. Judy Paice, Director of the Cancer Pain Program, Northwestern University, stated clearly: “Frankly I am most concerned about the direction pain management is taking now. In 25 years of working in this field I have never seen such barriers related to availability of medications and reimbursement for treatment....”

- May, 2005: Several states adopt new legislative initiatives on pain--AZ, HA, IN, MI, OR, and VA.
- September, 2005: H.R. 1020 the National Pain Care Policy Act of 2005 is introduced and referred to committees. American Pain Foundation responds with a statement of support of this Act and urges other organizations and persons to sign on to the statement.
- December, 2005: Support of H.R. 1020 testimony on research and education need is heard in House Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Health.

**For your information:**
One of Congresswoman Wilson’s committee assignments is the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. One of her priorities is improving health care. (See her web site: www.wilson.house.gov.)

**Action suggested:**
Encourage Congresswoman Wilson to support this bill. Indicate your concern about access to pain treatment being limited by changes in DEA guidelines.

**Remember,** League members can always be active in contacting public officials: city, county, state and federal. The key concern is to speak for yourself, not as a member of the League of Women Voters, and leave no impression that you speak for the League.

For current and additional information, contact Dee Watkins, Drug Policy Study Committee Chair (505) 823-2308 or e-mail.  
*Delores Watkins, Chair*

**Review of the**

**Coalition for Clean Affordable Energy**

With the completion of the 2006 legislative session, the Coalition for Clean Affordable Energy had much to celebrate. After three years of work, a Solar Market Development Act (Solar Tax Credits) passed. For the next ten years people will be able to get a 30% tax credit up to $9,000 per solar installation. The CCAE has expressed its gratitude for all of the League’s support that made this possible.

While this was an exciting event, there were many other bills that did not get through the short session, which is really no surprise. Of those bills, there was a Low Income Weatherization bill and Land, Wildlife and Clean Energy Act, both of which were followed closely by the League. CCAE hopes to work the following year on educating the public and the legislature on the importance of both of these bills.

The focus for the Coalition next year will include working on mechanisms to require new and renovated buildings to reduce the energy use by 50%, pushing for an increase in the Renewable Portfolio Standard to 20% by the year 2020, development in low income efficiency measures and renewable energy in rural application.

*Gale Zander Barlow*

**Death Penalty Position**

The one-year study of the death penalty is complete. The study was approved by the delegates at the LWVN Convention last May. Subsequently, the death penalty resource committee composed of Barbara Calef, Becky Shankland, and Dixie Trebbe compiled a study guide. The state board approved the questions composed by the committee and the procedure for reaching consensus.

The committee met with all eight units in the state to present the issues and to discuss the questions with local league members. To reach even more members, a questionnaire was included in some of the local league newsletters. The committee then reviewed the reports from the unit meetings and the questionnaires. There was clearly consensus on a position to repeal the death penalty. The following position was approved by the state board on Saturday, March 11.

**Draft of the Death Penalty Position**

The League of Women Voters of New Mexico supports the repeal of the death penalty and the institution of a sentence of life in prison without parole as an alternative.

Pending the repeal, the LWVN supports the implementation of the recommendations in the Final Report of the State Bar of New Mexico Task Force to Study the Administration of the Death Penalty in New Mexico (Jan., 2004) including
- adequate defense funding for capital cases;
- a comprehensive proportionality study, including the development of a complete database of homicide prosecutions in New Mexico;
- higher standards for defense counsel at all stages of the proceedings;
- allowing opponents of the death penalty to serve on the jury for the first trial (to determine guilt or innocence) in a capital case.

*Barbara Calef, Chair*
**League of Women Voters of New Mexico**  
**Proposed Budget 2006 – 2007**

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(1) Includes $510 for liability insurance—LWVNM has not had liability insurance in the past.

(2) Includes $75 to be reimbursed from the education fund. Includes mileage to travel to board meetings.

(3) Three delegates partially reimbursed for expenses to go the LWVUS convention in Minneapolis.

(4) To be reimbursed from education funds.

(5) Includes $900 from non-members.

(6) Includes raffle, membership solicitation, silent auction

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**LWVNM Action Committee Report**

LWVNM Action Committee endorsed and lobbied for twelve pieces (Senate and House versions were counted as one) of legislation in the 2006 legislative session. Ten of these were in our priority areas of Education (0), Natural Resources (7), Health Care (2) and Election Reform (1). Of the ten, two passed and one was partially addressed in the budget.

a. The Solar Thermal and Photovoltaic Systems Tax Credit Act (SB289) will provide tax incentives for those who install energy-saving devices.

b. The Require Paper Ballots for All Elections Law (SB295) will require paper ballots to be used throughout New Mexico. This is a major victory for those supporting integrity in our electoral system and puts New Mexico in the lead on addressing this issue.

c. The legislation we supported to provide full funding for Medicaid was stuck in committees, but the budget that passed contained the approximate additional funds requested by this legislation.

d. Legislation that provided for a study of various models of achieving health care did not pass, but the legislature put $280,000 for the study in the budget for the Legislative Council. The Governor vetoed that money.

For a complete list of endorsed legislation, please visit http://www.lwvnm.org/action.html.

The Action Committee asks that our members talk to their legislators about the legislation that didn’t pass and urge the legislators to support them in the 2007 60-day session. When the legislature is not in session, our legislators have more time for meeting with constituents. Our next step is to plan our strategy for the 2007 session.

Sixty people attended League Day at the Legislature on January 31, which was highlighted by a visit from Kay J. Maxwell, President of LWVUS. In addition to visiting with LWVNM members, Kay was introduced to the legislature, met with Governor Richardson, and keynoted a very successful luncheon in Santa Fe for members and guests.

*Delores Watkins, Co-Chair*
LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

Albuquerque/Bernalillo County.

The four LWV/ABC February unit meetings were devoted to the topic of affordable housing. Our excellent speakers included Ken Balizer, who is preparing an ordinance on affordable housing for the City of Albuquerque, and others involved with affordable housing organizations. In March we have focused on Sunshine Week and open government. The topics range from The New Mexico Open Meetings Act to campaign finance reform to “What Are You Entitled to Know About Your Government and What They Are Entitled to Know About You?”

We have found that reducing the number of our units from six to four has resulted in better attendance at the remaining units. One of those units is in Rio Rancho, and we are attempting to tailor those programs to Sandoval County concerns.

We held another moderator/timekeeper training session in March, 2006. We have moderated and kept time for several candidate forums in communities surrounding Albuquerque since the first of the year—Corrales, Rio Rancho and Los Lunas. We also staffed the office extra hours on February 7, helping voters find their polling places for the Albuquerque Public Schools bond election.

The Who’s Who was updated and 12,000 copies printed. This year’s edition ran 20 pages.

On April 1 we will hold our biennial and largest fundraiser, “Salute to Albuquerque,” at Taoano Country Club. The program is entitled “Albuquerque Political Characters, Past and Present.” In the event is a raffle with outstanding prizes. We will also present the Dorothy Cline Award to Mary Lee Martin, member of the Albuquerque Public School Board, in recognition of her innovative and pro-active advocacy for our community and its children.

Diane Goldfarb, President

Los Alamos.

The annual Los Alamos Legislative Preview was co-sponsored by LWVLA and AAUW this year on January 17. Representative Jeannette Wallace, whose district includes all of Los Alamos, and Senator Richard Martinez, one of our three senators, presented their views of the upcoming session. In addition, we heard from our new County Clerk, Mary Pat Krammer, about legislative action proposed by the interim Election Reform Task Force; Craig O’Hare of NMEMNR on the solar tax credit bill and other renewable energy initiatives; and Jeanne Basset of NMPERG on predatory lending legislation.

At its program planning meeting in January, LWVLA voted to recommend a national study of the “redistricting of legislative bodies into multimember districts selected by proportional voting or single transferable vote to increase competitiveness of elections and representation of the electorate.” We also agreed to support concurrence with the LWV of Illinois proposal to support the abolition of the death penalty. Locally, we expect to continue to observe several County government bodies and weigh in on issues of importance to the local League.

In particular, we hope to reactivate our affordable housing committee, as this is becoming a topic of much local concern. Our election reform committee will continue to study several topics and expects to sponsor a forum on clean elections next fall. The sustainability committee will be occupied with the second year of the state sustainability study, but will join the local government committee in such issues as promoting “green” building standards for the county.

Many of us were occupied during the legislative session with the state Action Committee, while back in Los Alamos we continued to have monthly Lunch with a Leader programs. We are now preparing for our annual meeting in April and a double header “Town Hall” on the structure of local government, with the first forum at the end of March and the second in early May.

Katherine Campbell, President

To Your Health

Since federal health care reform legislation is not anticipated, the Board of LWVUS decided in January not to place the Health Care issue as a 2006 priority advocacy issue, several Leagues arranged for a Health Care Caucus at National Convention in June. Their goal is to present an advisory to National Board urging emphasis on our League mission to influence public policy through education and advocacy.

Health Care Position Report

At the May 2005 State Convention the Health Care Position was revised. New principles are proposed to address New Mexico’s appalling rank as second in the nation for the rate of uninsuredness and first for children without insurance. This report shows the new position, the principles to be considered as we develop further, and an appeal to local League membership for questions, requests, or assistance on future changes, contact Dick Mason, polirich[a]aol[dot]com.

New Position: The LWVN M supports a health care system that provides a comprehensive level of healthcare for New Mexico residents and recognizes the need for efficient management of health care costs. Every New Mexico resident should have a comprehensive level of health care. The League favors a national health insurance plan, but until one is in place, the League supports expansion of state and federal plans.

Proposed Principles include: health coverage for all, cost management, improvement of health care quality and safety, equitable financing, and simplified administration. We will put information on these principles on the LWVN M List Serve.

Appeal: The Health Care Committee would like your input on the principles and would welcome discussing them with your local Leagues.

Our conclusion is that reform must be systemic and system-wide. Because (1) problems are closely related, they must be addressed at the same time and (2) the status quo is not working. Costs will continue to skyrocket. Tens of millions are without any health insurance. Safety of patients is jeopardized with sub-standard care. It’s time for a change.

Richard Mason, Health Care Committee
Drug Policy Study Committee (DPSC)  
Annual Report 2005-06

The Drug Policy Study Committee recommends continuing the study. There are two goals for 2006-2007: Goal 1- Continue educating the community about pain management and Goal 2 – Review the present position statement based on our new knowledge about addiction. We will provide information so members can be prepared to consider new wording of the statement at the LWV/ABC Annual Meeting in May, 2007.

Looking Backward and Looking Forward. The committee goals this year were to study addiction and to continue educating consumers about pain management. Two sessions on pain management and hospice care at Manzano del Sol used the dialogue and questionnaire from the League Unit meetings. The committee agrees that this educational effort needs expanding and will work to encourage others to join.

Addiction from Biology to Drug Policy, second edition, by Avram Goldstein, M.D., was a resource for discussions that are still in progress. We have deeper understanding of addiction. We think our position statement needs to be changed to assist others to understand the differences between addiction, physical dependence and tolerance. Healthcare professionals work to understand this. Consumers need the understanding. The committee recommends presenting background information during a unit meeting this year, gathering input from members and recommending a wording change in May, 2007.

The Journal of Pain Symptom Management, December, 2003, states the need this way: “Misunderstandings regarding the nature and occurrence of addiction have historically been barriers to the appropriate treatment of pain and have stigmatized the medical use of opioids.” This article’s key principles to clarify terminology will be reported to you as well as some basics about the “Seven Families of Drugs.” You may be very surprised by some of these facts.

Why You Should Join DPSC. ✓ To help your friends and neighbors talk about their pain and options for seeking relief. ✓ To improve our world by emphasizing treatment first instead of incarceration for drug abuse. ✓ To learn about H.R. 1020, the federal Pain Care Policy Act of 2005, which is in a House Committee. ✓ To hold discussions with informed people.

For the next meeting time and topic, contact Dee Watkins: phone 823-2308 or e-mail. Dee Watkins, DPSC Chair

Year-End Report, 2005-2006

Membership

According to figures reported from the LWVUS Membership Office in Washington, D.C., our numbers as of January 31, 2006, were as follows:

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<th>Membership Category</th>
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<td>Santa Fe County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greater Las Cruces</td>
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Adding in dues paid by household members and honorary members, the total membership is approximately 628 persons. (I say “approximately,” because 25 have signed as Members-at-Large since January 31, and I suspect that each local League Membership Chair can cite a similar situation.) The 2005 figure was approximately 623 total members, so we are making gains.

Note: These members who have joined nationally have paid dues directly to LWVUS rather than to LWVNM or one of the local Leagues. LWVNM receives a $5.00 per member payment for each of these persons. Honorary members are usually those who have been members for 50 years and are exempt from the payment of dues. There are 11 Honorary Members among our New Mexico members.

During this, my first year as Director of Membership, I communicated with MALs (the focus of my efforts) at least three times and sent out reports of Board meetings and membership renewal forms to a list of 46 prospective and current members passed on to me by former Chair JoAnne Ramponi. I wrote two articles on membership development for La Palabra, and one for the LWV/GLC Voter. I communicated with all the local membership chairs and realized that increasing membership is important to us all. Much of this past year has been spent in OJT (On the Job Training). As of now, I have no concrete plans for membership development, but I have a head full of ideas, and pledge that, by the time Council meets in May, I will have specific strategies to suggest to each local President and Membership Chair.

Getting involved with the League was/is one of the best moves I ever made. I thank the Board and members for allowing me to serve in this way. Johnnie R. Aldrich

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REGISTRATION FORM FOR LWVNM COUNCIL 2006, May 13, 2006

Name__________________________

Address__________________________

City/ State. Zip__________________________

I am attending as (please check one box): ☐ Local league delegate from ☐ LWVNM Board Member ☐ MAL Member ☐ Member Observer

Please send registration form and check or money order for $20 payable to LWV Santa Fe County, mail to LWV Santa Fe County, 1472 St Francis Drive, Santa Fe NM 87505. Registration is due by May 3, 2006.
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