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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.

Growing the League

for a Stronger Democracy

Linda Moscarella, State Coordinator and Coach,
and Bonnie Burn, State Coach

Imagine our League's voice being as strong and powerful as our reputation in communities across the United States. Imagine our League growing in membership and funding and more League leaders being trained, mentored, and guided. The League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) is pursuing these goals through its Membership and Leadership Development (MLD) program. Since 2005, the program has been rolled out in 10-state increments, and the final nine states, including New Mexico, will have it established in 50 states and the District of Columbia.

To increase the vitality of the League and strengthen democracy, leaders in each state receive training in techniques to recruit new and potential members, increase the retention of members, and develop leaders among members to carry on the important work of the League. It is a grassroots effort that includes state and national coaches who offer support to create more dynamic Leagues and promote advocacy in the public interest.

A two-day training session was held in Albuquerque, July 8-10, for League leaders in NM. Cheryl Graeve, LWVUS staff member, conducted the workshop. Shur Fellows Nancy Eitreim and Mary Wilson assisted in the coaching as well as LWVUS staff member Salye Stein. The training session involved learning about techniques for conducting regular outreach efforts to potential League members, connecting with and becoming visible in the



Marilyn Fifield and Andrea Targhetta (LWVCNM) in training.

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President's Message

In my leadership role with the League of Women Voters of New Mexico, I frequently ponder how far we have come as a country through the efforts of committed individuals and groups, as well as how much we still need to do. I am honored to work alongside people who labor year round to strengthen our democracy by promoting our effective public policy positions at the state and local levels. League members know that we go way beyond our commitment to mobilize voters and to educate them about ballot questions and candidates' stands on issues. Not only does the public rely on our state and local online and paper voter guides for honest non-partisan information, they also read our letters in the newspapers and hear our testimony at public meetings. They know that they can trust what we say because we work for the public good.

This summer, many people have actively re-engaged after waiting in frustration for the end of Congressional gridlock and bickering. Many of us are actively demanding that our elected officials give their attention to our most serious problems and stop the partisan politics. League members here and across the country will continue to fight against voter suppression tactics and for funding that will strengthen our public health, education, social service, and natural resource stewardship programs. We will stay on the frontline and work to reduce racial discrimination, gender bias, and unconstitutional attempts to limit the rights of women to make their own reproductive decisions. We are not fooled by tactics that attempt to distract the public from the important problems with our environment, our infrastructure, our governmental systems,

and our economy (especially with the lack of sustainable jobs, affordable housing, and effective anti-poverty programs).

This August 18 as we commemorate the ratification of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote, we remember that three more states need to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment to implement that overdue law. Fifty years ago this month was the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. now resonate more deeply than ever:

"If we are to go forward, we must go back and rediscover those precious values - that all reality hinges on moral foundations. . . .The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy. . . .When people get caught up with that which is right and they are willing to sacrifice for it, there is no stopping point short of victory."

We will continue working to address inequality, injustice, and other hardships. We will insist that government hire qualified, competent personnel with clear responsibilities to the public, not to cronies. We will insist on protection of our highly valued but threatened natural resources. We will insist on having strong health, education, and environmental programs that are adequately financed with public funds rather than with private dollars with strings attached. We'll fight for effective policies that reflect broad-based citizen input and review and that are carefully regulated and enforced for the public good. We'll protest negative and unethical actions of public officials as well as the attempts by individuals and groups with corporate ties to limit our hard-won rights. We'll advocate for

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President's Message *(Continued from page 2)*

good policies and programs. But we need your help.

The League never rests on its laurels, and we can only be as strong as our members are involved. My deepest thanks to everyone who joins us to work on public policy, spread the word of our organization through email, Facebook, telephone, and in person, and/or donate to the cause. Please help us monitor

government actions and urge office holders to address the inequalities in our country by providing high quality, transparent, accountable programs. Let us know how you will participate in strengthening our democracy by helping out wherever and whenever you can. Write to leaders@lwvnm.org or call me at (505) 577-6337.

Together, we make a tremendous difference!

Meredith Machen

**Growing the League** *(Continued from page 1)*

community, developing League leaders' skills and confidence, and coaching by dedicated and knowledgeable League volunteers. Before the training session concluded, local Leagues were assigned to two state coaches: Linda Moscarella will be coaching the Greater Las Cruces and the Santa Fe County Leagues, and Bonnie Burn will coach Central New Mexico and Los Alamos.

According to former LWVUS president and current national coach, Mary Wilson,

"It was an inspirational two days - we are reenergized and ready to not only strengthen our democracy but to strengthen the League, too. I was so proud to see the great ideas from my own local League and wonderful connections between all three levels of the League blooming through this program."

All levels of the League (local, state, and national) will work together to strengthen the League's voice and make our democracy stronger. Within the first two weeks of each month, the state coaches will have conference calls with their respective local League coordinators. During the calls, issues and problem-solving strategies will be discussed. The third week of the month, state coaches and coordinators will have conference calls with their national coaches/Shur Fellows. The fourth week of the month, national coaches/Shur Fellows conduct a conference call with LWVUS Support Team. The work of the national coaches was made possible through the generosity of League member Walter Shur in memory of his late beloved wife and life-long League member, Ruth S. Shur. The MLD Program is funded by the LWVUS Fund for Local League Growth (FLLG) to support local League growth and vitality. Donations to sustain the program are welcomed and can be mailed to League of Women Voters, 1730 M Street NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20036, or by accessing the web site, www.lwv.org.

Delegates Welcomed by Las Cruces 2013 State Convention

Fair weather, good food, and debate made the state convention a success. Hosted by the League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces, forty delegates from throughout the state traveled to Las Cruces for this biennial event. Although scheduled as a Saturday-Sunday event, May 18-19, most delegates arrived on Friday.

A reception at Carol Jackson's home on Friday evening set the welcoming tone for the convention. Meeting and greeting each other in an informal setting gave everyone an opportunity to get acquainted. Excellent food and beverages were welcomed after the long drive to Las Cruces.

Saturday morning, some League members traveled into the desert to bird and enjoy the cacti that were in full bloom. Some ventured to the Main Street Market that offers crafts, jewelry, and a variety of foods for sale. Others meandered into the meeting room to view the items offered at the silent auction. League members outdid themselves in donating extraordinary items. The auction netted \$1,600.

The convention opened at noon on Saturday with lunch and a speaker. Jake Rollow, Field Representative from U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich's office, presented information about the immigration reform law under consideration in Congress. He reviewed the significant points of immigration reform.

During the first Plenary Session, the business of the convention was presented and approved for consideration during the second Plenary Session. Please review your issue of *La Palabra*, Spring 2013, for details. The first four recommended bylaw revisions were reviewed and adopted with some

amendments. The last two amendments were defeated:

Defeated was **Article IX, Council, Section 3.a., Powers** - *The Council is authorized to change the program, as needed.* The debate revolved around the possibility that Council, a relatively small group of members, might terminate a study that had been adopted at convention.

Defeated was **Article XI, Principles and Programs, Section 3.b, Program Action** - *The state board shall have power to concur with the positions of other Leagues as needed.* Requests for concurrence may be initiated by local Leagues or by state board. State board shall establish procedures for concurrence action. The delegates vote to continue the practice of reaching concurrence at convention.

The banquet was held at Lorenzo's Saratoga Room. Garrey Carruthers, Dean, College of Business, New Mexico State University, was the guest speaker. When the invitation was extended to him in February, little did we know that he would be addressing us as the newly appointed President of New Mexico State University. Delegates may have been first to listen to him in his new capacity. He gave a remarkable presentation about the Early College High School, a partnership with Las Cruces Public Schools, Doña Ana Community College, and New Mexico State University. It opened in 2010 with a freshman class of 112 and will be welcoming its first senior class in fall 2013. Students who might otherwise have dropped out of school can now receive a high school

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Convention *(Continued from page 4)*

diploma and a two-year associates degree in just four years. Many students are first in their families to attend college.

Convention business was completed during the second Plenary Session on Sunday:

Budget Adoption: Members approved increasing the per member payment from \$12 to \$13 for individual members and from \$6 to \$6.50 for second household members. This change will be effective in 2015. Budgets of \$7,514 for 2013-2014 and of \$7,172 for 2014-2015 were approved.

Program for Study and Action: Current positions were adopted with these changes:

- Apportionment and Redistricting Position, "to be considered by the Legislature was deleted so that the sentence now reads: "The League supports having an independent commission or other independent group develop redistricting plans meeting these criteria."
- Public Regulation Commission Position (PRC): published in *La Palabra*, Fall 2012, was adopted by members. The change to this position that was proposed by the PRC Study Committee but not recommended by the Board was also adopted. The statement includes "and the entity regulating insurance," in the opening statement, splitting #3 into two separate sentences and renumbers the items to fit the format. The sentences now read:

"The League of Women Voters of New Mexico supports the following with respect to the PRC and the entity regulating insurance.

#3 - the PRC should be funded by assessments on the industries that it regulates and those funds should be sequestered from the general funds.

#4 The legislature should approve a budget sufficient to enable the PRC to carry out its allotted duties successfully."

- Affordable Housing Position, as proposed by the Greater Las Cruces League and recommended by the Board was adopted by concurrence.
- Mental Health Services, a Greater Las Cruces position recommended by the LWVNM board, was adopted by concurrence.

Continuing **with Program for Study and Action** two current studies, Reducing Death and Harm from Alcohol, and Natural Resources - Land Use were approved for two-year study extensions. Both studies were adopted at the 2011 Convention.

A request to review LWVNM's position on the Judiciary, adopted in 1962 and last revised in 1987, was approved. There was some discussion about reviewing and updating LWVNM positions, and a process will be developed by the Board at future meetings.

Finally, LWVNM's bylaws allow a proposed study that was not reviewed by the Board to be considered by delegates if it was submitted three weeks in advance of the convention and if delegates approved consideration by a two-thirds vote. Thus, a new study, New Mexico Mental Health Care, proposed by Shelly Shepherd, LWV of Central New Mexico, was adopted. The study seeks to identify Mental Health Services available in all counties of NM, comparing rural to urban centers, and the effect of available funding in the Affordable Health Care Act on these services.

Election of Officers and Directors: With no nominations from the floor, the proposed slate of officers and directors was elected:

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Convention *(Continued from page 5)*

President: Meredith Machen
 Vice President: Dick Mason
 Secretary: Christina Burroughs (who resigned in June and was replaced by Carol Tucker Trelease*)
 Treasurer: Cheryl Haaker
 Director of Program: Judy Williams
 Director of Fundraising: Carol Tucker Trelease (*who was appointed as Secretary at the July 20 Board Meeting)



Delegates hard at work

Directions to the Board included: conducting a regular review of positions, taking a look at the LWVUS bylaws regarding concurrence.

The convention adjourned at noon, May 19, 2013.

Note: A draft of the convention minutes is posted on www.lwvnm.org (to be finalized at the May 2015 Convention in Albuquerque).



Bonnie Burn recognized by Meredith Machen and Linda Moscarella



LWVGLC Board: Bonnie Burn, Ruth Benjamin, Dr. Carruthers, and Gwen Hanson

Thank You

Many thanks to LWVGLC members, especially past-president Bonnie Burn, for their generous hospitality and for organizing such a successful convention.



(L-R) Dick Mason, Keynote Speaker Garrey Carruthers, Linda Moscarella and Meredith Machen

VOLUNTEER

**JUDICIARY POSITION UPDATE
 REVIEW COMMITTEE
 seeks chair and committee members**

Delegates attending the 2013 Convention agreed to a much-needed update of LWVNM’s Judiciary Position that hasn’t been changed since 1987. Volunteers from local Leagues are needed to chair and to serve on the Judiciary Position Review Committee. This is not necessarily a full study. Most of the analysis and update can be done by email and conference calls.

**Contact: Judy Williams, Director, Program
 Email: jkwilliams24@gmail.com; Phone: (505) 920-7817**

Health Insurance Exchange is Moving Forward in New Mexico

Dick Mason, Chair of the LWVNM Action Committee

The development of a New Mexico Health Insurance Exchange is moving forward. New Mexico will have a hybrid Exchange with the state doing its own Exchange for businesses while using the federal platform for individuals. Both will start offering enrollment on October 1, 2013, and coverage will start on January 1, 2014. Individuals will receive subsidies for purchasing health insurance. Subsidies will be provided on a sliding scale for those making up to 400% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) – that is \$94,000 for a family of four and \$47,000 for an individual.

Health insurance companies have submitted their plans and rates for listing on the Exchange. New Mexico will have at least five plans offering coverage on the Exchange, and the rates that have been submitted are very competitive. All plans must offer the Essential Health Benefits required by the Affordable Care Act (ACA). At minimum, essential health benefits will include coverage within the following ten categories: ambulatory patient services; emergency services; hospitalization; maternity and newborn care; mental health and substance use disorder services including behavioral health treatment; prescription drugs; rehabilitative services and habilitative care as well as devices; laboratory services; preventive and wellness services and chronic disease management; and pediatric services, including oral and vision care. New Mexico also will require that plans include additional services mandated by New Mexico law.

Key to making sure that eligible people enroll in the Exchange will be the education and outreach effort. At the July 19 Exchange Board meeting, it was announced that Leah Steimel was hired as the Outreach Director. Leah was previously the Director of

University of New Mexico's (UNM) Pathways to Health Program, and advocates applauded her hiring.

LWVNM was disappointed that the Governor and the Legislature appointed an Exchange Board that had a majority of members who appeared to have a clear conflict of interest (eight of the thirteen members represent either health care providers or insurance companies). Despite that concern, we feel the Exchange Board has moved rapidly to implement the New Mexico Health Insurance Exchange. LWVNM and other advocacy groups will continue to monitor the operation of the Exchange to assure that it represents the interests of consumers.

You can find out more about the Exchange at its website: <http://www.nmhix.com>

In addition to the creation of the Exchange, New Mexico was one of the states that opted to accept Medicaid expansion offered under the ACA. On January 1, 2014, as many as 200,000 additional New Mexicans will be eligible for Medicaid coverage with the federal government picking up 100% of the costs for the first three years. Now we must be sure that the New Mexico Human Services Department mounts a vigorous campaign to enroll the newly eligible.

Health Action New Mexico, a health consumer advocacy group, will be tracking the progress of the Exchange and Medicaid expansion. You can find that info at: <http://www.healthactionnm.org/learn>.

January 1, 2014 will begin a new era for health insurance coverage for New Mexicans. Between the Exchange and the Medicaid expansion, as many as 350,000 additional New Mexicans will have quality health insurance coverage.

PROGRAM UPDATE

LWVNM PROGRAM - *Judy Williams, Director, Program*

Action Committee tracks legislation during legislative sessions and keeps an eye on potential legislation throughout the year. In addition, the committee acts on state regulatory and policy issues as they arise. LWVNM may lobby in support of or in opposition to specific pieces of legislation provided that LWVNM has a position at the statewide or national level that is relevant. The Action Committee coordinates the lobbying activities of several of the other LWVNM committees. LWVNM needs members who are able to track bills via the legislative website and keep others updated on their progress, and those willing to "lobby from their living room." League members able to attend committee meetings in Santa Fe on short notice are also needed. To join the Action Committee and receive Action updates where you will find out about participating in conference calls, please join the LWVNM Action listserv <http://www.lwvnm.org/links.html> (Richard Mason and Barbara Calef; action@lwvnm.org)

Drug/Alcohol Committee: The Drug Policy Committee is continuing its study of pain management and other drug-related issues in order to be able to address pending state and federal legislation. Education materials are available; contact Jan or any member of the LWVNM Drug Policy Committee. (Jan Bray)

Education Committee reviews educational challenges and needed legislation and other action based on the League's position and observes legislative interim and full committees. (Meredith Machen, Jane Ashe, and Sue Cain)

Health Care Services Committee

The League is part of several coalitions following developments at the state level, including implementation of the Affordable Care Act and the Health Care Exchange. (Richard Mason, Judy Williams, and Lydia Pendley).

Mental Health Care Services Committee

An extensive study of the need and availability of Mental Health Care Services was adopted at the 2013 Convention to complement LWVNM's Mental Health position. The expansion of current services, through Project ECHO telemedicine and other health care reform efforts, is key to increasing access and quality. (Jan Bray and Shelly Shepherd).

Natural Resources Committee

The committee is conducting a study of land use in New Mexico. In addition, it monitors water, energy, and other environmental issues and advocates at the legislature and before regulatory agencies. (Lee Lockie, Barbara Calef, and Judy Williams).

For more information and to participate, please contact Judy Williams, Program Chair, at jkwilliams24@gmail.com, 505 920-7817.

CONSENSUS

Alcohol Study Committee

During the next few months, the Alcohol Study Committee will be holding consensus unit meetings with local Leagues members. Watch your local VOTERS for details.

Latest report from the committee on pp. 9-11

Program Update *(Continued from page 9)*

IT'S NOT JUST DWI: REDUCING DEATH AND HARM FROM ALCOHOL- *Jan Bray, Chair*

As reported in the Summer 2012 *La Palabra*, the Epidemiology Division of the Department of Health estimates that alcohol abuse costs each New Mexican \$1,400 a year in alcohol related prevention and treatment services, productivity costs, crimes and property damage, and social welfare program administration.

The core concept in dealing with addiction to alcohol is that it is a chronic disease of the brain that can be controlled but not cured. The Senate Memorial 18 Drug Policy Task Force found that prevention and treatment programs related to alcohol and other drug disorders are scattered among 40 agencies in New Mexico. Most county and municipal efforts are not connected to state programs or to each other. One of the main recommendations of the Task Force is to create a central office and a comprehensive plan with public health goals and adequate funding. Proven strategies with recognized cost savings should be deployed.

The Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration said that on average each dollar invested in treating addiction yields a public savings of \$12 in medical and criminal justice costs. The financial return on each dollar invested in prevention averages \$18.

The most famous and one of the largest running treatment programs is Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). According to one three-year study, AA costs 45 percent less than outpatient treatment. It appears to be most useful and effective for patients whose social systems support drinking and for those who

have low levels of anger. Major studies agree that the more effective treatments were consistently in the medium to low cost range. Strategies that teach people how to cope with stress have shown success in preventing and dealing with relapses. Depression is a not uncommon complicating factor that must also be treated. Pharmacologic approaches appear to be appropriate for selected populations only.

Some of the largest treatment effects have been associated with community reinforcement approaches. The key appears to be helping the client find and become involved in activities that are more rewarding than drinking, and making access to those activities contingent on sobriety.

There are six categories of successful, evidence-based interventions:

1. Regulation of the physical availability of alcohol.
2. Taxation and pricing.
3. Alteration of the drinking context.
4. Education.
5. Treatment and early intervention.
6. Drinking/driving countermeasures.

We have made significant progress on only DWI. That leaves five more categories to address.

Current budgetary realities in New Mexico include a 61 percent loss in funding for the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention of the Health and Human Services Department. The Task Force says the priority for prevention must be younger age groups. People who start drinking before age 14 are more than six times as likely to become alcohol dependent. The Task Force recommends intervention to prevent or delay early use of alcohol through school based, family-based, and community based prevention programs. The key environmental

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Program Update - Alcohol Study

(Continued from page 9)

prevention strategy for early alcohol use and binge drinking is parental involvement, but the most successful prevention needs both individual and environment approaches. Either alone has serious limitations.

We need a law to specifically prohibit alcohol consumption by minors. It is not enough to prohibit possession. Under age drinking prevention needs dedicated funding, according to the 2008 Interim Legislative Health and Human Services Committee.

The LWVNM Alcohol Study Committee has concluded that there are barriers to both environmental and individual strategies in New Mexico. There is a strong anti-tax attitude to any tax increase in the legislature and by the governor. The liquor lobby is well funded and effective. Low population density in our rural state makes it hard to coordinate and conduct programs. There are cultural barriers. There is much resistance to regulating advertising. There is a general lack of knowledge and awareness of the impact of alcohol beyond DWI.

Consensus Questions (approved by State Board 7/21/12)

1. Is alcohol abuse a public health issue? Explain your answer.
2. If you do believe alcohol abuse is a public health issue, what public policy changes are needed to alleviate alcohol problems in New Mexico?
3. Would any of these changes cause undesirable outcomes?

How should the League prioritize any proposed changes?

Editor's Note: Alcohol Study articles published in La Palabra, Vol. 60, No. 1, Summer 2012. and Vol. 60, No. 3, Winter 2013,

NEW STUDY GETS UNDERWAY -

Shelly Shepherd and Jan Bray, Co-Chairs

There was an enthusiastic response to the first meeting of the Mental Health Study Committee that was held June 15th at the home of Jan and Olin Bray. At the state convention, the League of Women Voters of New Mexico (LWVNM) adopted, by concurrence, a position on mental health that allows us to take advocacy action during a NM legislative session. It is important for the League to be up-to-date about the many changes now being considered as a result of the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. Delegates felt it would be useful to expand League members' knowledge about mental health care services across the state. So far, most of the committee members are volunteers from the Central New Mexico League (LWVCNM), but it is hoped that more members from other local Leagues in the state will join us. The study committee brainstormed the following research options at its first meeting.

1. Identify existing resources in New Mexico.
2. What happens to people who are dangerous to themselves or others? Is there a specific target or general rage? How do you tell if someone is dangerous? What role does drug use and self-medication play in this issue? What is currently being done with regard to suicide prevention and the danger of others being killed out of anger before a person takes his/her own life?
3. What coordination exists between providers or agencies? What do experts, clients, etc., say about the adequacy? What coordination is needed and what should be improved?

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Program Update - Mental Health

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4. What triage mechanisms are being utilized? What do experts, clients, etc., say about the adequacy? What triage mechanisms are needed?
5. What can be done to minimize stigma?
6. What are the reasons why people don't get care? What is the impact of reluctance to get care?
7. What is the role of stress management in mental health and as a critical link between physical and mental health?
8. What public and private funding is available? What funding is missing? What are the effects of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) on funding and organizing mental health care?
9. What are the priorities of mental health care in New Mexico?
10. What statistical and other analysis is available?
11. How does New Mexico compare with the rest of the U.S. with regard to standards of mental health care?
12. What are the evidence-based treatments, best practices, and standards of care?
13. How can we leverage resources and innovative technologies such as Telemedicine and Project ECHO?
14. What recommendations can this study provide in the areas of public education, legislative recommendations, analyses and updated positions?

JOINS US

in examining this important issue

Contact

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ohbray@nmia.com or
 Shelly Shepherd at (505) 296-1238 or
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SUSTAINABLE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE

Judy Williams, Director
Program,



Santa Fe County adopted a new Sustainable Growth Management Plan in November 2010 following a two-year process. Three and a half years later, the County is poised to release the second, and hopefully final, draft of the implementing code, the Santa Fe County Land Development Code.

The process has been long, as the County has gone out of its way to seek extensive public comment at every step. The second draft code is expected to be released in mid-September to be subjected to another public review. The Santa Fe League has been involved in the entire plan and code process, offering comments, testimony, and letters urging the county to enact a strong code and to do it in 2013.

The plan and implementing code contain many important elements. Highlights include: county zoning rules for the first time; requirements for energy-efficient housing using the Home Energy Rating System (HERS), water capture, landscaping and more; open space and vistas; a single contiguous code with no attachments; minimal need for variances. There will be a zoning map indicating where new development can be considered, where infill is desirable, and where communities are already fully developed. Santa Fe County is home to several traditional communities, all of which have their own plans. The county plan and the new code will work with all 14 of these plans; this process will follow enactment of the code. Developments of Countywide Impact (DCI) including gravel,

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Program Update - Sustainable Land *(Continued from page 11)*

landfills, drilling and resource extractions, will be subject to special regulations, including environmental impact studies.

A major feature, one that is likely to cause a fight, is that development infrastructure costs are to be borne by the developer. In order to implement the provision, a capital improvement plan will accompany the code. This plan will include a detailed costing of items, which will be used as the basis for determining and assessing development impact fees. Once approved, the code will be a model for the rest of the state and for communities across the nation.



LOCAL LEAGUE NEWS

Central New Mexico (CNM) - *Andrea Targetta, President*

A two-day event was held at the University of New Mexico (UNM) in April for women who are thinking of running for office. "Ready to Run" was sponsored by the Hispanic Foundation Institute, and CNM was asked to participate in a panel, "Navigating New Mexico Networks: Parties and Organizations." The panelists were: Elaine Miller, New Mexico Federation of Republican Women; Roxanne Lara, Democratic Party of Eddy County member; Laurie Weahkee, Executive Director of Native American Voters Alliance; and me representing the League of Women Voters.

Our Annual Meeting was held on Saturday, May 4, with Chief Ray Schultz as our guest speaker. He enlightened us concerning new technologies the Albuquerque Police Department is using and shared the Department's strategy for the future.

Dig into Learning was the theme for the Cherry Hills Library June 1st fair. Jan Bray and Judy Binder represented CNM with a short seminar on How to Communicate with Your Legislator.

Our calendar planning includes diverse programs for the coming year. To name a few: alcohol study consensus, healthcare/workforce development, climate change, immigration, security/privacy concerns, NM budget matters, sunshine week, Girls and Boys State presentations, mental health, economic development, spaceport, and the film industry.

UNM President Robert Frank spoke at the general meeting in June. UNM is working with the City of Albuquerque to locate a property to develop as a center for start-up businesses. Dr. Frank also is working on a long range plan called UNM 2020 to chart the future of UNM.

July's general meeting hosted Amanda Johnson, ACLU of NM, who spoke on the timely subject of marriage equality. She gave an overview of current strategies to win marriage equality in New Mexico. There was a very lively discussion on how to have conversations with individuals who might be on the fence about marriage equality.

We have begun to collect information in order to publish the *2013 Municipal Voters' Guide*. A question committee gathered to

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Local League News - CNM *(Continued from page 12)*

discuss what is of interest to our citizens and develop questions for the mayor and city council candidates. Many League members emailed their questions to this committee. It was a collaborative effort.

Greater Las Cruces (GLC) - Ericka Graf-Webster, President

You'd think that the middle of summer in hot Las Cruces would be a pretty calm and quiet time, but things have actually been kind of hopping.

We were delighted to have hosted the LWVNM Convention in May – Bonnie Burn had everything so well organized that it went like clockwork. We hope you all enjoyed yourselves.

At our May luncheon, Senator Joseph Cervantes provided some insights into the 2013 Legislative session. We have always appreciated having Senator Cervantes as a member of our local League and enjoy having him talk to us because he seems to “tell it like it is” or like it “was” during this legislative session, one that suffered from some contentiousness. A major topic covered by Senator Cervantes was the issue of water, or rather the lack thereof. In pursuit of further understanding of this, the League has contacted NMSU's New Mexico Water Resources Research Institute, whose Director, Professor Sam Fernald, will discuss this further at our League luncheon in September.

Allison Smith, an experienced lobbyist at the NM legislature, gave a presentation on “Respectable Lobbying” at our June luncheon meeting. Her talk contained a number of pointers for being successful in getting one's message across to legislators.

Our League typically takes July off – no member meeting, no Board meeting.

However, this year there does not seem to be any drop-off in community activity that is of interest to the League. Doña Ana County is holding a bond issue election on July 30, with early voting underway since early July. One of the beneficiaries of this proposed bond issue is the Las Cruces Crisis Triage Center. Our League is in support of this facility and has been advocating for it.

Another area that is taking up our time and attention is Affordable Housing. We are in discussions about a possible collaborative meeting among the League, the Las Cruces City Council, and affordable housing stakeholders.

Note: At press time, the Special Bond Election is over. Two general obligation bonds for a new 911 call center (\$6 million) and a facility for animals in court cases (\$800,000) passed. The increase in gross receipts tax (GRT) that among other requests would have funded staffing for the Crisis Triage Center defeated.

Los Alamos (LA) - Barbara Calef, President

The Lunch with a Leader (LWL) program continues to flourish with interesting talks, including one by JJAB (Juvenile Justice Advisory Board) founder Judge Alan Kirk and the Coordinators, Ellen Ben-Naim and Sharon Marinuzzi, who discussed the history and function of the JJAB, created eight years ago to provide services for children who have been arrested or are at risk of getting into trouble. There are now 21 such boards in NM, partially funded by state government.

New Mexico District 43 Representative Stephanie Garcia Richard gave a legislative wrap-up talk, reporting on her first session at

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Local League News LA *(Continued from page 13)*

the Roundhouse. Of 1,656 bills introduced, 298 were sent to the Governor and 228 were signed into law. Many bills failed because the legislators ran out of time, but work will continue during the Interim Committee meetings.

Self Help is a non-profit organization started in 1969 with the goal of enhancing life skills and empowering individuals by providing programs and services that focus on developing self-reliance. Ellen Morris Bond, the Executive Director, explained that the organization now has a budget of \$280,000 and serves six counties, helping the “near poor” as well as the poor and the homeless.

Michael Sharp, Vice President at Research & Polling, was the speaker at the League’s annual meeting in April. Sharp provided an overview of the redistricting process, which is repeated every ten years following the census. Sharp made some brief comments regarding independent redistricting commissions that “take the process away from the legislature” and are typically composed of citizens who have been appointed, not elected. The forms vary among the states that have adopted this process, but there is always a political component, he said. Sharp did not seem to believe that an independent redistricting commission would be preferable to the current system in New Mexico, but offered to participate in further discussions.

**Truth never damages
a cause that is just**

Mahatma Gandhi

Santa Fe County (SFC) - Donna Reynolds, President

The League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County will host a membership reception on July 30th where Leaguers have been asked to invite a prospective member as their guest. The event will take place at the home of one of our newest members, Karla Holoman. She is an attorney who recently moved to Santa Fe, and we’re looking forward to a well-attended event at a wonderful venue. Our program will feature board member Pat Hawkins, who will offer her anecdotes on serving as an ambassador for the United States.

Our vice president, Chris Furlanetto, and I attended the Membership Leadership Development training in Albuquerque along with many Leaguers from around New Mexico. Over the next few months, I plan to engage the board about the project and help establish a committee to assist with the membership outreach efforts.

Our local Action and Advocacy Committee, headed by Chris Furlanetto, has been very active over the last few months. It has sent letters to the County of Santa Fe Commissioners regarding the proposed Sustainable Land Use Code, to the City of Santa Fe Charter Commission members advocating changes supported by the League, and to members of the Santa Fe Community College and Public School Board urging combined elections. The City’s Charter Commission has recommended a number of changes proposed by the League, including an independent redistricting commission. The city charter proposals will now move to city council for consideration.

Our Voter Services Chair, Marcy Litzenberg,

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Local League News (SFC) *(Continued from page 14)*

has contacted our city libraries to seek a partnership in support of our upcoming municipal elections by providing accessible candidate forum venues at little to no cost. An early response from the head librarian is promising!

The Santa Fe Board hosted a retreat on July 16th to prepare for the upcoming year by reviewing a membership survey, the strategic plan and annual calendar of events. It considered a proposal to establish a local education fund, planned a business fundraising campaign, and discussed office issues.



League of Women Voters of New Mexico CALENDAR

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
July 20	Board Meeting, Albuquerque 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. (Completed)	January 4 Board Meeting, Albuquerque 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
September 21	Board Meeting, Santa Fe, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.	League Day at the Legislature January 27 (Mon.) Legislative Reception Garrett's Desert Inn 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
November 16	Board Meeting, Socorro 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.	January 28 (Tues) League Day Garrett's Desert Inn
December 7	Lobbying Workshop (Details to be announced)	March 29 Board Meeting, Albuquerque 11:00 a.m. - 3 p.m.
		May 17 STATE COUNCIL MEETNG Santa Fe

Unless noted, LWVNM Board Meetings are on Saturdays and are open to all members. To add agenda items, please write to leaders@lwvnm.org or call Meredith Machen at (505) 577-6337.

WOMEN WIN THE VOTE

**Celebrate the 93rd Anniversary
of the ratification of the
19th Amendment to the
U.S. Constitution**

August 26, 2013

WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY

August 26, 2013

**In 1971 Congresswoman Bella Abzug
introduced legislation to commemorate
women winning the vote.
Each president has issued a Proclamation
to honor this event.**



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