



# La Palabra

The newsletter of the League of Women Voters of New Mexico

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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

## WOMEN WIN THE VOTE

90th Anniversary of Ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

Celebrations across the nation are being planned to acknowledge this special anniversary of women gaining the vote. The Susan B. Anthony amendment was ratified by 36 states when Tennessee legislators approved the amendment by one vote on August 18, 1920. New Mexico ratified the amendment on February 21, 1920, during a special session of the State Legislature called by Governor Octavio Ambrosio Larrazolo. Representative Dan Padilla, (D-Bernalillo) put forth a referendum to take the approval vote to the NM voters; however, the hue and cry from the public caused him to declare that he would vote for it. The Senate vote was 17 ayes--8 Republicans, 9 Democrats and 5 noes (all Republican). The House vote was 36 ayes—23 Republicans, 13 Democrats, 10 noes (8 Republicans and 2 Democrats).

Although some territorial states gave women the right to vote, New Mexico's women remained disenfranchised during the greater part of the women's suffrage movement. The state's constitution, ratified in 1910, was a formidable obstacle in that it required a three-fourths majority of voters in each county to amend it. This requirement gave no hope of winning suffrage by popular vote, a successful method in other states. Another factor was that the influential Catholic Church openly opposed women's suffrage in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Railroads were few and automobiles almost unknown in New Mexico from 1900 -1910, and the distances among cities and towns were great. These conditions precluded organizing for women's suffrage.

The 1848 Convention held in Seneca, NY, the first to focus on women's rights, supported the goal of achieving the vote for women. As early as the 1890s, women's clubs were organized; however, it wasn't until 1910 that this kind of organization came to New Mexico. The General Federation of Women's Clubs called a convention in Las Cruces. **Mrs. George (Laura) Frenger** (at right), secretary of the General Federation and Mrs. Philip North Moore, president, convened the convention. A New Mexico State federation was formed with Mrs. S. P. Johnson of Palmas Springs, president, and Mrs. Sam J. Nixon of Portales, secretary. Among the offices formed was a Legislative Department headed by Deane



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## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

The 2010-2011 LWVNM year got off to a great start with the Council meeting in May, hosted by the League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County. Highlights:

- Council approved a slightly revised budget for 2010-11. In 2009, LWVNM changed its bylaws to adopt a two-year budget at Convention, but there are always small changes needed and it remains the job of Council to review and approve these for the second year.
- Attendees accepted two possible concurrence proposals to be presented to Convention in 2011. In March, the Board adopted a new position on water, the culmination of a three-year study. No additional studies were suggested or approved at the 2009 Convention. To fill the gap (since we know you are all just twiddling your thumbs in this election year!), Council agreed to explore two proposals: concurrence with an appropriately modified version of LWVSFC's new position on transparency in government, and an update, to the extent possible through concurrence, of our natural resources position (last revised in 1987.) The Board will work with the proposers to ensure that these proposals can be carried out within the concurrence process as defined by the League, which is much more limited than consensus.
- Council voted to use the grant of \$1000 that we have from the LWVUS Public Advocacy for Voter Protection (PAVP) project to support a readily identifiable project within Count Every Vote New

Mexico (CEVNM). CEVNM is a Common Cause initiative that LWVNM partnered in 2008 that will continue this year. The objectives line up very well with those of the LWV PAVP project.

The complete minutes are available at [lwvnm.org](http://lwvnm.org).

Both the state and local Leagues participated in self-assessments designed by LWVUS during the spring of 2010. One common thread in the results is that although most of the local Leagues are growing in absolute numbers, the number of active members and of members willing to assume leadership roles is not keeping pace. Every League has a "handful of very active people [who] are doing a lot of the work, but we don't want to burn them out." One way to address this (at the state level as well as the local) is to establish a working committee system that not only takes some of the burden off of the Boards but also provides on-the-job training, hopefully increasing participating members' self-confidence and willingness to move on to Board positions. This year all Leagues have *Voters' Guide* committees, a great opportunity for members to work on one of our core missions. Contact your local League to find out how you can help!

Finally, mark your calendars! League Day at the Legislature will be February 1, 2011, about two weeks into the 60-day session. And Santa Fe also will be the location of this year's Lobbying Workshop, on December 4.

*Kathy Campbell, President*

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## **Board Meeting Highlights**

*Jennice Fishburn, Secretary*

The LWVNM Board met on May 15, 2010, after the conclusion of Council, and conducted an electronic board meeting from July 16-25.

At its May meeting, the Board adopted the 2010 – 2011 meeting calendar and decided to (a) write a press release on LWVNM's new water resources position, (b) co-sponsor the Albuquerque showing of a PBS film, "Beyond Motor City", and (c) prepare for future use of

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## Board Highlights *(Continued from page 2)*

LWVUS' "Salsa" communications system for advocacy activities and dissemination of information about League positions.

During its weeklong electronic meeting in July, the LWVNM Board:

- Approved statewide candidate questions for the LWVNM *Voters' Guide*.
- Adopted the proposed LWVNM policy, *Becoming a Local League in New Mexico*, and decided that the beginning organizational structure requirement for new Member-at-Large (MAL) units will be a leader/president, secretary/treasurer, and membership director, with other leadership roles added as momentum is built.
- Approved a plan for proceeding with the government transparency concurrence proposal that is based on the new LWVSFC position discussed at Council. Jody Larson of LWVSFC is leading the LWVNM concurrence process.
- Agreed to sign onto a letter developed by Clean Energy Works that expresses disappointment in the U.S. Senate's failure to act on comprehensive climate legislation and calls on it to continue to pursue every avenue to promote clean energy and cut greenhouse gas emissions including preserving the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to regulate greenhouse gas emissions.

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## Ethics Legislation: Presentation by Fred Nathan

*Jennice Fishburn, Reporting*

The challenges of passing ethics legislation in New Mexico were highlighted by Fred Nathan, founder and executive director of Think New Mexico, when he spoke at the May 15 LWVNM Council luncheon. As described by Fred, Think New Mexico is a results-oriented think tank that focuses on solutions, not ideology, and white papers aren't issued unless there will be follow-up action such as drafting relevant legislation. They've also added a grassroots component via their website and social networks.

Think New Mexico's past campaigns have included making full-day kindergarten accessible to every child in New Mexico; repealing the state's regressive tax on food; creating a Strategic Water Reserve [plan] for our rivers; changing the state lottery so that millions of dollars a year go to full-tuition college scholarships rather than to excessive administrative costs; and seeing that title insurance rates were lowered to reduce closing costs for homebuyers and homeowners refinancing their mortgages.

Think New Mexico is currently addressing "pay to play" state politics. As part of this

process, it traced "pay to play" history and found examples throughout the years, from pre-statehood days to the present time. The examples included a letter from President Theodore Roosevelt (an advocate for New Mexico statehood) that showed his frustration with political corruption in the New Mexico Territory and the Lincoln County War that began as a political fight in the late 1870s over control of government contracts for meat.

A subsequent mapping exercise by Think New Mexico revealed two major "pay to play" commonalities: lobbyists and contractors. They also looked at what other states are doing to prohibit political contributions by lobbyists and contractors as well as some of the things they are learning, (e.g., that most lobbyists would rather not get into a bidding war and would rather win on merits, and that



**Fred Nathan**

*(Continued on page 7)*

## Hot Summer, Cold Senate

Lora Lucero, Director, Natural Resources



In June 2009, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES) that includes provisions for clean energy, energy efficiency, reducing global warming pollution, transitioning to a

clean energy economy, and providing for agriculture and forestry related offsets. ACES requires retail electricity suppliers to meet 20% of their demand through renewable electricity and electricity savings by 2020; it sets a goal of improving overall U.S. energy productivity by at least 2.5% per year by 2012; and it establishes a cap-and-trade system for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and goals for reducing such emissions from covered sources by 83% of 2005 levels by 2050.

Then it was the U.S. Senate's turn to take action. Following a year of wrangling and negotiations, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid announced on July 22 that the Senate was abandoning plans to take up legislation intended to reduce carbon emissions, but would instead pursue a more limited measure focused on responding to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and tightening energy efficiency standards.

The LWVNM joined many other organizations to express our disappointment with the Senate's failure.

*As we witness the worst industry-caused environmental catastrophe in our history, the deadliest coal mining disaster in 40 years, and sweat through the hottest first 6 months of any year on record, there's never been a more urgent time to move forward with a*

*clean energy and climate policy.*

*There's no doubt that big oil, big coal, their army of lobbyists and their partners in Congress are cheering the obstruction that blocked Senate action on clean energy and climate legislation. Their cheers are cheers for China taking the lead in clean energy jobs, the Middle East getting more of our money, and America getting more pollution and fewer jobs.*

*At every opportunity, a minority of senators who are in the pocket of America's largest polluters in the coal and oil industries chose obstruction over working together to solve America's energy and national security challenges. As a result of their actions, the big polluters will continue to reap record profits at the expense of Americans.*

*As we look forward, one thing is clear: the Senate's job is not done. It must use every opportunity available to address clean energy and climate reform by working to limit carbon pollution and invest in new clean energy sources that are made in America including protecting the Environmental Protection Agency's authority to crack down on polluters.*

Although the Senate may be cool to confronting the challenges of climate change, the League of Women Voters is not. We are joining other state Leagues and many other organizations to create a public parade demanding serious and sustained action by our federal, state and local elected officials to confront this climate crisis. Check out the LWVUS Toolkit for Climate Action <http://tiny.cc/4vwn7> The Toolkit includes a section on the basics of climate change with clearly written and accessible resources; helpful information about how to help individuals and groups from school-age kids to congregations and business communities learn about actions they can take to reduce

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Hot Summer, Cold Senate (Continued from page 4)

their carbon footprints; ways to mobilize the community and promote public policy initiatives at state and federal levels. Finally, there is a comprehensive set of resources for in-depth information about key climate change-related topics including climate science, energy, economics, ethics, health, and national security.

**New Mexico Action Opportunity:** We have a unique opportunity in New Mexico. There are currently two petitions before the Environmental Improvement Board (EIB) to cap carbon emissions in New Mexico. The LWVNM is a co-petitioner in one, and supportive of the other. We have asked the EIB to set a cap to reduce global warming pollution and require sources that produce more than 25,000 metric tons of carbon annually to reduce 3% per year for three years starting in 2012, and a reevaluation after 3 years, with the ultimate goal of reducing emissions 25% below 1990 levels by 2020.

Four LWVNM members testified before the EIB on March 1, and the hearings will resume the week of August 16 in Santa Fe. The witnesses will include: Dr. Paul Epstein, Associate Director of the Center for Health and the Global Environment at Harvard Medical School; Matt Pawa, an attorney who recently won the groundbreaking 2nd Circuit opinion about global warming as a public nuisance; Dr. David Gutzler, UNM climate scientist; Steve Michel, an attorney for Western Resource Advocates; and Winona LaDuke, environmentalist, activist and educator. The hearings will be open to the public.

In addition, the EIB hearing officer will take public comments on our petition to cap carbon emissions on Wednesday, September 1st, in Hobbs beginning in the early afternoon and continuing into the early evening; again on Thursday, September 2, in Clovis beginning in the early afternoon and continuing into the early evening; and again

on Thursday, September 9th, in Farmington beginning in the early afternoon and continuing into the early evening. For more information, please contact Lora Lucero (505) 247-0844.



**10-10-10:** Have you heard of the Global Work Party – “A Day to Celebrate Climate Solutions” - planned for October 10, 2010? The 10-10-10 party is the brainchild of Bill McKibben and his team at **350.org**.

Scientists say that 350 parts per million CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere is the safe limit for humanity – we are currently at 392 ppm and rising. Check it out at [www.350.org](http://www.350.org)

Many Leagues around the country are organizing 10-10-10 actions, and the LWVNM has decided to participate, too. We are asking our members to write personal letters to our New Mexico gubernatorial candidates expressing why it is important for New Mexico to be a leader in establishing a carbon cap and asking for their support for the EIB petitions. Both Suzanne Martinez and Diane Denish need to hear from us. If you would like to join our letter-writing party, please contact Lora Lucero, Natural Resources Director, at (505) 247-0844 or [LoraLucero\(AT\)aol.com](mailto:LoraLucero(AT)aol.com) Lora will be collecting all of the letters and presenting them to the candidates on October 10, 2010.

**State and local Leagues** and individual League members have a **critical role** to play in helping to **limit future climate change and protect the planet.**

**LWVUS Toolkit: [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)  
Climate Change**

## Women Win the Vote *(Continued from page 1)*

H. (Mrs. Washington E.) Lindsey, whose husband was governor of New Mexico. In 1913, Mrs. Lindsey was appointed state chair of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), the organization later headed by Carrie Chapman Catt. Women's suffrage was now a movement in New Mexico.

In 1910, the State Federation of Women's Clubs won the right to school suffrage for women, and full voting rights to Hispanic men also were guaranteed. In 1914, the NM suffragists had a float in the parade at the State Fair in Albuquerque. In 1916, both suffrage organizations, National American Woman Suffrage Association and the Congressional Union, visited New Mexico.

In May, NAWSA President Carrie Chapman Catt sent Miss Lola Walker of Pittsburgh to look over the situation in NM. She spent 10 days visiting Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Portales and Las Vegas. Miss Walker spoke to the Women's club and about eighty members voted unanimously in favor of suffrage.



The Congressional Union (CU), later known as the National Women's Party (NWP), lead by Alice Paul also sent Mrs. Ella St. Clair Thompson as an organizer to reach out to Spanish-speaking women, particularly those who had influential Mexican-American

relatives. **Adelina Otero-Warren** (at left) was attracted to the cause. She was related to the former NM Territorial Governor Miguel Otero and became the first female government official as Santa Fe Superintendent of Instruction and chair of the State Board of Health. She later rose to leadership positions within the National Women's Party and through patience and badgering of elected officials convinced them to vote in favor of the 19th amendment in 1920.

In New Mexico, members of the General Federation of Women's Clubs and the presence of NASWA and NWP moved the suffrage movement to a successful vote by NM legislators

During the last six months of the struggle and under the auspices of the NASWA, Carrie Chapman Catt and other leaders realized that an organization would be needed to help the newly enfranchised women exercise their responsibilities as voters. Thus, the League of Women Voters was founded in Chicago, on February 14, 1920, and celebrated its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

In concluding this article, acknowledgement is given to the Santa Fe County League that has undertaken a history project. Much of the material used here was garnered from that already collected by them. 1920 was a starting point for the League in Santa Fe County even though it was not recognized as a local League until 1951. Many of the women who became involved in the LWVNM and LWVSFC also participated in or supported the women's suffrage efforts. Some women even marched in New York City for suffrage. All of us look forward to the completion of the Santa Fe project and appreciate the use of information from their documents.

(Source: History of Woman Suffrage: 1900-1920, edited by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan Brownell Anthony, Ida Husted Harper, Matilda Joslyn Gage, 1881-1922.)

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*LWV of Greater Las Cruces is collaborating with the American Association of University Women and other community women's organizations to present a "Celebration: Women Win the Right to Vote," a major event that includes workshops and lunch and features Keynote Speaker, U.S. Federal Magistrate Judge Carmen Garza on Saturday, August 28th. Two films, "Iron Jawed Angels" and "One Women, One Vote" will be shown, free of charge, on Friday, August 27, and Saturday afternoon, respectively.*

## National Health Care is Moving Forward in New Mexico

*Dick Mason Reporting*

On both the national and state levels, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act is being implemented.

On the state level, the 2010 Legislature created a Federal Health Care Reform Work Group (SJM 1) that has been meeting monthly since May and will deliver a report to the Governor and Legislature in November, 2010. For more information go to <http://www.nmprc.state.nm.us/id.htm> and click on the SJM 1 icon. Also, in April, 2010, Governor Richardson appointed the Health Care Reform Leadership Team. This team has already made a preliminary report to the Governor and to the Legislative Finance Committee. For more information go to <http://www.hsd.state.nm.us/nhcr/nhclao.htm>.

New Mexico has already started to take part in the federal program that allows people with pre-existing conditions to take part in the subsidized high risk pool. Since New Mexico already had a functioning high risk pool program, it chose to use federal funds to expand that program.

On the federal level, a number of advances have already taken place: allowing young adults up to age 26 to stay on their parents' or guardians' policy; barring insurance companies from using pre-existing conditions as a reason to deny coverage to children; barring lifetime limits on new policies; eliminating co-payments for preventive services under Medicare; issuing \$250 checks to those on Medicare that enter the prescription drug "doughnut hole"; and giving tax credits to small businesses that provide health insurance to their employees. In addition, New Mexico has already received close to a million dollars to assist in health care workforce development. The LWVNM has co-sponsored a number of educational events being conducted throughout New Mexico entitled "Health Care and How it will Benefit New Mexicans." Please check out the Health Action New Mexico web site, [www.healthactionnm.org](http://www.healthactionnm.org), for more details on

these events and other information about federal health care reform.

There is still much work to be done, much of it in the 2011 New Mexico Legislative session. The LWVNM will be monitoring and advocating for strong implementation action both before and during the session.

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### Fred Nathan Presentation *(Continued from page 3)*

some legislators want to concentrate on the case that's being presented instead of thinking about who the people are, who they're representing, and whether they've contributed anything). Another point is addressing the problem as soon as it happens, thereby sending a message that the action won't be tolerated.

Fred believes that New Mexico is now moving in the right direction, and cited the Gift Act as a good start. It prohibits individuals and organizations that stand to receive direct and substantial financial benefits from the state from giving gifts worth more than \$250 to state officials, candidates, or employees. In looking at constitutional law, Think New Mexico discovered that courts routinely upheld laws that are narrowly tailored to fighting corruption and that didn't get into broader free speech issues.

Think New Mexico is recommending that legislation be enacted that prohibits contractors, seekers of government subsidies, and lobbyists from either making or bundling political contributions to state or local elected officials who have the power to influence the contract or subsidy. Although it is still a challenge to get legislation through the various legislative committees involved, Fred feels that these reforms have the potential for strong bipartisan support.

*Restoring Trust: Banning Political Contributions from Contractors and Lobbyists*, a Think New Mexico 28-page publication, is

*(Continued on page 9)*



## LWVNM Action Committee

*Dick Mason and Barbara Calef, Co-Chairs*

The Action Committee has met three times by telephone since our May 15 Board Meeting.

Jody Larson, with back up from Kathy Campbell, has been observing the Government Restructuring Task Force and has issued a number of summaries of the meetings. The 17 member task force convened its first meeting on April 21 and will complete its work by December 31, 2010. The task force was charged with examining the laws, constitutional provisions, rules and court decisions governing state government and reorganization. A meeting schedule and official minutes may be accessed at [www.nmleg.gov/lcs/committeedetail.aspx](http://www.nmleg.gov/lcs/committeedetail.aspx).

Dick Mason has been observing the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee, Federal Health Care Reform Working Group and the Governor's Federal Health Care Reform Leadership Team. (See the article, National Health Care, p. 7 for more details.)

Meetings of the Courts, Corrections and Justice Committee will be observed because it will be dealing with many of the LWVNM's priority issues. Gayle Prinkey, Cheryl Haaker and Kathy Campbell will be observers.

Lobbying Workshop is set for December 4th in Santa Fe, Montezuma Hall, 431 Paseo de Peralta.

League Day at the Legislature is set for February 1st. Speakers and lunch will be at the First Christian Church, Webber Street (two blocks from the Round House with parking).

On August 8, President Campbell sent an email to the Board of LWVUS urging them to implement the resolution passed at the 2010 National Convention to advocate strongly for bills that legislate for improved Medicare for all. The email further urged LWVUS to support of H.R. 676 and S. 703.

## In the Interim

*Kathy Campbell, Reporting*

The New Mexico State Legislature doesn't stop working outside of its formal 60- and 30-day sessions that begin in mid-January each year. In fact, these "interim" periods may be when most serious work gets done. The Interim Committees, both long-term committees that work every year and short-term committees mandated by specific legislation, have time to examine issues in detail, hear presentations from many points of view, and contemplate reforms without political pressure. In short, it's my favorite part of the legislative process!

This year LWVNM is following the activities of two short-term committees in addition to the work of the long-term committees that may be relevant. The Government Restructuring Task Force (GRTF) was created by HB 237. Its final report is due in December, and it is meeting two days a month in Santa Fe. The Health Care Reform (HCR) Working Group was mandated by SJM 1 (Feldman) to work on issues associated with the implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) of 2010. It meets monthly.

The overarching questions to be addressed by the GRTF are 1) What are the essential services the state must deliver? and 2) What is the most effective way to accomplish the state's goals with the funds available? The GRTF has asked every interim committee to include in its own work plan its findings and recommendations on restructuring the agencies and programs that it oversees. The Task Force is looking for redundancies and consolidation possibilities, as well as opportunities to pool functions such as information technology, purchasing, and legal services across agencies. Also, it will review sources of revenue.

Like every interim committee, the GRTF has a web site; go to [www.nmlegis.gov/lcs/committee\\_interim.aspx](http://www.nmlegis.gov/lcs/committee_interim.aspx) for links to all of these pages. Handouts from GRTF

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## **Interim Committees** *(Continued from page 8)*

meetings are available, as well as minutes and agendas. One of the handouts for the group's first meeting is an overview of how states across the union are addressing their budget shortfalls (The Big Reset, from the National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices.) Several of the May presentations also made comparisons to other states.

The June meeting was devoted to education, both K-12 and higher education. Committee interest focused on the funding formula (once a model, it is now considered out of date); reducing the remediation requirements of college freshmen; and improving assessment. In recent years, increasing licensing requirements for teachers and expanding pre-K opportunities, both initiatives mandated by the legislature, has resulted in a significant increase in costs.

The Office of the Governor has established the Federal Health Care Reform Leadership Team to oversee PPACA implementation. Health Action New Mexico is providing a consumer voice to both groups (see article by Dick Mason, p. 7) The Legislative Health and Human Services (HHS) committee also has a substantial interest in the PPACA and will be considering in particular its implications for work force and Medicaid as well as the creation of new insurance products and pools.

Besides HHS, long-term committees that may consider issues of interest to LWVNM include the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC), the Courts, Corrections and Justice Committee (CCJ), Water and Natural Resources (WNR), and the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC). Some of these meet outside Santa Fe. For example, the August 23-25 meeting in Albuquerque of the Legislative Education Study Committee will consider charter school issues and academic rigor in high school programs among other topics. The Water and Nature Resources committee is scheduled to meet in Las Cruces at the end of August.

Courts, Corrections and Justice work plan includes examining "issues relating to good government", but no such issues have yet appeared on an agenda. This Committee also is drafting a bill on Treatment in Lieu of Incarceration for substance abuse.

The July meeting of the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) included a session on tax policy issues. An excellent presentation on the Corporate Income Tax discussed the combined filing issue, offering a far more nuanced view of the complexities of this issue than has been available in the Financial Impact Reports associated with related bills. Legislators of both the LFC and the GRTF also have expressed interest in re-examining the numerous tax credits that have been passed by the Legislature to determine whether they are serving their intended purpose and whether that purpose is still valid in light of the current budget shortfalls.

Download the legisletter, published biweekly, from the legislative web site for information about interim committee meetings. Or join the LWVNM Action Committee listserv; send e-mail to LWVNMAction-subscribe(AT)yahogroups.com.

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## **Fred Nathan Presentation** *(Continued from page 7)*

available to League members who don't already have a copy.

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Fred also expressed his appreciation for the League's work in New Mexico and for our collaboration with Think New Mexico on issues of common concern. And by the way, his mother is a League of Women Voters member!

## LWVNM Voters' Guide Update

Jennice Fishburn, Editor

The LWVNM *Voters' Guide* is covering the following statewide offices in the fall general election: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, State Auditor, State Treasurer, Attorney General, Commissioner of Public Lands, Justices of the New Mexico Supreme Court (retention), and Judges of the New Mexico Court of Appeals (both elected and retention positions). After LWVNM Board approval of candidate questions during its July meeting, letters and questionnaires were sent by mail and email to 22 candidates. Their response deadline was August 5<sup>th</sup>.

In addition, the LWVNM *Voters' Guide* will include statewide ballot measures. There are five proposed Constitutional amendments: (1) permit the establishment of a college scholarship program for New Mexico military war veterans; (2) allow the appointment of certain former members of the Legislature to civil offices in the state in a limited situation; (3) allow county officials to serve three consecutive terms instead of two; (4) modernize language on qualified electors by removing language denigrating persons with developmental disabilities, adopting federal requirements to vote, defining mental incapacity for voting purposes and restricting felons from voting except as restored by statute; and (5) provide a property tax exemption for property of a veterans' organization chartered by the United States Congress.

Voters will be asked to issue four statewide general obligation bonds: Bond Issue A, in an amount not to exceed \$7,790,320, to make capital expenditure for senior citizen facility improvements, construction and equipment acquisition projects; Bond Issue B, in an amount not to exceed \$7,082,110, to make capital expenditures for academic, public school, tribal and public library acquisitions; Bond Issue C, in an amount not to exceed \$5,100,000, to make capital expenditures for pre-kindergarten classrooms and facilities at public schools

and for public school books and instructional materials; and Bond Issue D, in an amount not to exceed \$155,567,824, to make capital expenditures for certain higher educational and special schools capital improvements and acquisitions. The total for all four questions, including bond issuance costs, is \$175,540,254.

Information about these ballot measures and statewide candidate responses with photos will be posted on LWVNM's website, [www.lwvnm.org](http://www.lwvnm.org), and provided to local Leagues for inclusion in their printed *Voters' Guides*. This information also will be made available to the LWVUS [vote411.org](http://vote411.org) website.

The state *Voters' Guide* Committee is composed of the following representatives from the LWVNM board and local Leagues: LWVNM board, Jennice Fishburn, Lora Lucero, and Dick Mason, with input from Kathy Campbell, president, and Cheryl Haaker, webmaster; LWVCNM, Josephine Porter and Andrea Targhetta; LWVGLC, Dale Yeo and Erika Graf-Webster; LWVLA, Lynn Jones and Becky Shankland; and LWVSFC, Marcy Litzenberg and Meredith Machen.

*The League has built up high recognition value and reservoirs of community trust by providing citizens accurate, nonpartisan services and information on elections and on government issues. Public respect for the League's commitment to factual, unbiased information is a source of pride for League members, ... Providing voters service and citizen education is a time-honored tradition dating back to the founding purposes of the League.*

*"In League," LWVUS*

# 2010 Biennial Convention League of Women Voters of the United States

*Linda Moscarella, Vice President, LWVNM*

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There are YES conventions and NO conventions and here is evidence that the 2010 biennial convention held in Atlanta June 11-15, was a YES convention.

Two studies were adopted.

- Recommended by the LWVUS Board, the Federal Role in Public Education was approved on a voice vote.
- The non-recommended study proposed by Seattle WA, Privatization: the policy agenda to transfer government functions, services and assets to the private sector, was approved on a card vote, yes - 308, no - 274, invalid - 3.

The main concerns voiced about the privatization study were about cost. There was enough desire to do it that collection bags passed around the hall netted around \$3,500 with promises of more. Studies, which are much cheaper than they used to be due to digital communications, cost about \$10,000 in the first year, \$25,000 in the second, we were told.

Three concurrences were passed.

- A Board recommended update to the Arms Control Position
- The Marriage Equality wording proposed by Maryland and Maine state Leagues will be added to the Equality of Opportunity position: "LWVUS supports legislation to equalize the legal rights, obligations, and benefits available to same-gender couples with those available to heterosexual couples.
- The third concurrence, proposed by LWV of Arizona, adds the following words to the third sentence of the position on selection of the president: "We support the use of the National Popular Vote Compact as one acceptable way to achieve the goal of the direct popular vote for election of the president until the abolition of the Electoral College is accomplished."

Seven resolutions were passed.

- Resolved that the LWVUS supports lifting the travel restrictions for Americans going to Cuba. LWV Florida
- Resolved to support safe drilling and mining for energy resources. LWV of Tompkins Co. NY
- Resolved, to call upon the Senate to change its rules to limit the use of the filibuster. LWV of Kalamazoo Area, MI
- Resolved to add the principle of transparency to the SARA Resolution as adopted at the 2004 LWVUS Convention. LWV of Monterrey Co, CA
- Resolved to advocate strongly for bills that legislate for improved Medicare for all. LWV Bloomington-Monroe, IN
- Resolved that the LWVUS highlight the need for those responsible for the oil spill to be held accountable and responsible for the clean-up. LWV Dane Co, WI
- Resolved that the LWVUS urge the federal government to work with the coastal states and respond creatively, efficiently and effectively to the environmental, health and economic crisis created by the oil flowing from the out of control BP oil well. LWV of AL

The delegate body voted in a \$0.30 increase in per member payment for 2011 bringing the total to \$29.70 with an increase in 2012 to \$30. Many Leagues spoke against the increases, but not enough to prevent it. They argued that they could not raise their dues without losing members and they did not have enough money for their local activities, complaints familiar to those who have attended conventions over a period of years. The cost of convention was also high for many and too high for some who, consequently, were not there.

These studies, concurrences and resolutions required many and strenuous caucuses, and the delegates worked hard for three and one-

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## Local League News from the Presidents

### **Central New Mexico - Jan and Olin Bray**

We had a very successful fund raising spring season. We did three things. (1) A theater party at the Adobe Theater for the League's birthday raised over \$500. We had 50 people for the play and reception after the performance with the cast with goodies and wine provided by Board members. (2) A one day garage sale made \$900. (3) A solicitation letter to members and friends has so far brought in \$7,000. The first two benefited the operating fund and the third was for the Education Fund.

We had David Campbell, the Albuquerque Chief Operating Officer and an LWVCNM member, as the speaker for our Annual Meeting. He discussed the mayor's priorities for Albuquerque. He also mentioned that since the candidates used public financing it reduced the amount that was spent on the campaign, moderated the tone of the campaign, and probably made the transition easier. In June we had Lee Reynis, Director of UNM's Bureau of Business and Economic Research, discuss the regional and state economic performance. On June 26 a number of our members participated, as individuals, in the AmericaSpeaks Town Meeting on the U.S. budget and the deficit, which was a surprisingly civil discussion of a very heated topic. Mary Wilson addressed the July general meeting on the relationship with the national League and what it is doing for state and local Leagues. Steven Robert Allen of Common Cause will speak at our August general meeting. Legislative prep will be the topic for our September unit meetings.

We will be doing new Board member training and a strategic planning retreat this summer. We will have a new member social in August.

The board provided refreshments for JoAnne Ramponi's memorial service. Several hundred people attended. The main obituary in the *Albuquerque Journal* was about JoAnne. Her service to and passion for the League were prominently mentioned. We

received many memorial contributions in her name.

### **Greater Las Cruces - Bonnie Burn**

"Women Win the Vote," immigration and human rights, and renewable energy are the issues of focus for the Las Cruces League.

August 26 is the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the U.S. Constitution that gave women the right to vote. A celebration of this milestone has become a community affair. The American Association of University Women (AAUW) and the League entered into a collaboration that identified 20 women's organizations in Las Cruces and assembled a committee to plan a celebration. A reception and free showing of the film, "Iron Jawed Angels," is scheduled for Friday, August 27th. Saturday, August 28, from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., the program includes workshops, lunch, and keynote speaker. From 2:00-4:00 p.m., the documentary, "One Woman, One Vote," will be offered as a free showing. The celebration fee is \$20. The community is invited.

The International Relations Institute and the Center for Latin American and Border Studies presented a conference in March entitled Immigration and Human Rights. An Immigration Reform Action Committee was identified after that conference that brought together community leaders for the purpose of understanding and making recommendations to influence immigration legislation. A Summer Institute, July 6-14, presented a program of speakers and panel discussions about the issues of legalization, enforcement, and future immigration flows. A white paper reflecting recommendations about immigration law reform is the expected final work product.

On June 3-4, Congressman Harry Teague and Barbara Couture, President, New Mexico State University, co-sponsored, "Re-energizing America." Organized by NMSU's

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Institute for Energy & the Environment, the conference updated participants about the progress the renewable energy industry is making in New Mexico and the challenges that continue. Congressman Teague has been instrumental in securing stimulus money that supports the industry now. Attracting replacement money from the private sector is one of the identified challenges.

At its Annual Meeting, members selected two program items for study and action: affordable housing and education.

### **Los Alamos** - *Barbara Calef*

Tony Mortillaro, the Los Alamos County Administrator, discussed current capital improvement projects with League members and guests at Lunch with a Leader in April, assuring his audience that the County needs and can afford all of them. Gross receipts taxes from LANL are expected to remain high for the next ten years as a result of the major construction projects planned there.

The Lunch with a Leader speaker in May was Cas Mason, retired LANL chemist and board member of the Northern New Mexico Citizens' Advisory Board (NNMCAB). This organization was instituted to provide a means for local citizens to give and receive information about their environmental concerns in DOE-affected areas. The citizens on the board represent tribes, interest groups, civic groups, surrounding communities, and other CABs (representing other nuclear facilities in the US). The members also include the NM Environment Department (NMED), DOE, LANL, and other federal regulatory agencies. Issues that have come before the CAB are the safeguarding water supplies, clean-up of legacy contamination, and risk management and budget prioritization decisions.

At the Annual Meeting, Marcy Leavitt, Director of Water and Wastewater Management at NMED, spoke about some of the challenges facing her department. One of the major concerns is the dairy

industry. There are over 150 large dairies in the state, and they have not been well regulated in the past. Even though they have an average of over two thousand cows each, they think of themselves as family farms. Consistency in regulation is needed, but has not yet passed the legislature.

NMED also is seeking an Outstanding Natural Resource Waters (ONRW) designation for wilderness areas to give the state a role in administering a part of the many acres of Forest Service lands. This effort, like that to pass legislation enabling the department to enforce the Clean Water Act, has been opposed by ranchers and developers. The ONRW hearing has been postponed from March to September. Leavitt commented that new regulatory programs most often are passed only when the public is incensed.

LWVLA held two candidate forums prior to the June primary. The first gave voters an opportunity to meet the nine candidates running for four positions for judge in the First Judicial District. Because only Democrats were running, the outcome of the primary was final. At the second forum the spotlight was on the two Republican candidates for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District, the two Democratic candidates for the 43<sup>rd</sup> NM House District, and the eight Republican candidates for four seats on the County Council.

### **Santa Fe County** - *Meredith Machen*

LWVSFC's most important current focus areas are Santa Fe Community College's (SFCC) bond proposal and Santa Fe County's Strategic Land Development Plan (SLDP). On the federal level, immigration reform was spotlighted along with health care and climate change legislation.

For a year, a committee carefully studied SFCC's finances and proposal for a Higher Education Center (HEC) and infrastructure improvements. A fact sheet, posted on [www.lwvsfc.org](http://www.lwvsfc.org), was prepared as a service to voters. Our position on SFCC calls for transparent, public processes for referenda

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## **Santa Fe County** *(Continued from page 13)*

and for career training, rather than capital improvements, so advocacy was not possible. If voters approve, Santa Fe will have a centrally located campus where state universities will offer bachelor's and master's degrees. To date, the capital city's only public higher education is SFCC's associate degree coursework and scattered upper-division offerings from UNM and NMHU.

LWVSFC's emphasis on more transparency and citizen involvement in county planning and decision-making has led to improvements to the SLDP as well as delays as constituents in the southern part of the county called for more input opportunities. More public hearings are scheduled, but philosophical disagreements continue between those who want infrastructure, water, and emergency services in planned clustered communities and those who resist

restrictions on development. LWVSFC's committee will meet with task forces and stakeholders through September with the goal that some improvements to the current outdated plan be implemented while other recommendations wait for resolution. Katherine Miller, NM Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Administration, will become Santa Fe County Manager on 9/2 replacing Roman Abeyta, who resigned abruptly after county staff were charged with fraud allegations.

LWVSFC's Immigration Forum this spring brought together the mayor, sheriff, governor's staff, business representatives, and immigration attorneys to discuss current immigration policies and implications for economic development, social programs, education, and healthcare. Public participation and media attention were excellent and generated a lot of traffic to our website for the League's immigration position.

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## **In Memoriam - JoAnne Ramponi** **1945-2010**



JoAnne Ramponi, a member of LWVCNM, passed away on April 14, 2010. She was a mentor and inspiration to League members around the state as well as a former membership chair for the state League. And, she catered many delicious lunches for the state Board when it met in Albuquerque! Here are some excerpts from a eulogy by Josephine Porter of LWVCNM.

Many remember quite vividly their first meeting with JoAnne Ramponi, even after many years. Words like "inspiring", "lively", "fun" came up as people recalled when they first met JoAnne. Also, and I know you might be surprised, but "forthright" "strident," "loud" were also first impressions several had of our friend, JoAnne. But I think the word that came up most often when remembering their first meeting with JoAnne was "passionate".

JoAnne would not just talk about the injustices or problems she witnessed; she would act on them. As you all probably experienced when she talked, she used her strong and persuasive voice to move others to feel and act as passionately as she did.

JoAnne advocated for natural resource issues such as sustainable water use, air quality, transportation and planned growth. In the late 1990s, she served on the DOE/Sandia Labs Citizens Advisory Board advising DOE on contamination issues at Sandia National Laboratory. She relished the challenge and the opportunity to learn and educate others about critical issues.

As a League representative she was active before the Mid Region Council of Governments, (MRCOG), the County Commission and the City Council, fighting to make sure that good laws

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## **2010 LWVUS Convention** *(Continued from page 11)*

half days. Acres of hand outs were printed and distributed. A lot of prep work preceded the convention, and lots of discussion was on the convention electronic listservs. There was lots of discussion and several workshops on the use of the web and electronic support for Leagues. National is in the middle of a major audit and review of how they use information technology (IT) to support League activity at all levels. Workshops on the use of social media and tools to increase League exposure and build membership were held.

One recruiting tool mentioned by several Leagues was an introductory, half price first year membership. Leagues that tried it seemed to like it, though virtually the entire first year's dues went to national as PMP. Olin Bray proposed to waive PMP on first year memberships and got a very positive response from several Board and staff members.

Old friends were greeted with joy and new friends were made. Our own Mary Wilson was outstanding as she facilitated from the podium during the arduous and sometimes contentious plenary session. It was wonderful to be present when she passed the gavel to Elisabeth MacNamara the new president.

It wasn't all work. We were fortunate to hear U.S. Representative John Lewis speak movingly of his efforts on behalf of African Americans and to praise the League for its contributions. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius assured us that the health bill we fought so hard for was not in vain and was beginning to work for all. A panel of fascinating former LWVUS presidents from Lucy Benson (1968-1974) to the present shared some hair raising and funny stories about the League through the years.

State League delegates, LWVCNM Co-president Olin Bray, LWVSFC President Meredith Machen and I, want to thank the New Mexico League for sending us on this rewarding, exciting and exhausting experience that is the National League Convention. Bringing it home is a challenge for your representatives. Please visit the convention section on [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) for additional information about the process, the adopted program, the new national Board, and more. We wish you could have joined us.

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## **JoAnne Ramponi** *(Continued from page 14)*

on transportation, land use and planning were passed and then followed. She also served as a registered lobbyist for the League and represented us well before the legislature on natural resource issues.

Probably the position where JoAnne had the greatest impact was as LWVCNM Membership Chair. JoAnne took personal responsibility for knowing each League member. She would call new members, knew everyone by name and committed to attend all unit and committee meetings.

Because she was a long-time League member, she added greatly to the institutional memory of the organization. She knew League practices and priorities and when we were in a muddle of where to go next she was often able to clearly see the way forward for the organization. It wasn't just natural resources and membership that JoAnne was involved in. Her clarion voice was heard on virtually all policy decisions taken by the local League.

JoAnne had such a great laugh, a big heart and an even bigger spirit. She was definitely one-of-a-kind and a life-changing inspiration.



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**CALENDAR**

2010	2011
September 11    LWVNM Board Meeting Albuquerque, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.	January 8            LWVNM Board Meeting Albuquerque, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
November 13    LWVNM Board Meeting Socorro, 12:30-5:30 p.m.	February 1 <b>League Day at the Legislature</b> Speakers & Lunch at the First Christian Church 645 Webber St., Santa Fe (two blocks from the Round House with parking)
December 4 <b>LWVNM Lobbying Workshop</b> Montezuma Hall, 431 Paseo de Peralta, Santa Fe	March 19            LWVNM Board Meeting Socorro, 12:30-5:30 p.m.
	May 14-15 <b>LWVNM Convention</b> Holiday Inn Express, Los Alamos

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