



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 and advocacy.



The Co-Presidents' Corner

By Kathy Brook and Hannah Burling
LWVNM Co-Presidents
president@lwvnm.org

My thanks to all League members and friends of the League for what you are doing to provide accurate information to voters and to encourage civic engagement and voter participation as we approach election day. Whether you are talking to your friends and neighbors or participating in more formal League activities, such as preparation of voter guides and candidate forums, thank you for everything.

No matter what happens in the election (up and down the ballot), our communities continue to need the dedication of League members and supporters. So, I hope you'll have a chance for some R&R followed by renewed enthusiasm to face the challenges ahead.

Please join me in recognizing the wonderful contributions of two LWVNM board members who are leaving the board. Rebecca Chaiken (LWVLA) has been a terrific secretary for the board and is now relocating to Minnesota. Kim Sorensen (LWVSNM) has taken on two jobs – treasurer for LWVNM as well as treasurer for the newly formed LWVNM Education Fund. She also preceded Rebecca as the board secretary. Kim is resigning from her current positions effective December 31, 2024. Both the secretary and the treasurer are crucial to the business side of the League and we are very fortunate to have had Rebecca and Kim on the board and working to advance our mission.

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Looking ahead, we have a 60-day legislative session in 2025, followed soon after by our League convention. I encourage you to be thinking about how you can contribute to the League's success and, most importantly, the success of our democratic institutions. Between now and late April, we will need members to serve on the budget committee (a task of relatively short duration) as well as members to serve as treasurer and secretary at least until the convention. The nominating committee will also be charged with proposing a slate of candidates for officers and directors for the 2025-2027 biennium. If you are willing to serve in

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any of these positions, please contact me (kathybrook@comcast.net) or any other board member.

Kathy Brook

Combatting Mis/dis/mal-information

At the LWVUS Convention in June, I attended a workshop on proactive practices and tactics to combat mis/dis/mal-information. Misinformation is defined as false or inaccurate, disinformation is intended to mislead, and mal-information is based on fact but used out of context to mislead, harm or manipulate.

How can we recognize these when we encounter them? Mis/dis/mal-information frequently is missing context, lacks important details, relies on faulty logic, dog whistles, and conspiracy theories. It may also be old information and no longer relevant. It does not have to be false to be a problem.

The rise of AI adds risk to the flood of mis/dis/mal-information. Generative AI is a cheap and accessible way for bad actors to generate content.

How can we combat this?

Read beyond the headlines. Check the url. Conduct a speedy fact check. Can the facts be verified? Double check the source. Consider the source and the source's source. Analyze the information critically.

Be aware of algorithms leading into echo chambers or down rabbit holes. Have a healthy skepticism of content. Remember that trolls and bots are prevalent and social media platforms are backing off on enforcement.

On social media, verify before you share. Pause and reflect before responding. Make sure your message is accurate. Focus on solution-building, there is no need to be defensive or respond angrily.

How to debunk mis/dis/mal-information? State the truth. Introduce the core fact before presenting the false. State the falsehood and why it's false, but do not use the same language. Restate the truth and point to a trusted resource. Don't make people feel stupid. Visuals and graphics are very helpful. Make sure that messaging is accessible to people at the average American reading level.

All of these tactics train us and the people we inform to be aware and alert. Once we learn to recognize these methods, we build techniques to counter them.

Hannah Burling

Voter Services Report

By Edwina Jaramillo, Voter Services Director

LWVNM-assigned candidates (those in counties not covered by a local League) were sent two invitation letters and a reminder letter asking candidates to participate in the LWV VOTE411 Voter Guide. The letters asked candidates to respond to LWVNM-approved questions by August 31st. Responses were requested in English, Spanish, and/or Navajo. With the help of local League volunteers, candidates who did not respond by mid-August also received a phone call encouraging them to respond. Candidate questions and responses become a tool to assist voters, enabling them to compare candidates' responses before making their selections. For candidates who do not respond, VOTE411 will show "Candidate has not yet responded."

Local Leagues also sent invitation and reminder letters with response deadline dates of mid-September for their candidate lists. Local Leagues plan to download candidate questions and responses to produce local printed voter guides.

The VOTE411 Voter Guide will go live on October 1st. It will include four state constitutional amendments (and their pros/cons) in both English and Spanish, state GO bonds, and local bonds. These are in addition to other VOTE411 information already online including: absentee ballot information and a request tool; an online voter registration tool and voter registration verification support; early voting information and options; upcoming election dates and registration deadlines; and polling place hours and location finder, etc.

Printed Native American Voter Guides have also been produced for eight counties with large Native American populations (Cibola, Luna, McKinley, Otero for (Mescalero), Rio Arriba, San Juan, Socorro, and Taos).

Voting and Elections* Report

By Dick Mason, Voting and Elections Director

I attended an Election Implementation meeting on August 20 where Lindsey Bachman and Alex Curtas represented the Office of the Secretary of State (SOS). The discussion included:

The need for poll workers in 2024!

The following form was created by the SOS to collect information and transmit it to county clerks:

To assist the counties in their search for poll workers, the Secretary of State's Office is collecting contact information from anyone interested in working the polls in the 2024 General Election. Use this Google Form (<https://forms.gle/AhfiBYS5HvukjqT9>) to share on social media, with your friends and family, or through community networks to spread the word about working the polls.

To become a poll worker in New Mexico you must:

Be registered to vote in your county (Not registered? It only takes a few minutes at NMVOTE.ORG)

Attend a training

Take an oath of office

Not be a candidate, law enforcement officer, or close relative of a candidate on the ballot in 2024 (spouse, parent, child, sibling, or in-law)

Have basic computer skills, a mobile phone, and an email address.

Military: Not later than forty-five days before an election, even if the forty-fifth day before an election falls on a weekend or a holiday, the county clerk shall transmit a ballot and balloting materials to all federal qualified electors who by that date submit a valid military-overseas ballot application.”

Misinformation: Lindsey Bachman of the SOS office will be the point person on responding to misinformation about the election. Do not contact her directly. We agreed the LWVNM would take reports from our members and forward them to her. Email act@lwvnm.org to report misinformation

Permanent Absentee Ballot list: Those who have signed up for permanent absentee ballots will receive a letter confirming their enrollment prior to each election. They can remove themselves if they wish, otherwise they will receive the absentee ballot.

Previously incarcerated: The SOS is working with the Department of Corrections (DOC) to be sure that the

DOC informs the SOS when a felon is released. The SOS hopes that when a person gets a release date, they will be allowed to register to vote with an activation date of the day of their release. We can assume that anyone who shows up in person is eligible to register to vote. If DOC is behind schedule, the person will get a letter saying that they are listed as still being incarcerated. They can bring that letter to the county clerk to verify they have been released. **Registering them is not illegal.**

Posters: The SOS will be providing posters to county clerks. They will list all the rules for a polling place including rules for firearms. They cannot force the clerks to post them.

The LWVNM has registered as an Election Related Organization with the SOS. That gives the LWVNM the opportunity to appoint nonpartisan “Watchers,” who are allowed to be inside the voting locations to observe the voting process. This is different from party “Challengers” who can challenge the process. Email us at act@lwvnm.org if you are interested.

*Voting and Elections work is separate from Voter Services, which develops Vote411 and printed Voter Guides.

Action Report

By Akkana Peck, Action Committee Chair

Upcoming events on the Action calendar:

November 12: Making Democracy Work Award Luncheon honoring Raul Burciaga. 11:30 a.m.- 1 p.m. at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in ABQ

Early December: First Action Committee meeting

January 4: Advocacy Workshop 10 a.m. to noon

January 9 or 16, 6 p.m.: Review of League issues in the upcoming session

January 21: Legislative Session begins

February 5: 5:30 p.m.: Legislative Reception

Feb 6: League Day at the Legislature, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Land Office.

8 a.m.-2 p.m.: Tables set up in the Roundhouse

The of Women Voters of New Mexico is proud to award the 2024 Making Democracy Work award to Raúl Burciaga – Retired Executive Director of Legislative Council Service



Photo by Jim Weber/The New Mexican

**Luncheon on November 12, 2024 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Indian Pueblo Cultural Center – Silver Room
2401 12th Street NW, Albuquerque, NM 87104
\$50 for the luncheon**

To reserve your seat go to the LWVNM website: www.lwvnm.org

For more info: lwvnm@lwvnm.org

On August 30th Raúl Burciaga retired as Executive Director of the Legislative Council Service (LCS). The LCS performs the nonpartisan work behind the scenes for the Legislature. Burciaga has provided excellent leadership of the LCS for the last 14 years during which the LCS has continued to improve the quality and transparency of legislative information. Burciaga in particular, and the LCS in general, are always ready and willing to provide responses to inquiries from the public. This behind-the-scenes work is crucial to “**Making Democracy Work.**”

LWVNM Nuclear Issues Report

By Karen M. Douglas, Nuclear Issues Chair

Transportation of Spent Nuclear Fuel

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is making preliminary plans to conduct physical demonstrations on a rail-sized spent nuclear fuel (SNF) transportation cask, inspired by a history of similar testing endeavors worldwide and recommended by the National Academy of Sciences and the Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future. DOE is considering both demonstrations based on regulatory tests and demonstrations based on realistic transportation incident scenarios.

Slides from August 27, 2024 public webinar on the PPD RFI. <https://curie.pnnl.gov/system/files?file=PPD%20RFI%20Public%20Webinar%20Aug%202024%20Jackson%20Juckett.pdf>

U.S. DOE Consent-Based Siting of Federal Consolidated Interim Storage Facility

The DOE has now held five online stakeholder engagement meetings communicating Consolidated Interim Spent Fuel Facility (CISF) concepts to interested members of the public and exploring methods and challenges to identify interested host communities (7/25/23, 11/2/23, 2/15/24, 5/22/24, and 8/29/24). Recordings are available at Consent-Based Siting | Department of Energy. Three U.S. sites are now being explored for interest – a similar Consent-Based Siting approach in Canada yielded a community in Ontario expressing interest in hosting a federal CISF for SNF.

Local League News

Southern New Mexico

By Jo Galván Nash, President

LWV of Southern New Mexico is busily preparing voter guides, holding voter registration events, and scheduling candidates for in-person and televised forums. We are disappointed that many candidates did not answer Vote411 questions in Spanish, but our League will still publish printed guides in English and Spanish. We were happy that many of the congressional candidates and statewide judges answered questions in Spanish. The Las Cruces Bulletin will insert into the weekly newspaper approximately 10,000 copies in English, while Camino Real Media will distribute 8,500 Spanish copies in the rural areas of Doña Ana County.

A new addition to our English Voter Guide will be a QR code directing readers to a survey. We're capturing data about the age of guide readers, what they like about the guide, and what else they would like for the guide to include. Plus, we hope to attract additional financial gifts to pay for future guides.

We've also printed 10,000 flyers to be inserted into utility bills in the southern end of our county (primarily Santa Teresa and Sunland Park), and taken to community hot-spots, publicizing registration information, Vote411, and where to vote in November. The flyers are also in Spanish. SNM members have been featured on local talk radio to get-out-the-vote and many voter registration efforts will continue until Nov. 5.

Two in-person candidate forums will be held in early October at Las Cruces City Hall and will feature the county

races and those running for the state House and Senate. Our partners include the American Association of University Women and the county's chapter of NAACP. LWVSNM is also a



Members of LWVSNM included Las Cruces talk-radio as another way to promote upcoming voter registration events and candidate forums. Pictured with KTAL host Greg Smith are (l to r) President Jo Galván Nash, NM Co-President Kathy Brook, and Voter Services member Rebecca Courtney

partner with public media KRWG TV to televise in September and October candidate forums for multiple races. And we are posting our southern-based social media messages to promote Vote411 and urge residents to vote early.

Santa Fe County

By Debbie Helper, SFC Liaison

Our League currently has 157 members with seven new members in just the last month – two of whom are high school students eager to be involved in our voter registration, education and social media campaigns. A membership survey has been developed by Joann Volinski and Joanna Ruppel and will be sent out to members after the first of the year.

Judy Gibbs-Robinson, our new Social Media Director, published and sent out a September Newsletter by Constant Contact. Unfortunately, the Lunch with a Leader event highlighted was cancelled by the presenter due to an unexpected scheduling conflict. Another newsletter is planned for publication in early October.

We have been very active with voter registration events and tabling as usual. One of our members, Rae Dominico, has created 20 different informational handouts (brochures, flyers, pamphlets), which she actively distributes to over 20 organizations – mostly composed of marginalized voter groups. Over 1800 copies of the local League's voter information materials have been printed and distributed. This does not include those materials given out at tabling and canvassing events.

Susan Pfeiffer has been working hard at tabling sites. New sites have been added to those at the Santa Fe Farmer's Market and Food King; these include the Santa Fe Community College and Santa Fe Teen Centers (in conjunction with the SF City Libraries). Canvassing for GOTV in partnership with NAACP begins this week. Eleven high school seniors from four different high schools have been trained as Voter Registration Agents, two of whom are bilingual. Member Anne McDonald Culp works closely with the students and the schools and, as a result, we have been asked to make a presentation on October 9th to the MASTERS Program Civics class to show students how to access reliable voter information, including an introduction to Vote411 and the printed & digital Voter Guides.

The print Voter Guide is completed and has been submitted to the Santa Fe New Mexican for proofing. We will have 800 copies for local distribution and Judy Williams has requested 1,000 for distribution to various tribal communities. The print Voter Information insert went out in the September 20th issue of the *Santa Fe New Mexican*.

Two candidate forums have been planned by member Andrea Slade and scheduled for October 7th (US Representative District 3) and September 30th (NM Representative District 50). We were unable to obtain commitments for a forum from the U.S. Senate candidates, so that will not take place.

Our new website has gone live. All Board members were introduced (by Zoom presentation) to the new site by Jay Turley of Studio X, who helped design it and migrate our Weebly site information. Several Board members attended a more detailed presentation as potential administrators on the site.

Kelly Davis wrote and obtained a \$5,000 grant for social media and educational outreach from the SF Community Foundation. We hired Henry Lopez of Integrated Tech (he formerly worked in tech at the New Mexican), who has simplified and expanded our social media reach while training our new Social Media Director on how to sustain it. We are reaching out to like-minded organizations to help amplify our social media posts.

We have been asked to present “What the League Does” to Women’s Connection in late October and the Rotary Club (TBD).

Save the Date letters have been emailed to seated and uncontested legislators inviting them to our annual Luncheon with the Legislators to be held at La Fonda on January 8th from 11:30-1 p.m. Newly elected legislators serving SFC will be invited after results of the election are certified.

We have a committee planning a Sunshine Week event with a panel to discuss Mis/Dis/Mal-Information and AI.

The Action and Advocacy Committee continues to attend and monitor governmental body meetings with monthly meetings to share their observations and decide on when/if any action should take place. They are trying to meet with the city manager to discuss priorities, to get information about who can talk to us about wastewater issues, and to hear a presentation on broadband soon.

The study group for the local Community Health Study continues to conduct interviews, review documents and meet monthly. Members are now writing and compiling summary documents for editing or reviewing to determine what other information might be needed before presentation to the general membership in February and March.

Central New Mexico

By Starlyn Brown, President

Women’s Equality Day and Julia Brown Asplund Trail Marker Dedication

The event was the perfect way to celebrate Women’s Equality Day and honor Julia Brown Asplund. UNM Professor Amy Johnson spoke about Asplund’s life and accomplishments. Yvonne Novar, from Mayor Tim Kellor’s office, read the mayor’s proclamation. The dedication ceremony was followed by a program and refreshments inside beautiful Hodgin Hall. Hannah Burling introduced Dr. Cathleen Cahill, Pennsylvania State University and Lisa K. Curtis, Esq., Chair, NM Commission on the Status of Women. Dr. Cahill gave an historical perspective of New Mexico women and their impact. Ms. Curtis gave a current perspective on New Mexico women and the work of the commission. Jeanne Logsdon and Meredith Machen began working on the trail marker several years ago. There was an article in the Albuquerque Journal about the event:

https://www.abqjournal.com/good_news/a-history-marker-nm-suffrage-leader-honored-by-plaque/article_7c0e9fa0-64a8-11ef-9517-ab38b6f2c8be.html

New Membership System - ChapterSpot

We are going to be a beta test site for the new membership system. I have not yet received word from the national membership team when the testing will begin. A small LWVCNM committee has started meeting to define what questions and tasks lay ahead concerning board education, member communication and education, integration with our existing website, treasure education, membership chair education, Stripe implementation, bylaw changes, etc.

I attended a zoom meeting by the League Experience Brain Trust to discuss the ChapterSpot rollout process. There are still a lot of unanswered questions and no specifics on how the system will work. The document for the meeting can be found at [Salesforce](#). If you would like to see the items to be discussed. There were many additional items discussed.

We decided to have a final membership renewal campaign in October for all current members. We feel it would be better if everyone is on the same renewal schedule next year.

Voter Registration

We made voter registration a top priority for August and September. We have had events at several previous locations and at several new locations. One new location was LUSH. By October 5th we will have tabled at least 30 events.

We also asked our members to become Voter Registration Agents. At least ten members have been certified.

Voter Guide

The Voter Guide committee has spent countless hours on the Election. They were challenged with finding a new graphic designer and a new printer. VOTE411 is ready to go. The decision was made to include all four of our counties in the printed guide. Previously we only included information for Bernalillo and Sandoval counties. The current estimate is that the printed Voter Guide will be about 65 pages, and we will be printing 25,000 copies. We reached our fundraising goal to help pay for the printing. We have also aggressively sought new locations for the printed guide in an attempt to reach voters in new areas such as the South Valley. We expect to start delivering the printed guide the first week of October.

Other

We have LWVCNM members who have stepped forward to observe housing and Immigration issues. We have met with the ABQ Affordable Housing Coalition (AAHC) and the New Mexico Immigrant Law Center (NMILC) to see what areas or activities we could support as nonpartisan and adhering to policy. LWVCNM members have been directed to join the Action Committee for the 2025 legislative session. Our December 12 educational meeting will be on Immigration.

We also met with Conservation Voters of New Mexico. They are willing to help distribute the voter guides and other voter information. They have been directed to the Action Committee as well.

Abolish the Electoral College - Moon Shot

LWVCNM member Anne Galer is involved with this project and is beginning to develop Zoom and PowerPoint presentations tailored for New Mexico voters. She would like to establish a group of people who could do outreach to other League members and the community.

Los Alamos Report

By Felicia Orth, President

Voter Registration: On September 17, National Voter Registration Day, the League participated in registering voters and distributing educational materials at multiple locations in Los Alamos. League members registered voters at the Co-op and the high school. The energetic team at the high school included three young women student interns, who attracted students and even hunted them down. The result was ten registrations! The team at the Co-op had fewer registrations, but they were more challenging, with folks coming from out of the County and even from out of the state. Barbara Calef and Charlie Sartor have also been offering voter registration at the Farmer's Market. Nearly everyone there is already registered, but many want the sample ballots and ask about

the Voter Guide, which was delivered on October 3.

Membership: Remains stable. In a community of fewer than 20,000 residents, we have approximately 140 members at various levels: single, family, sustaining, with one student membership. We also have more than two dozen friends of the League, who wish to stay involved and make donations without being members.

Fundraising: We made a big push this year. Aside from the relatively modest individual donations and sponsorships, the Delle Foundation made a grant of \$35K to help cover the cost of the Voter Guide over the next several years. We held a sweet donor appreciation event with an Italian flair at Ellen Mills' house on September 8.

Voter Guide: The 16-page Voter Guide for the general election was finalized at the press on September 20! We will distribute it to every household in Los Alamos County and place extra copies at the libraries and polling places, for a total of 9,600 copies in all.

Candidate Forum: Our general election candidate forum is on October 7 at UNM-LA. It appears we'll have full participation for the County Council race; most of the other races are not contested.

Girl Scout Connection: Having heard about the collaboration between the League and the Girl Scouts on the national level at the convention in D.C. in late June, Felicia introduced herself to the Regional Director at the Los Alamos ChamberFest the following week. The northern New Mexico Scouts already had a "Democracy Badge-o-Rama" planned for August 11, and she was invited to make a presentation about the League and voting at that event. (In a brief election there, President Caramel deLites won by two votes over President Thin Mints.) It was a modest start, but well-received, and we hope to establish a deeper connection going forward.

Lunch with a Leader: We heard a fascinating presentation from the Los Alamos County Fire Chief Troy Hughes in August, and a very engaging presentation by the DEI Liaison for the Los Alamos School District, Andrea Dertman, in September.

Looking forward: The DEI liaison for the public schools has requested a presentation to the older high school students regarding the Electoral College, based on their express interest. Felicia will make this presentation on October 23.



Rosemary Alme, Hedy Dunn, and Lynn Jones offer to register voters at the Los Alamos Co-op. Photo by Barbara Calef



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Please consider helping your local League or LWVNM to pay for our voter guides and candidate forums. You can send a tax-deductible gift by check to your local League or to LWVNM. See www.lwvnm.org for more information and links to our local Leagues. Thank you for making democracy work!

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that helps the public play an informed and active role in government. At the local, state, regional and national levels, the League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Anyone 16 years of age or older, male or female, may become a member. The League of Women Voters never endorses candidates for office or supports political parties.