



La Palabra

The newsletter of the League of Women Voters of New Mexico
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Website: www.lwvnm.org
email: leaders@lwvnm.org

Contacts

LWVNM

2315 San Pedro NE, #F6
Albuquerque, NM 87110
505-884-8441 lwvnm.org
Central New Mexico

2315 San Pedro NE, #F6
Albuquerque, NM 87110
lwvnm.org

Shelly Shepherd and
Sandra Browne, Co-Presidents
Greater Las Cruces

PO Box 8322
Las Cruces, NM 88006
575-524-8683

lwvnlc.org
Bonnie Burn, President

Los Alamos

PO Box 158
Los Alamos, NM 87544
505-662-3825

lwvlosalamos.org
Barbara Calef, President

Santa Fe County

1472 St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, NM 87505
505-982-9766

lwvsc.org
Judy Williams, President

La Palabra Editor

Chris Burroughs
coburroughs@cybermesa.com

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.



Lobbying Workshop -- Some 40 people attended the Dec. 1 LWVNM lobbying workshop held at the Montezuma Masonic Lodge in Santa Fe. Speakers included Sen. Peter Wirth (SD 25), Rep. Jimmie Hall (HD 28), and Linda Siegle, registered lobbyist specializing in non-profits and health care associations. See more on pages 8-10.

(Photo by Joe Keefe)

Legislative Reception and League Day at the Legislature

Legislative Reception, Monday, Feb. 4, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Garrett's Desert Inn, 311 Old Santa Fe Trail

Reception to feature panel on improving elections in New Mexico

Panelists include:

Viki Harrison, Director, Common Cause NM to discuss Election Protection and Campaign Finance Reform

Denise Lamb, Santa Fe County Elections Director to discuss the Wisconsin Election Accountability Model

Dick Mason, LWVNM Leader and Action Chair to discuss LWVNM Priorities

League Day, Tuesday, February 5

Committee Hearings at the Roundhouse, 8-10:15 a.m. and 2-5 p.m.

Educational events and lunch at the Desert Inn, 10:30 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.

(Continued on page 2)

League Day

(Continued from page 1)

The 2013 Legislative Session will be dealing with many pieces of legislation that have been prioritized by the League of Women Voters. The 60-day session is able to deal with the full range of policy questions. We expect the Governor to continue asking for legislation that would require mandatory photo IDs for voting. She has also pledged to eliminate driver's licenses for undocumented immigrants. The LWVNM opposes both of these pieces of legislation. We also expect action concerning the implementation of the health insurance exchange and Medicaid expansion and on numerous League priorities, including redistricting reform, education, the PRC, tax breaks and loopholes that reduce New Mexico revenues and threaten funding for essential programs, and much more.

LWVNM Packets: We need your legislators to hear where the League stands on issues!

Members can pick up their information packets at the Desert Inn at the reception on Feb. 4 or when we reconvene there on Feb. 5 at 10:30 a.m. These packets contain one-pagers on each of the League's priorities for this session. We would like each of our legislators to get a copy of these summaries of our positions directly from the League members who are their constituents.

League Day starts at the Roundhouse

Members are encouraged to attend sessions in the House and Senate and/or committee hearings before 10:15 a.m. when we head a few doors toward the Plaza to the Desert Inn.

Our morning speakers are:

Nandini Kuehn, Ph. D., Health Care Expert--
Implementing the Affordable Care Act in New Mexico

Ruth Hoffman, Director, Lutheran Advocacy --
Social Justice and Public Policy Issues for 2013

The lunch speaker will be **Mary Wilson**, attorney, Immediate Past President of LWVUS. She will discuss "Essential Elements for Reforming Redistricting in New Mexico."

Lunch Reservations

Reservations for the \$10 box lunch are required by Jan. 31 and payable at the event. Please email mermachen@cybermesa.com or leave a message at 505-988-4523 with your three choices:

1. Turkey (w/ mozzarella) on white croissant or Veggie (w/ portabella) on wheat croissant
2. Brownie or Lemon Bar
3. Lemonade or Ice Tea

Lunch also includes a fresh fruit salad.

Accommodations

Garrett's Desert Inn offers a "Legislative Rate" of \$59 plus tax that includes continental breakfast and free parking (normally \$8/day). Call 1-800-888-2145 to make a reservation. Parking is also free for League members attending the Legislative Reception and League Day activities.

The LWVNM Action Committee will be sending out email Action Alerts throughout the 2013 Legislative session. If you are not part of the LWVNM Action list, please sign up at www.lwvnm.org

Pre-Tax Giving

The end of the year is fast approaching, and many of us are making those last tax-deductible contributions to deserving charities. If you are in this situation, please give some consideration to contributing to your local League's Education Fund, a 501(c)(3) organization. The contributions are fully tax-deductible and are used to fund the *Voters' Guides*, *Who's Who*, educational forums, voter registration drives and the many activities that your League carries out from its "Ed Fund" side.

LWVNM also maintains an Ed Fund which is used primarily to publish the bi-yearly *Voters' Key*. If you care to spare a few dollars, we would be most grateful! Send contributions to LWVNM Ed Fund/2315 San Pedro NE, Ste F-6 / Albuquerque 87110.

- Cheryl Haaker

Notes from the East

By Katherine Campbell

Greetings to all New Mexico League members! As some of you know, I moved to central Massachusetts last spring. I own some property in Leverett, near Amherst, mostly wooded except for an acre of open field and a decaying house. I spent the summer clearing brush, gardening and shoring up the house. Despite new roof insulation and a one-room propane heater, I can't live there through the winter, so I also have a condominium in Amherst. I voted in Leverett (paper ballots cranked into a big wooden ballot box, hand counted), but a very bad case of poison ivy drove me into Amherst a month earlier than the weather would have required. I am only now beginning to make long-term plans for the property. One factor to consider is that my daughter will likely settle in the mountain west after her marriage next year. Another is that although I have never been a "dog person." I would like an airedale like hers -- but no dogs allowed in my condo.

Meanwhile I am participating in the Five Colleges Learning in Retirement program and in the activities of the local UU Society, and I expect to become more active in the work of the Kestrel Trust, which I have supported financially for many years. And of course I have joined the Amherst League. They have an active group working on health care (supporting single payer for MA) and another on money in politics. I am helping the latter draft a state study proposal to consider what should be the League's position in response to the Citizens' United decision, which seems to undermine the Constitutional foundations for the traditional approach to campaign finance reform at the state as well as the national level. I am sure this is a subject of great interest in New Mexico too.

E-mail to the forwarding address ksmithcamp@post.harvard.edu will always reach my inbox. I'd love to hear from you. And let me know if you're going to be in my area. Happy Holidays to all!

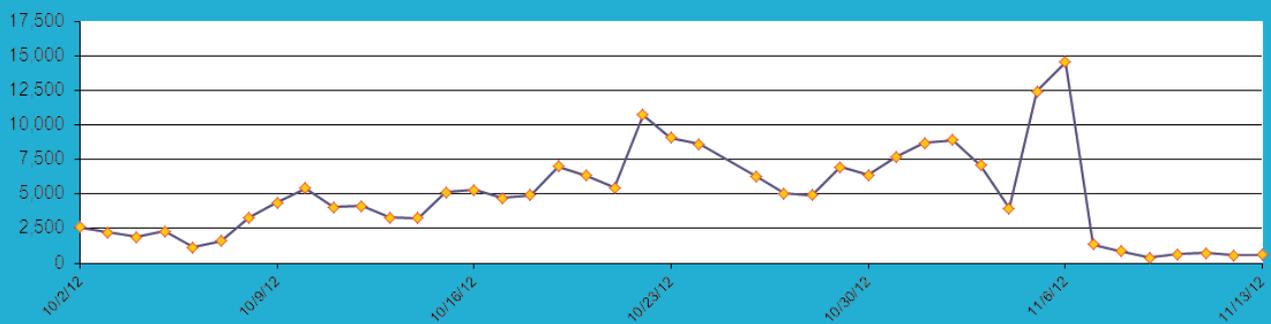
Web Report

Did you check your state and local League websites for the *Voters' Guide* and other voting information? Well, if you didn't, plenty of other folks did! Here are the number of page requests per day for Oct. 1-Nov. 14.

The *Voters' Guide* site, www.lwvnm.org/VGuide2012/, got 32,000 hits! The top pages viewed in the *Voters' Guide* were the PDF of the LWVCNM *Voters' Guide* (3,751), constitutional amendments (3,116), state bonds

(2,326), statewide judges (2,224), and the "Voting 101" PDF (1,867). Other local *Voters' Guides* were also popular: LWV Los Alamos (1,042), LWV Santa Fe (763), and LWV Greater Las Cruces (495). Pages for the PRC, PEC, Congress, US Senate, and President got between 1,600 and 1,200 views each. As far as individual pages went, only the LWVNM.org website home page (9,922) received more views than the LWVCNM *Voters' Guide* PDF. -- Cheryl Haaker

**lwvnm.org Requests per Day, October-November 2012:
2012 General Election**



Alcohol Study report

Editor's Note: The following is a summary of the first part of the LWWNM Alcohol Study report, which identifies the problem. The next issue of La Palabra will include a summary of the treatment, prevention and recommendation sections, which will be the basis of consensus questions.

Alcohol abuse includes alcoholism or addiction, a chronic disease that is treatable but lasts a person's lifetime. Alcoholism is defined as a disease with four predictable symptoms:

- * Craving -- the need to drink
- * Loss of control -- not being able to stop once started
- * Physical dependence -- withdrawal symptoms after stopping
- * Tolerance -- need to drink greater amounts to achieve high.

The risk for developing this disease is influenced both by genetics and lifestyle choices. People who report drinking before age 15 are five times more likely to develop alcohol dependence as adults. Alcoholism is only one type of alcohol problem. One can drink too much without being dependent. A much more common problem involving alcohol is binge drinking. For men, binge drinking is defined by the National Institute for Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse as five or more drinks within two hours. For women, the limit is four drinks. The following are the number of ounces of each type of alcohol that equal one drink.

- * 12 oz. Beer
- * 1.5 oz. 80 Proof Liquor
- * 5 oz. Wine
- * 7 oz. Malt Liquor or Ice Beer
- * 10 oz. Wine Cooler

So who binge drinks? In 2010, binge-drinking prevalence among men in the lower 48 states and Washington, D.C. (23.2 percent) was twice that of women (11.4 percent). Men who reported binge drinking reported a higher frequency and intensity than women. Binge drinking was most common among people aged 18-34 and decreased with increasing age. However, the highest frequency of binge drinking by age was reported by people 65 years and over. While the prevalence of binge drinking increased with household income and was highest among those with annual household incomes of \$75,000 or more, the highest frequency and intensity of binge drinking was reported by those with incomes of \$25,000 or less.

The effects of alcohol abuse include:

- * failure to fulfill major responsibilities at work, school, or home.
 - * drinking in dangerous situations, such as drinking while driving or operating machinery.
 - * legal problems related to alcohol, such as being arrested for drinking while driving or for physically hurting someone while drunk.
 - * continued drinking despite ongoing relationship problems that are caused or worsened by drinking.
- Health problems associated with heavy drinking or binge drinking include:
- * chronic diseases such as liver cirrhosis, various cancers, including liver, mouth, throat, larynx (the voice box), and esophagus; high blood pressure; and psychological disorders.
 - * unintentional injuries, such as motor-vehicle traffic crashes, falls, drowning, burns and firearm injuries.
 - * violence, such as child maltreatment, homicide, and suicide.
 - * harm to a developing fetus if a woman drinks while pregnant
 - * sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
 - * alcohol abuse or dependence.

Alcohol abuse also has serious effects on teen drinkers. Alcohol affects the teen brain. Memory, learning ability, and impulse control can be considerably impaired. Teen drinking greatly increases the risk of addiction. Adolescent drinkers are much more likely to engage in life-altering risky behaviors. Teen drinkers are five times more likely to have been pregnant or made someone else pregnant. They are four times more likely to have attempted suicide and almost eleven times more likely to have ridden with a drinking driver.

In 2007, 31 percent of New Mexico high school students reported drinking before age 13. This is the highest prevalence of early drinking in the US. Specifically, 38.4 percent of 9th graders and almost half of 12th graders reported consuming alcohol at least once in the last 30 days. Binge drinking was common among current drinkers. Almost two-thirds reported it. There was no significant difference in prevalence of current or binge drinking between boys and girls. Alcohol use and misuse is the third leading cause of preventable death in the U.S. The New Mexico total alcohol-related death rate has ranked first, second or

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San Juan Generating Station issue still unresolved

By Barbara Calef

As we reported in the Summer 2012 La Palabra, on July 2 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) granted a 90-day stay to give the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) and PNM an opportunity to propose a new plan for reducing the emission of haze-producing nitrogen oxide by the San Juan Generating Station. The EPA was insisting that selective catalytic reduction (SCR) technology be installed at SJGS and had rejected PNM's proposed alternative of non-catalytic reduction technology (SNCR), which would have been far less costly, but also considerably less effective.



San Juan Generating Station

The compliance date for the SCR installation was not extended, so PNM has been required to proceed with preparations for the installation even while the company and NMED carried out a process for trying to find agreement among owners and community groups for an alternative approach, namely closing down the two oldest units at the SJGP and installing SNCR on the other two, as suggested by Dan Klein and explained in the Summer La Palabra .

Subsequently, following a series of hearings, NMED officially proposed to the EPA that the two units be shut down and the remaining units be equipped with the less expensive SNCR by 2017, suggesting that PNM would use natural gas to maintain the level of production for its customers. The stay was extended an additional 45 days while discussions continue among the owners of SJGS. EPA has not yet taken a position on the proposal. They have until Jan, 5, 2013 to do so.

LWVNM Calendar for first half of 2013

Editor's Note: The following is the LWVNM official calendar for the first half of 2013.

Board Calendar

- *Jan. 5** LWVNM Board meeting, Santa Fe, 11 am - 3 pm, Pasatiempo Center
- Feb. 4** Legislative Reception, 5-7 pm, Garrett's Desert Inn
- Feb. 5** League Day at the Legislature, Capitol and Garrett's Desert Inn
- March 16** LWVNM Board meeting, Santa Fe,

11 -3 pm, TBA

March 23 Deadline for spring *La Palabra*, Call to Convention 2012

May 18-19 LWVNM Convention, Las Cruces
Note: All LWVNM Board meetings are on Saturdays.

Legislative Calendar 2013

Dec. 17, 2012-Jan. 11, 2013, Legislation may be pre-filed

Jan. 15 Opening day (noon)

Feb. 5 League Day at the Legislature

Feb. 14 Deadline for introduction of bills

March 16 Session ends (noon)

April 5 Legislation not acted upon by governor is pocket vetoed

June 14 Effective date of legislation not a general appropriation bill or a bill carrying an emergency clause or other specified date

For information about the session, please see www.nmlegis.gov.

Alcohol Report

(Continued from page 4)

third in the U.S. in each of the past 24 years. It has been first since 1997. The 2001-2005 rate was 48.4 deaths per 100,000. Binge drinking kills as many young people as all other drugs combined.

Except for DWI deaths, which have decreased significantly, all other types of alcohol-related deaths have remained stable or increased over time. In 2006-2007 only 3.1 percent of New Mexicans who needed treatment for alcohol use received it.

Reforming Redistricting in New Mexico

By Meredith Machen, Leader

Though the 2020 Census seems far off, LWVNM is working to improve redistricting while the memory of how poorly New Mexico's process worked this past time is still fresh. There is widespread consensus among legislators and the public that we need to avoid the inordinate costs in time, money, and effort of the current process.

On October 10, past LWVUS President Mary Wilson, Dick Mason and I went before the Courts and Corrections Committee of the Legislature to give some background as to why redistricting reform is needed in New Mexico. Mary shared some of her extensive expertise on how other states conduct redistricting, the features of various alternatives and the components most crucial to real redistricting reform.

Dick reviewed the history: the contentious 2011 Special Session, where New Mexico's legislative redistricting maps were passed along straight party lines. The Governor vetoed those plans, which led to a number of lawsuits. Eventually, the Court appointed a special master to finalize the maps. The Senate map was approved in January 2012, but the House map wasn't approved until the end of February 2012, leaving many candidates and voters up in the air. The Associated Press estimated that the total cost of redistricting to New Mexico taxpayers was \$8 million. How sad that \$5 million was spent on lawsuits rather than on education, health care and other government services.

After studying more functional systems in other states, LWVNM is proposing a modification of the Iowa redistricting process as a viable option for New Mexico. State Senator Elect Bill O'Neill is

working diligently with us in formulating the elements of redistricting reform. The discussion draft of the bill he is sponsoring includes an independent redistricting commission with seven private citizens, chosen by the majority and minority leaders, and a group of appellate judges. If passed into law, the independent commission will recommend up to three redistricting plans, the Legislature voting up or down on each. If no plan is passed on the third try, the decision power goes to the NM Supreme Court, which will issue the final redistricting map. Incorporating the Supreme Court into the process will save our state millions of dollars in legal fees. This plan relies heavily upon Iowa but also incorporates elements of the California model as well as the judicial aspect from Senator Ortiz y Pino's Senate Joint Resolution 10 from the 2012 Session.

The Voting Rights Act and other statutes require equal population, contiguous districts, respecting geographical boundaries, and not diluting minority voters. Among the League's interests is the prevention of gerrymandering, the drawing of districts for the purpose of favoring a political party or incumbent legislators.

We have high hopes that a generic redistricting reform bill will be passed in the 2013 Session. Our goal is to have a proposed Constitutional amendment for the General Election 2014. If we are not successful in this Session, we will continue to work to pass legislation so that an amendment can be on the 2016 ballot. We are committed to reforming New Mexico's redistricting process in whatever way possible. We have promised to help search out information and offer other services, as we did by videotaping the redistricting hearings throughout the state.

First Call to Convention

**First Call to Convention 2013 - May 18-19, 2013,
Las Cruces, New Mexico
Leadership Team: Richard Mason and
Linda Moscarella, Co-Presidents, and Meredith
Machen, Vice President.**

The 2013 Convention of the League of Women Voters of New Mexico will be hosted by the League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces on May 18 beginning at noon and continuing through May 19, ending at approximately noon. An overnight stay on Saturday will require hotel reservations.

The convention will adopt a program for study and action, elect officers and directors, adopt a balanced budget for the next two years, consider revising the bylaws and transact such other business as may be presented.

Each League is entitled to a number of delegates proportioned to its membership: the president and one delegate who shall be chosen by the members through the local Leagues; the members in each

local League having more than five voting members shall be entitled to one additional delegate for each additional 25 voting members or a major fraction thereof. In addition, all board members except the local League presidents are automatically delegated. Finally, there is one delegate allocated to represent LWVNM's members-at large. Additional member observers are always welcome. (See Bylaws, Article VIII, Convention, Section 4, Representation for additional details.)

The Convention will open with lunch and a speaker at noon on May 18 of the two-day convention. Plenary Session 1 will convene after lunch. A banquet is schedule for Saturday evening with a panel discussion about Border Issues. Plenary Session 2 will convene on Sunday, May 19, with registration at 8 a.m. A board meeting for newly elected officers and directors will follow the convention adjournment.

Mark the date on your calendar! Complete details will be published in the spring *La Palabra*.

Board meeting highlights

By Chris Burroughs, LWVNM Secretary

November 17, 2012 Board Meeting

During their Nov. 17, 2012 meeting at the Socorro Public Library, the board:

* Received a written report from State Treasurer Cheryl Haaker noting that current bank balances are checking account, \$1,880.25 and savings, \$6,104.24 for a total of \$7,984.49.

* Heard from Nominating Committee Chair Mary Wilson who said the committee -- consisting of Andrea Targhetta, Rebecca Shankland, Richard Mason and Linda Moscarella -- was working diligently to fill vacant positions. The committee has made phone calls to various League members ask-

ing them to be on the state board.

* Discussed whose guidelines to follow when a local League holds candidate forums jointly with another organization. The board agreed that League guidelines should be followed.

* Learned that LWVNM officially joined the New Mexico Coalition for Choice, a non-religious group. Diane Goldfarb serves as the League representative on the coalition.

* Received a written report from Web Monkey Cheryl Haaker which said: "Not surprisingly, the most-accessed pages on the lwvnm.org website during the October-November period were those comprising the online *Voters' Guide*. The various pages and PDFs that made up the Guide got nearly 28,000 hits."

League of Women Voters of New Mexico Lobbying Workshop, Dec. 1

Editor's Note: The following are notes taken by Connie Bell, member of the League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County, at the Dec. 1 LWVNM Lobbying Workshop.

Moderator: Meredith Machen, LWVNM Leader, Voter Services and Education Chair

Basic Rules: Dick Mason, LWVNM Leader, Action Chair

If you are going to speak on behalf of an organization (paid or unpaid), you should be registered as a lobbyist and you should have authorization from that organization. Both forms and the Lobbyist Regulation Act are available on the Secretary of State website. Registration is free for those representing non-profit organizations.

http://www.sos.state.nm.us/Lobbyist_Information/Lobbyist_Forms.aspx

Everyone is strongly encouraged to read The Lobbyist Regulation Act.

Senator

Peter Wirth,
Senate District 25
Santa Fe, Judiciary
Committee Vice-
Chair, Rules
Committee
Member, gave the
top ten rules of
lobbying. They
are:



Peter Wirth

10. Don't be afraid of the Roundhouse. Go sometime when the legislature is not in session to look around and familiarize yourself with it.

9. Understand what it takes for a bill to become a law. Very few bills make it through the whole process.

8. Use the tools on the NM Legislature's website -- <http://www.nmlegis.gov>. You can read bills, do research by topic, track your bills, and listen to many committee hearings and the "Floor Sessions" of the Senate and House.

7. Know the best way to communicate

with your legislators. Sen. Wirth tries to respond to every e-mail. If he doesn't, e-mail him again, and he will respond. He doesn't get very many telephone calls. Other legislators may prefer phone calls.

6. You are most effective lobbying your own legislator. Legislators are most responsive to their own constituents, so if you need to lobby someone that isn't your legislator, take one of his or her constituents with you!

5. Be courteous and remember your bill is one of hundreds legislators have to consider.

4. Bills usually take more than one to legislative session to pass.

3. Anyone can walk down onto the "Floor" before or after sessions. If you can't find your legislator in his/her office, you can talk to him/her on the floor! Wirth loves it when you do that, as it helps keep the lobbyists at bay.

2. Speak up at committee hearings.

1. Count your votes and be strategic in how you advocate for/against bills. Bills are assigned to two or more committees. To get a bill through a committee, know who is for it and then focus your energies on getting those who are not for it to pass it. Lobby members on the first committee, then lobby those on the second. Don't lobby non-committee members until your bill is out of committee and going to the floor.

Representative Jimmie Hall, House District 28, Bernalillo County, House Education Committee and Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee, noted the following:

*** The job of every Senator and Representative is to do the best for the STATE OF NEW MEXICO, not just to represent their constituents.**

*** Number one rule for lobbying: Know who your State Senator and State Representative are!**

*** Respect the votes of legislators and their right to vote their conscience.**

*** Get your legislators' e-mail addresses and phone numbers.**

Important results of the General Election:

1. For the first time, NM has more urban

Lobbying Workshop

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than rural legislators.

2. **There will be completely new leadership**, with the exception of Senate Majority Leader, Michael Sanchez (D-Valencia County).

Education is approximately half of the state budget. Hall has worked on bipartisan legislation with Rep Mimi Stewart to implement and expand funding for Pre-K and K-3 Plus. Funding has gone from \$3 million to \$6 million, and he hopes to double or triple that. He also wants to increase funding for teacher training. Some legislators and officials like to talk about other states' plans, but he believes in our New Mexico plan.

New Mexico is unique because of three provisions in the constitution

1. **The anti-donation clause** (the state cannot donate anything to a private entity).

2. **NM has been committed to provide a "sufficient education" since statehood.**

3. **Balanced budget requirement**, meaning we cannot spend more than we have.

Hall says you should attend interim committee meetings/hearings if you can. Committee-endorsed legislation comes out of these. The Education Committee also meets for a week before the session begins.

Don't take anything for granted -- "bird-dog" your bill(s).

Legislators can pre-file legislation between Dec. 15 and Jan. 15 and get bill numbers in the first days of the session. It's a significant advantage to pre-file legislation in the House because it takes bills in order by bill number. A bill with a lower number is more likely to get through the whole process. The process includes getting through the committees, getting passed on the floor, getting passed by the Senate, and to the Governor's desk for signature.

If you have a Santa Fe issue that you are passionate about, you need to look at how that legislation will impact districts represented by other committee members.

Know your opposition and their positions better than they know them. Hall will listen to your position for or against a bill, then ask you why he should vote the opposite way.

Be there. If something's happening at 2:15

p.m., be on time even though some committees do not run on time. If you are not there when the bill is heard, you have missed your chance.

Linda Siegle, registered lobbyist in New Mexico since 1992, specializing in representing non-profits, schools and health care associations, noted the following:

One definition of a "lobbyist" is "The person you hire to protect you from the people you elect."

First, pick a sponsor who cares about the issue/knowledge. If it's a money bill, find a legislator who is on House Appropriations or Senate Finance. Be careful of personality conflicts, though: you don't want your bill carried by a committee member that the chair dislikes!

You can draft a bill or use a model bill from another state, but only a legislator can sponsor a bill.

New Mexico Legislative Council Service -- non-partisan legislative service agency. Legislative Council Service staff are responsible for handling all bill drafting requests that come from members of the Legislature.

Legislative Council Service also provides staff for interim committees, which meet from May to December. There are standing members and advisory (nonvoting) members on Interim Committees and the meetings are held around the state as budget allows.

Standard practice now is to introduce a bill in one house and then ask someone from the other house to "sign on." In the past, identical or similar bills would come up in both houses.

Don't expect a bill to pass the first year. Siegle worked on the NM Human Rights Act, which took 13 years to pass!

Don't wait until day 29 of 60 to introduce a



Linda Siegle

Lobbying Workshop

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bill. It will probably be too late to get through.

After key witnesses speak at committee hearings, it is time for public comment. Often the committee chair will ask how many in the room are for and against a bill. Be prepared to identify yourself and speak. Be concise and get your point out there!

The House hears bills in order. In the Senate, your bill can be number 3 one day and number 54 the next. In the House, the speaker assigns bills to committees; in the Senate, there's a more structured process.

If a bill from one body is amended by the other, the original body may ask the second to "recede" any amendments they don't like. If amendments by the second are OK, there will be a conference to finalize the wording.

Once a bill passes both the Senate and the House, it goes to the Governor. If it gets to her before the last three days, she has three days to sign it or veto it. If it gets to her in those last three days, she has twenty days. So you want to get your bill on her desk for signature before the last three days.

Questions

Schedules and agendas are posted on www.nmlegis.gov. The Legislative switchboard number is 1-505 986-4300. You can call to speak to your representative or senator or find out from the legislative aide of a committee chair whether a bill on an agenda is still scheduled to be heard that day and how the committee is doing on the schedule.

Pick up the 2013 Legislative Almanac (not available yet). The governor's switchboard is 505-467-2200.

Hall does not like memorials. There used to be a lot of memorials instructing agencies to study this and that, but those are becoming less common. He will sponsor one type -- the "X" Day Memorial. The rest are just feel-good recognition and a waste a lot of time. Wirth agrees, although he mentioned a worthy one from last year -- HM4 (Mimi Stewart) "EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT RULING IN CITIZENS UNITED V. FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION."

Hall, Sources of Model Legislation -- : ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council) -- Conservative CSG (Council of State Governments) or CSG West, which focuses on issues facing the Western states, such as mining, problems of distance, and water

NCSL (National Conference of State Legislatures)-Objective. Ed. Note --See also SLLF (State Legislative Leaders Foundation). Further info on all at <http://truth-out.org/news/item/9033-subverting-the-statehouse-uncovering-the-other-alecs>

Wirth -- Bring your model or draft legislation, but know that you'll be meeting with LCS staff (with or without your senator or representative) to draft the actual bill, and it WILL change. New Mexico is unique.

Hall -- Look at the analysis of similar bills in previous years. That will give you the supporters and opponents. Very important!

Other:

LWVNM is planning its priorities for the 2013 sixty-day Legislative Session. If you are a League member, you can sign up to be on the LWV Action email distribution list and Action phone calls. See Action page for the latest details or write leaders@lwvnm.org. <http://www.lwvnm.org/>

Local League news

League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico Shelly Shepherd and Sandra Browne, Co-Presidents

The major focus of LWVCNM in October and November was the publication of the *Voters' Guide* for the 2012 General Election, and fundraising efforts to support the costs of printing. We cannot thank the volunteers and contributors enough for their hard work and dedication to LWVCNM. Contributions to the Education Fund were extremely generous, and we deeply appreciate your contributions. Whether large or small, they added up and enabled LWVCNM to again print and distribute 50,000 copies of the 2012 General Election *Voters' Guide*.

We want to give special recognition to LWVCNM Editors Judith Binder and Andrea Targhetta, LWVNM Editor Meredith Machen, Webmaster Cheryl Haaker, Spanish Page Translator Christine Nelson, Bonds and Ballot Issues Researcher Karen Wentworth, and Distribution Coordinator Marilyn Fifield. Of the many individuals who assisted in many ways, I want to particularly thank Nadine Allen, Peggy Beaupre, Alice Brasfield, Jan Bray, Pati Brummett, Sallie Cervera, Linda Cotton, Sterling Fluharty, Janet Ford, Bob Ford, Lisa Franzen, Karen Gatlin, Diane Goldfarb, Joyce Greer, Pam Harris, Donna Hill, Peggy Howell, Ida Humphrey, Marilyn Hunter-Torburn, Leah Inghram, Janice Kondo, Margaret Krahenbuhl, Sonia Lersten, Richard Mason, Marilyn Morgan, Judy Morgan, Judy Orrell, Jane Peterson, Josephine Porter, Gayle Prinkey, Gary Shepherd, Mary Smith, Virginia Stephens, Laura Stokes, Marjorie Swartz, Dee Trestor, Carol Tucker Trelease, Helen Wright, Bernard Zak and many others who helped with the distribution.

As many members are aware, the Secretary of State's Office directed all county clerks to remove all copies of the *Voters' Guide* from the early voting sites, stating it could be considered "campaigning" or "electioneering." Not only

League members, but many non-league members have expressed dismay and alarm over this decision. Many individuals have indicated that they rely on the *Voters' Guide* being available at early voting sites, because the publication provides nonpartisan voter information that they know is neutral and nonpartisan. The statutes the Secretary of State cited to us were 1-6-5 (L), which prohibits electioneering in the county clerk's office or in alternate voting locations, and 1-20-16 (B), which states "Electioneering includes the display or distribution of signs or campaign literature, campaign buttons, t-shirts, hats, pins or other such items and includes the verbal or electronic solicitation of votes." These statutes do not apply in any way to our *Voters' Guide*. The LWVCNM has provided general election guides in early voting locations in Bernalillo County continuously since 2006, and in earlier years as well. Up until now, there haven't been issues or complaints about the *Voters' Guides* being there. The LWVNM is pursuing correcting this situation so that it will not occur in future elections.

Another matter of concern is that the League office was broken into sometime between the afternoon of Nov. 7 and the morning of Nov. 8. Our League computer and modem were stolen, along with other smaller items. It could have been worse. The membership data is password-protected and the membership and other information was backed up. Members need not be concerned about identity theft due to the burglary.

On a lighter note, at the request of Karen Schafer, Albuquerque Council for International Visitors, LWVCNM hosted a delegation of professional women from Bahrain, a small island country situated near the western shores of the Persian Gulf. They live in a constitutional monarchy and are interested in learning about democracy as they visited different states, including Washington D.C.

October meetings focused on Campaign Finance and November Units focused on "Where do we stand with healthcare reform?"

Local League news

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Los Alamos -- Barbara Calef, President

The LWVLA *Voters' Guide* was published in the *Los Alamos Monitor* in early October and delivered to every household in the county.

Additional copies were placed in the libraries and senior centers. We held two candidate forums in the county; the first was for the candidates for County Council, County Clerk and Charter Amendments and drew an audience of 200. The second included the candidates for New Mexico House of Representatives, Court of Appeals and Supreme Court and was also very well-attended. This year we were assisted by members of the Los Alamos High School Speech and Debate Team, who served as time-keepers and brought the microphone to audience members who wished to ask questions. The forums, recorded by our public access television station, were available on their website in the on-demand video library. Also, copies of the DVDs were placed in the library. A third forum for the candidates for U.S. House of Representatives was held in Santa Fe and co-sponsored by the Los Alamos League.

The election process ran smoothly in Los Alamos. During the early voting period, residents could vote at any one of three locations, including the Office of the County Clerk. On Election Day one could choose any of three Vote Centers (the new name for "Voting Convenience Centers"), one in White Rock and two in Los Alamos. There were no lines. Besides electing representatives at every level of government, voters approved all of the proposed Charter Amendments.

The Council is currently working on the next group of recommendations from the Charter Review Committee, with the goal to complete the project before the end of the year. At the November Lunch with a Leader program, Becky Ehler, the new County Attorney, listed the new ordinances resulting from the review. They fall into two categories: structure of government and utilities. The Department of Public Utilities (DPU) is a non-profit, publicly-owned organization that provides water, electric, natural gas and wastewater services to the community and the laboratory. Among the new

ordinances, the most controversial would permit the addition of additional services (e.g., broadband) to the responsibilities of the DPU as well as enabling the Council to remove members of the Board of Public Utilities at will. Residents will vote in March on the amendments.

Santa Fe County -- Judy Williams, President

LWVSFC has won the 2012 Piñon Award from the Santa Fe Community Foundation. The Tried and True Award is given to an organization that provides:

high quality, greatly needed services and opportunities to the community for more than ten years. As an inclusive, independent, non-partisan organization committed to civic improvement the League



Judy Williams, LWVSFC President, and Meredith Machen, LWVNM Leader, at the Santa Fe Community Foundation award ceremony.

continues to be influential and respected by people across the political spectrum." The award was presented on Oct. 9.

The *Santa Fe New Mexican* agreed to publish the League's *Voters' Guide* at no cost to the League other than an ad, and provided 3,000 copies for distribution. The other 30,000 copies were an insert in the Oct. 5 newspaper. We have worked with them in the past, but this is the first year of this agreement. The League is responsible for all of the content.

League members met with the county at the county's request to discuss the upcoming bond issues and the proposed Fire Excise Tax. At our suggestion, they have developed a Q&A on the tax. The county staff also made a presentation to the October Action and Advocacy meeting.

League members have been monitoring the proposed county Sustainable Land Development Code; we have sent letters and talked to county

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Local League news

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commissioners and staff about the importance of getting the code finalized this year.

Greater Las Cruces -- Bonnie Burn, President

The major focus that began in July and is continuing until the Nov. 6 General Election is voter education. The League, in conjunction with the NAACP, the Unitarian Universalist Action Committee, the Colonias Development Council and NM Comunidades en Acción de Fé (CAFé), mounted a county-wide voter registration effort. The League registered voters in traditional places such as high schools and retirement centers, but added Walmart and Pro's Ranch Market, a new entry in the food market industry in Las Cruces specializing in Mexican food products.

Through a memorandum of understanding with CAFé, the League will be publishing a Spanish edition of our Voters' Guide and will have access to a certified translator of Spanish. The Voters' Guide will be published in the weekly newspaper, the *Las Cruces Bulletin*, on Oct. 12.

Redistricting has added new candidates to our ballot, and some of us are finding that familiar elected officials are no longer representing us. We will be holding three candidates' forums to accommodate the large field of individuals running for office. The City of Las Cruces approved our request to hold the forums in the city council chamber. This venue gives us access to government television facilities for live broadcasts of the forums and for rebroadcasts up to election day.

Doña Ana County received a \$2 million grant from the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, an association composed of the U.S. Departments of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and the Environmental Protection Agency. This three-year award supports regional planning efforts that integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transporta-

tion and infrastructure development for the 90-mile corridor stretching from Sunland Park to Hatch. It is aptly named the Camino Real Regional Plan for Sustainable Development.

The Public Education Department held hearings in Las Cruces regarding a request from the Academic Opportunities Academy of El Paso to develop five charter schools in Las Cruces, Carlsbad, Deming, Anthony and Alamogordo. Based on our recently completed study of public education in Las Cruces, the League spoke in opposition. Currently, seven charter schools operate in Las Cruces. There was concern about the application, the wide grade coverage (1-12), and the continued commitment of the founders.

Former Senator Tom Udall and Barbara Couture, former President of New Mexico State University, hosted the annual NMSU Water Conference on Aug. 28. Over 400 people attended and listened to individuals and panel members discuss the hard choices about water that need to be made to ensure a sustainable supply in the future. League events included

* David Soules, local resident and member of the local chapter of the Wilderness Alliance, made a presentation about the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument initiative at our August 13 luncheon meeting. Through a slide presentation and exceptional photos of our area from Google Earth, we learned the history of our area and the need to conserve 600,000 acres of land in this wilderness initiative.

* Ray Powell, New Mexico Public Land Commissioner, addressed League members at the Sept. 10 luncheon. Through a slide presentation, he spoke about the work of the State Land Office.

* Sponsoring the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument by David Soules as an open public meeting on September 13.

* Welcoming the LWVNM Public Regulation Commission Study Committee to Las Cruces where our League members discussed the study and consensus.

LWVCNM consolidates units

After a lengthy discussion, the board of directors for the League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico has decided to consolidate the number of units. Currently there are four unit meetings in Albuquerque, but unusually poor attendance at the Midtown Unit, which meets at Manzano del Sol has forced a decision to close that unit.

Members who have worked to bring speakers to that unit have been discouraged by the low turnout of members and interested visitors. There has also been a relatively low turnout for the NE Heights unit, which meets at La Vida Llena, but that unit will continue to meet for the time being. Ida Humphrey is

looking for ways to increase interest and attendance at the unit.

The board is also looking for ways to increase attendance at the Evening Unit meeting. Any suggestions should be directed to Andrea Targhetta at atarghetta@comcast.net and Shelly Shepherd at shelly@shepdesigns.com

This is a difficult time for the League as some members become less active, and we look for new members to bring in new interests and concerns the League might address. The board will welcome any suggestions or ideas for ways to keep our organization vital and growing.

-- *Karen Wentworth*

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