



The

Voter September 2010

League of Women Voters
of Central New Mexico
2315 San Pedro NE, Suite F-6
Albuquerque, NM 87110
(505) 884-8441

Olin Bray
Jan Bray
Co-presidents
(505) 292-7270

Chris Burroughs
Voter Editor
(505) 822-9852

Lwvncm home page: <http://www.lwvncm.org>

2011 Legislative Session to be topic of September Unit meetings

Topics for September League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico unit meetings will focus on the 2011 New Mexico Legislative session.

Given the New Mexico budget deficit and the state action required to implement national health care reform, the 2011 Legislative session will be crucial to the future of New Mexico. In addition to the above mentioned subjects, the LWV will be advocating for ethics reform, same-day voter registration and a more objective procedure for the redistricting that will occur in 2012.

Luncheon Unit Meeting: Sept. 9, 11:45 a.m., Airport Grand Hotel

Topic & Speaker: "New Mexico Implementing Federal Health Care Reform," Katie Falls, New Mexico Secretary of Human Services. The 2011 Legislature will be making key decisions about how the federal health care reforms will be implemented and supplemented in New Mexico. The New Mexico Human Services Department will be key in advising the Legislature on this important issue.



Katie Falls

Governor Bill Richardson appointed Falls in December 2009 as the New Mexico Human Services Department Secretary. Falls was unanimously confirmed by the New Mexico Senate on Feb. 15, 2010. She serves on the Federal Health Care Reform Working Group and also chairs the New Mexico Health Care Reform Leadership Team for the

Implementation of National Health Care Reform. Falls previously served as the department's Deputy Human Services Secretary of Programs since January 2006. Prior to that she headed the Income Support Division. She previously was a senior program manager for The Technical Assistance Collaborative, Inc. In this capacity, she was also director for the New Mexico Alliance for Children with Traumatic Stress. Before that, she worked for the New Mexico Department of Health (from 1995 to 2001) where she became the Deputy Director of the Division of Health Improvement. She also worked for Navajo Indian Health Services and Albuquerque Indian Health Services from 1990 to 1995.

Before moving to New Mexico, Falls worked for the University of Virginia's Institute of Law Psychiatric and Public Policy Program. Born in Charlotte, N.C., she earned her BA at Erskine College in S.C. She also earned a graduate degree

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September Calendar

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|--------------|------------------------------|
| September 2 | Board meeting, 5:30 p.m. |
| September 5 | <i>Voter</i> deadline |
| September 9 | Luncheon meeting, 11:45 a.m. |
| September 14 | Evening Unit, 6 p.m. |
| September 20 | Midtown Unit, 1:30 p.m. |
| September 27 | Heights Unit, 10 a.m. |

**League of Women Voters of
Central New Mexico
Board Meeting
1st Thursday of each month
Offices of Sutin, Thayer & Brown,
6565 Americans Parkway NE**

Program Committees

Fair Representation Committee

Cheryl Haaker (298-7415)

Drug Policy

Delores Watkins (823-2308)

Natural Resources

Includes transportation, land use, air quality, water, and energy

All League members are invited to all unit meetings, committee and board meetings.

The *Voter* is published on partially-recycled paper each month by the League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico.

Chuck Quinn passes

We are saddened to announce the passing of League member Charles (Chuck) Quinn. He had an inquisitive mind and was interested in a great variety of policy issues at both local and national levels. He was a generous supporter of the *Voters' Guide* and other League activities. Our condolences go to his wife Terry and family.

Chuck died July 22. He was born in Trenton N.J. on April 23, 1928. After graduating from Dickinson College, he joined the Marine Corps and served in the Korean War, followed by a career at the Department of Energy. He is survived by his wife Terry; son, Michael; daughter, Bridget; son-in-law, Stuart Cataldo; grandchildren, Justin Aedan and Catherine Cataldo; and sister, Barbara Marciante. He is also survived by stepchildren, Anne Rubin, Christine Kamm, and David Billing and their children.

Pain Management Committee

There will be no meeting in September. September is Pain Awareness Month, and special activities are being held throughout the month. One way you can keep up on special information and participate in awareness activities to go to painfoundation.org and join. -- *Dee Watkins, Chair*

Presidents' Corner

This column addresses two issues. First, it summarizes the self assessment results from our board strategic planning workshop last March. Second, it describes some of the privatization issues for the new national study. We also want to find out who is interested in participating in such a study.

Strategic planning workshop

Part of our strategic planning workshop in March was a self-assessment of what we were doing well and what we needed to improve. We continue to do well growing our membership from about 325 to almost 350. However, we still have a problem attracting younger and more diverse members. We are effective at our core functions – voter services and getting out the *Voters' Guide*, the *Voter*, and *Who's Who* and distributing them. We also seem to be effective at teaming with other organizations that support our positions, thus leveraging our effectiveness. The Drug Policy Study Committee is still going strong, but we have trouble getting any other studies started. Cheryl is doing an outstanding job with our website, and we have over 250 members on our LWVCNMTOPICS listserv. However, given additional things we would like to do with the site, it would be too much for one person so we are talking about a web committee to help. We have talked about putting up more content, such as meeting summaries, presentations from our luncheon speakers and perhaps observer/liaison reports. We think that more effective use of the web, facebook and other electronic and social media would also help us attract more younger members.

Although our membership is growing, like many Leagues we are still having difficulty getting many members involved and participating and taking on leadership positions. (We are doing a survey to help determine how active our members want to be, so we are not planning based on incorrect or unreasonable expectations. To participate, go to www.lwv.org/surve.) A handful of very active people are doing a lot of the work, but we don't want to burn them out. Our new member social is one way for our board to get to know the new members and try to find things they are interested in and how they want to participate. Although there are term limits on various offices, this issue was raised about term limits for the board, regardless of position, as a way to get more new people on the board.

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Step into the Chronicles of LWV in New Mexico

For the curious among us, take time to investigate the nearly 30 boxes of League History available at the University of New Mexico Zimmerman Library's Center for Southwest Research Special Collections. Check the scrapbooks filled with newspaper clippings compiled by the League of Women Voters of New Mexico, Albuquerque, Gallup, Roswell, Los Alamos and Las Cruces. It's a regular treasure trove of the many issues studied by the League (or of which the League had taken an official position) and includes photographs of League events, pamphlets, correspondence and commemorative programs.

The information is divided into several categories, including administrative, local Leagues, program and League positions. You can find the usual data from Annual Reports to workshops, along with information from the 50th and 75th anniversary celebrations.

The series on local Leagues is arranged alphabetically by location and covers all parts of the state, including Alamogordo, Grants, Gallup, Roswell, Las Vegas, Belen/Valencia, Farmington, Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Tucumcari. Follow the correspondence, minutes and publications and listen to the CD of Governor Jack Campbell's speech to the Roswell League on Sept. 10, 1963 relating to the New Mexico

Constitution and Constitutional Revision Commission.

Over the years, League members formed positions on campaign finance reform, the New Mexico constitution, drug policy, election reform, four-year terms and the New Mexico Equal Rights Amendment. They/we studied collective bargaining, daycare, D.W.I., education, finance, health care, human resources, Indians, international relations, taxation, natural resources, urban issues, welfare and women's issues. They/we practiced voter service, wrote Know Your State & Local Government and a pamphlet on how to choose good child care.

Among the positions supported by the LWVNM was the drive to change the outdated New Mexico Constitution. Although the idea received much support statewide and a Constitutional Convention was called in 1968, the proposed constitution was not ratified. Other issues actively supported by the League have been jury duty for women, the absentee ballot, four-year terms for the governor, a state personnel system based on merit, mandatory kindergarten and expansion of services for troubled children.

League members can be especially proud of their attention to detail. Their efforts -- along with others throughout the state -- truly improved the lives of the citizens of New Mexico. *-- Judith Binder*

New Mexico Broadband and Smart Grid Summit draws more than 300 people

Communication has changed so much over the past 30 years. Most of us are now getting our news and information about what is going on in the world via the Internet using broadband technology. We are using it to find jobs and communicate to friends. But sadly, parts of New Mexico are still lagging because the technology hasn't reached them.

On Aug. 16 Senators Jeff Bingaman and Tom Udall served as moderators of two panels at the New Mexico Broadband and Smart Grid Summit held at the Moriarty Civic Center. More than 300 people attended from throughout the state, many of them from technologically underserved rural areas.

Udall led the first panel session, titled "Wiring New Mexico for the Future," and Bingaman led the second, titled "Bringing Broadband to Energy -- Smart Grid in New

Mexico." Discussions compared bringing broadband to rural areas to the electrification of those same areas in the mid-1930s and 1940s. New Mexico is working to overcome digital divide challenges and harness broadband technologies to promote economic growth, education and healthcare delivery, especially in rural communities.

The smart grid is equally as important. It is a method of using different types of electric generation, from coal powered plants to alternative energy, to ensure that power sources go uninterrupted. New Mexico is becoming a leader in smart grid technology, largely due to collaborations between its universities, utility companies and the two national laboratories.

I believe these issues of bringing broadband to our state and smart grid are of great concern and should be monitored closely by the League.

-- Chris Burroughs

September Units

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from Smith College in MA.

The cost of the luncheon is \$17, payable at the door. Reservations must be called into the League office at 884-8441 by Tuesday, Sept. 7 at 9 a.m.

Evening Unit, Sept. 14, 6 p.m., Erna Ferguson Library, 3700 San Mateo Blvd. NE, Albuquerque

Topic & speaker: Budget Issues in the 2011 Legislature. Nick Estes, policy analyst for New Mexico Voices for Children and the Better Choices for New Mexico campaign. Estes graduated from Harvard Law in 1972 and has been an assistant U.S. Attorney, a trial attorney for the Justice Department, an assistant attorney for the City of Albuquerque and staff attorney for the New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty. In the 2010 Legislature, the LWV was an active member of the Better Choices for New Mexico campaign that advocated that the Legislature consider new revenue enhancements, versus only drastic cuts in vital programs, as a way of dealing with the budg-

Technology Treats

Membership Survey Online! A brief survey has been prepared where members can indicate their interests, desired level of participation and skills. Just go to www.lwvcnm.org/survey.

Just Give. Don't forget the "Contribute!" button on the League's website. You can make secure credit card contributions to the League's Education Fund via the Just Give website. Three percent of your contributions are deducted as a transaction fee. Remember, with the *Voters' Guide* coming out this fall, the Ed Fund needs all the help it can get. And -- it's deductible.

Keep up with the Jones's. As the fall election comes closer, there will be a lot of debates, forums, town halls, and other events. Keep up with the schedule by signing onto the LWVCNM Topics list serve. Go to www.lwvcnm.org/news.html#list-serve and click on "subscribe" link.

The Voter is Online again! Just go to www.lwvcnm.org/newsletters.html to see all the latest issues, thanks to editor Chris Burroughs. -- *Cheryl Haaker*

et shortfall. This battle will only become more intense in 2011 given the projected revenue shortfall.

Midtown Unit, Sept. 20, 1:30 p.m., Manzano del Sol, Hobby Room, 5201 Roma NE

Topic & speaker: Albuquerque Election, Campaign Financing and Ethics legislation in the 2011 Legislature. Josephine Porter, First Vice President of the LWVCNM and long-time activist on these issues will give a preview of key issues in these areas that may be dealt with in the session.

Northeast Heights Unit, Sept. 27, 10 a.m. La Vida Llena Card Room, 10501 Lagrima de Oro Road, NE.

Topic & speaker: Dick Mason, chair of the Action Committee of the LWV of New Mexico will preview the LWV key issues in the 2011 Legislature. They will include implementing health care reform and advocating for new revenue to offset budget deficits.

Editor's Note: The Sandoval Unit has been temporarily disbanded until the board of directors gauges interest from members. The unit has been poorly attended over the past year.



Steven Robert Allen, executive director of Common Cause New Mexico, addresses the LWVCNM Luncheon Unit on Aug. 12. He talked about campaign financing and reviewed the U.S. Supreme Court decision that removes limits on corporate and business contributions to political campaigns.

(Photo by Cheryl Haaker)

Office training session set

All League members wishing to become LWVCNM office staff members should attend the training session on Sept. 10 at 1:30 p.m. at the League office. Also invited are Board members who haven't previously attended such a session for informational purposes and any present staff members who would like a refresher. Diane Goldfarb and Meg Wentz will present the office procedures. The office is located at 2315 San Pedro NE, Suite F-6 at the northern end of the building at the NW corner of Indian School and San Pedro. Please call Meg at 299-5274 if you plan to attend, so that we can have sufficient copies of the newly revised Office Procedures manual. The session usually takes a little over an hour.

Presidents' Corner

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There was also discussion of a marketing committee to help increase our visibility within the community. This is especially important as we expand to a multi-county League. It would also help with our recruitment and fundraising.

Privatization national study

The second topic is the national study on privatization. Privatization involves letting businesses provide some of the functions normally done by government. However, the line dividing government and business functions is shifting and is not as clear as it once was. All levels of government are considering if and what to privatize and how to do it. The specific issues also vary depending on the function and the level of government. In some cases, privatization involves simply letting business begin to provide a function that a government organization was previously providing. In other cases, it may involve transferring or selling of significant infrastructure (e.g. roads, bridges, utilities, or even airports) to a company and having them maintain the infrastructure and provide the services.

In many cases today, privatization decisions seem to be driven primarily by economics and political ideology. Rather than raise taxes or issue bonds to build and/or maintain infrastructure, governments are making a decision to privatize it and let a company worry about financing it. However, the company usually faces the same decision to raise revenue and charges (user fees) or to let the infrastructure decay. In some cases the company may find additional revenue streams to tap, but in

other cases it simply has to issue bonds at a higher rate than the government and it has to include a profit, so the same work may be done at a higher price. Privatization can often have a number of hidden external costs and benefits, which if not accounted for can distort the ultimate economic decisions.

Although the study scope is still being defined, certain issues will have to be covered. First, what services are or are not appropriate for privatization? For example, you probably do not want to privatize the military and national security, although specific functions may be appropriate for privatization. Business is driven by profit and loss, whereas government services usually have other performance metrics and economics only determines efficiency not the importance or value of the services. Second, if a service is to be privatized, what terms and conditions should be included in the contract? For example, should a minimum level of service and infrastructure maintenance be specified, with the understanding that the service and infrastructure revert to the government if these levels are not met. However, even with these conditions it is usually very difficult to reverse a privatization decision.

For LWVCNM the question is do we want to participate in this privatization study and if so how? If we participate, we will need a local committee. We can address the broader national privatization issues or focus primarily at the local level in the CNM area. For example, focusing on private water and waste disposal services. Please let us know if you are interested in participating in this study and how you think we should address it.

-- Olin and Jan Bray

Membership renewal starts soon

Our annual membership fees run from October 1 through September 31st each year. We are gathering information and gearing up to mail out all current members their renewal notices. They will arrive early September. Please call the office now to update your current address, phone and email information if it has changed, in order that we don't get a lot of returned mail. We have been receiving returned League mail and must pay a fee to the post office. This bites into our League monies. Please also consider an additional donation to the Operating Fund. The League appreciates your continued membership.

-- Andrea Targhetta

Membership report

Member address changes:

Donna and John L. Hill
10501 Lagrima de Oro NE Apt 4209 87111
(Same phone)

Dean S. Smith
8100 Central Ave. SE #104 87108-2405

Drug Policy Study Committee

Drug Policy Study Committee continues outreach efforts to educate the community about how to manage pain. One way -- and the most common way -- is with analgesics. Regulations to reduce misuse and abuse of drugs is ongoing, especially with the Food and Drug Administration. This agency is "implementing strategies to reduce preventable harm from suboptimal use, misuse and abuse of such drugs as NSAIDS, Acetaminophen, opioids and other drugs for pain."

A policy for developing how to manage the risks of these drugs is still open for your input. If you would like ongoing information about what has been developed and when you can write about your experience, call 823-2308 or go to: <http://www.painfoundation.org/take-action/natl-efforts/remis>.

This committee will be distributing information at events such as the August Conference on Aging. Learn about possible pain following shingles, treatment of low back pain and how to talk with your healthcare professionals. Contact a committee member for handout. -- *Dee Watkins*

Plans for electronic *Voter* continues

The LWVCNM Board continues to move forward with the adoption of an all-electronic *Voter* that would go to members via email and be placed on the League's website.

During the month of September, all members will be called by the Board to determine who has email and access to the web and who does not. The Board will request an up-to-date email address of members where the *Voter* can be sent. For those people who do not have email, the Board will come up with a way to make sure all members receive the *Voter*, whether that means mailing it to them at the expensive nonbulk mail rate or hand delivering it. The *Voter* is a privilege of membership, and all members will continue to receive it.

The Board wants to make this move because printing and mailing the *Voter* costs nearly \$4,000 a year -- about 15 percent of the operating fund budget (\$3,840 out of \$26,687 for 2009-2010). If we electronically distribute the *Voter*, we could eliminate most of that cost. Just think of the studies and other work we could do with that added income. Most organizations have shifted to electronic distribution and are happy with the results. -- *Chris Burroughs*

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