

League of Women Voters
of Central New Mexico
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The Voter

League of Women Voters of
Central New Mexico
June 2013

LWVCNM homepage: <http://www.lwvcnm.org>

UNM President to Speak at June 13 General Meeting

University of New Mexico President Robert Frank will speak at the general meeting on June 13 at 11:45 a.m. at the MCM Elegante Hotel, 2020 Menaul N.E.

Frank will discuss UNM's economic development activities. UNM is working with the City of Albuquerque to locate a property to develop as a center for start-up businesses. Frank and Albuquerque Mayor R.J. Berry are working to find a way to allow UNM to become much more actively involved in economic development. Frank is also working on a long range plan called UNM 2020 to chart the future of UNM.

Frank has been president of UNM since January 2012. He holds three degrees from UNM,



Robert Frank

including a doctorate in clinical psychology. He lives on the UNM campus with his wife Janet, and two dogs Bailey and Lobo.

The cost of the lunch is \$15. Please telephone your reservation to the League office by 10 a.m. June 10 at (505) 884-8441 or email a reservation to lunch@lwvcnm.org.



The 2013-15 LWVCNM board poses for a picture at the May 4 Annual Meeting. Andrea Targhetta was elected president. See page 4 to read more about the meeting.

Calendar Planning Set for June 8

All league members are encouraged to attend calendar planning on June 8. We will meet at 10 a.m. at Highland Senior Center, 131 Monroe St NE. This is one of the most important meetings of the year for league members because we will plan our program for the next year.

If there is any issue you think the league should consider over the next year, please come to the meeting so we can discuss it. There are many things we should be learning more about, but we need your help to keep our priorities straight. See you there!

-- Karen Wentworth

June Calendar

June 6	Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
June 8	Calendar Planning, 10 a.m.
June 13	General Meeting, 11:45 a.m.

**League of Women Voters of
Central New Mexico
Board Meeting**

**1st Thursday of each month
Offices of Sutin, Thayer & Browne,
6565 Americas Parkway NE**

Program Committees

Drug Policy

Jan Bray

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. It is also distributed via email.

NM Mental Health Study

Delegates of the League of Women Voters State Convention voted unanimously on May 19 to approve LWVCNM's proposal of a thorough study of Mental Health Services currently available in all counties of New Mexico. As mentioned in previous articles in the May *Voter* and *La Palabra*, mental illness has become a major area of discussion among the public, government and mental health professionals in the wake of recent shootings and other violence across the state and country. Due to the fact that most of the mental health services are concentrated in a few more highly populated areas of the state, rural areas have few or no services. Funding is changing with the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. It is uncertain what the effect will be on mental health care.

Jan Bray and I (Shelly Shepherd) will be leading the study. Both Jan and I have served as president of LWVCNM and have held numerous other positions and participated in studies over many years, and I have over 30 years in the field of providing mental health care and evaluation. Jan and I are looking for interested people to join in this important study. If you are interested in the study or would like to participate, please contact Jan Bray (292-7270) or me (296-1238). We believe this study will provide the League with invaluable information on the issue and enhance our current position on mental health.

-- Shelly Shepherd

Presidents' Corner

By Andrea Targhetta, LWVCNM President

It is exciting to be your president for the next two years. Collaboration is the glue that enables us to educate ourselves and the public concerning issues we all care about. Our annual business meeting went quite well. We always look forward to the buffet afterwards, gathering with friends, and hearing the speaker. Chief Ray Schultz spoke to us on reducing violence in Albuquerque. He also gave us a glance at all the new, exciting technologies and programs initiated in the APD

Below are remarks I made during the meeting:

"I'm always in awe at the talent and experience I see every time this League is assembled. Each of you has a wealth of knowledge which has contributed to the strength of this organization. Your continued support is vital -- not just your financial support, but the support of your time and talent. We may not be experts, but together we DO make a difference. When we act as a team, it enhances our efforts and displays our determination to make a positive impact on our democracy. YOU are the core; you ARE this organization. All of us are stewards of the gifts and opportunities we're presented. It takes more than a few involved members to make a better community. I am asking all of you to please consider volunteering for at least one undertaking this year. If the state approves them a convention, take part in the two proposed new studies (Mental Health and Judicial Update). We need people to gather governmental information and proofread our publications. We always need assistance with our legislative receptions, candidate forums, and panel discussions. There is always a need in fundraising and contacting donors. These are small but important tasks, and put together it weaves commitment to promote political responsibility."

Our New Mexico State Convention was held on May 18-19 in Las Cruces last month. We will have a summary for you in the next *Voter*. Our delegates were Jan and Olin Bray, Shelly Shepherd, Marilyn Fifield, Judith Binder, Margaret Magee, Mary Wilson and myself.

The 2013 Municipal *Voters' Guide* will be published by the first of September and the Question Committee will be starting soon. We are looking for members who are interested in forming questions for the candidates of each race. This is a lively group that will discuss the current issues concerning the public and ask questions which inform as well as educate. It's fun! Call the office if you wish to participate or call Josephine Porter directly. I hope you all have a great summer. Don't forget, there will be no regular unit meetings as we only have General Luncheon meetings during June, July and August. Those luncheons will have some very interesting speakers which will be announced in upcoming *Voters*. Come and ask your usual great questions!

Book Review – *The Great Inversion and the Future of the American City*

Editor's Note: Book Review -- This review of an important public policy book is a regular feature in the Voter.

By Olin Bray, Author of ebook, *Political Incompetence: What's Wrong With Our System and How To Fix It*

The Great Inversion and the Future of the American City, Alan Ehrenhalt, 2012, Alfred A Knopf, 276 pages.

Urban policy is important since most of the population is in the cities and the cities are a major economic and social driver for what happens in the country. Historically, there have been three major demographic movements – to the west to settle the country, from the farms to the cities, and finally from the cities to the suburbs. Ehrenhalt says that for about the last two decades there has been another unrecognized shift – from the suburbs back to the cities. Conventional wisdom, which is often the basis for policy (frequently bad policy), is that the central cities have few residents (and most of those are poor and minorities), bad schools, and usually poor and declining infrastructure and services. Ehrenhalt sees what he calls inversion as a major shift. It is far more than just the gentrification of a few neighborhoods and the displacement of their current, often poor residents. He looks at a number of cities (Chicago, New York, Atlanta, Cleveland, Washington, Philadelphia, Houston, Phoenix, Charlotte, and Denver) to show what is happening. The details are different, but he sees inversion occurring in most of the successful cities. He defines a successful, livable city/neighborhood as one with residents, jobs, and entertainment in a safe walkable environment where there are a lot of people and activities on the street most of the time. He ties this type of environment to the one Richard Florida says attracts the new “creative class” which is a major economic driver wherever they choose to live. For example, pre-2000 there were only a few thousand residents in New York’s financial district (lower Manhattan), now there are well over 100,000 in a lot of new upscale apartments and condos and converted office space made available by the cutbacks in and flight of many financial jobs.

He describes efforts by some cities that did not have a real downtown to try to develop one and attract people to it. Charlotte’s efforts have been far more successful than Phoenix’s. Houston seems to be developing a number of urban centers with their own “downtown” environment and culture. The level of cooperation or competition among a metropolitan area’s suburbs can affect the success of such efforts.

He explains the dilemma of many first ring suburbs. There has been a lot of federal and state aid to the center cities. The newer, wealthier exurbs don’t need any help. The older, inner suburbs are seeing their infrastructure beginning to need repair and/or replacement while many of their higher income families are moving further out to the newer exurbs. However, there is little or no aid for these inner, first ring suburbs. In some cases urban sprawl, poor transit, and traffic congestion may save them. As part of the “Great Inversion” many people are willing to trade big houses and lots, high home prices, and long commutes for less space close to jobs and activities and shorter commutes. Moving directly into new center city residences can be expensive. These first ring of suburbs are making a comeback in some cities, especially where they still have good transit into downtown.

Part of what is driving these population shifts is job relocation. Most manufacturing and polluting jobs have moved or are moving out of the cities leaving behind many higher quality jobs, which are helping to attract middle and upper income people back into the cities. He has data on the number of jobs being created 10 or more miles outside of cities.

Ehrenhalt has a lot of good data and examples. You may not agree with him, but he does provide food for thought. Even if he is only partly right, it suggests that we need to rethink some of our urban policies and the assumptions on which they are based. My main problem with the book is that it is more descriptive than analytical, but he is an award winning journalist, not a political scientist. Nevertheless for policy it would be useful to know which patterns or initial conditions are more likely to lead to which results.

Annual Meeting held May 4

LWVCNM Annual Meeting was held May 4, 2013 at the MCM Elegante. There were 32 voting members and 3 guests present. Margaret Magee, our new Administrative Coordinator, was introduced. A moment of silence was given by Sandra Browne to honor long time League members Louise Prowell and Marjorie Holmes, who passed away recently.

Two changes to the local positions were adopted. Regarding Education, the addition of specific language to the "Emphasis on basic skills" sentence of the Local Position, specifically that the language "STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics)" be inserted after the words "Ongoing technical developments" and before the words "Identification of children at risk" was adopted. Regarding the Health Care Local position, the word "comprehensive" was added after the words "health care" and before the words "LWVCNM supports" was adopted.

In 2012 a two year budget was adopted.

The Board of Directors of the LWVCNM reviewed the budget and did not recommend any revisions to the 2013-2014 budget. Dick Mason presented a Treasurer's report. LWVCNM in in good financial standing.

The membership voted to not change the dues for the fiscal year 2013-2014. The dues will remain \$60.00 for the first household member and \$30.00 for each additional household member. Election of Officers, Directors and the Nominating Committee were held. Andrea Targhetta was elected President, Carol Tucker Trelease was elected 1st Vice President, Peggy Howell was elected 2nd Vice President/Membership, and Shelly Shepherd was elected 4th Vice President. Sonia Lersten was elected Secretary, Jan Bray was elected Director, Community Education, and Brenda McKenna was elected Director. Sandra Browne, Helen Wright and Pati Brummett were elected for the 2014 Nominating Committee.

-- Shelly Shepherd



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