

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO

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May 2016

## The VOTER

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### **US Senator Tom Udall to address the LWVCNM Annual Meeting Brunch**

US Senator Tom Udall will present “Campaign Finance Reform and March 2016 Legislation” to the League of Women Voters of Central

New Mexico during the May Annual Meeting Brunch on Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 am, at the MCM Elegante (2020 Menaul Blvd NE).

LWVUS established the current national Campaign Finance Position January 1974 with March 1982 revision. LWVCNM completed the Money in Politics (MIP) Consensus activity 2015, initiated by July 2015 MIP Background and Overview presented by Dr. Jeanne Logsdon, LWVUS MIP Committee, and followed by October Study Committee formation and review of LWVUS MIP documentation with November 2015 LWVCNM membership Consensus Meeting. LWVUS is tabulating MIP Consensus results from all local LWVs during April 2016 and the LWVUS Campaign Finance Position Revision is forthcoming.

Senator Udall has been extensively involved with Campaign Finance Reform/MIP. While representing the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District of NM in the US House of Representatives, Congressman Udall introduced Campaign Finance reform legislation. The recent US Supreme Court decision on the Citizens’ United case changed the landscape for permissible political contributions/Money in Politics. Senator Udall introduced a Constitutional Amendment to overturn the Citizens’ United decision.

On Super Tuesday, March 1, 2016, Senator Udall introduced the Federal Election Administration Act abolishing the current Federal Election Commission (FEC) and establishing a replacement agency – Federal Election Administration (FEA) with five members appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. This new legislation is consistent with the prior bipartisan McCain-Feingold legislation and the proposed bipartisan FEA would consist of a Chairman and two appointees from each party.

In 1990, Udall was elected New Mexico Attorney General. In 1998, Udall was elected to represent the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District of New Mexico in the U.S. House of Representatives. In the House, he wrote and passed legislation to establish a national renewable electricity standard, which would spur the creation of good jobs, reinvigorate our economy, and reduce global warming emissions. He co-founded the Congressional International Conservation Caucus, which is now the second largest caucus in the U.S. Congress and has continued as the co-chair of this caucus in the Senate. He began serving as United States Senator in 2009 and was re-elected to the U.S. Senate in 2014, and is now New Mexico's senior senator. Senator Udall serves on five Senate committees: Appropriations, Foreign Relations, Commerce, Indian Affairs, and Rules and Administration. As a member of the powerful Appropriations Committee, Senator Udall has a voice in federal funding for departments, agencies and other programs. With its labs, military bases and public lands, New Mexico has a large federal presence. Through the Rules Committee, Udall is working to reform government and Congress, continuing his commitment to a more open, transparent government that can work together to get things done

**The VOTER**  
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## MAY 2016

**Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>**

### **Annual Meeting**

9-9:30a.m. Registration

9:30-11:30 a.m. Business Meeting

11:30 a.m. Brunch

MCM Elegante Hotel Albuquerque

2020 Menaul NE

**Monday, May 2nd 10:00am Luncheon Reservation Deadline**

*US Senator continued from page 1..*

for the American people.

Born in Tucson, Arizona, Udall earned his undergraduate degree at Prescott College and obtained a Bachelor of Laws Degree from Cambridge University in 1975. He graduated from the University of New Mexico Law School in 1977. Udall then served as a Law Clerk to Chief Justice Oliver Seth of the U.S. Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals and became a federal prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's criminal division. As Chief Counsel to the New Mexico Department of Health and Environment, he also fought for stronger environmental and health protections. Senator Udall is married to Jill Cooper, who is a former attorney and a long-time advocate for the arts. They have one grown daughter, Amanda, and live in Santa Fe.

## Thank You

For at least 15 years, the Board of Directors have met in the law offices of Sutin, Thayer, and Browne in Uptown. We have had the most wonderful, quiet location in the city. We met at 5:30 p.m. on the 10<sup>th</sup> floor after all the offices were closed for the day and enjoyed a view of the city most people do not get to see at night.

Our past President Sandra Browne and her daughter Anne Browne generously gave us permission to use the conference room in their firm. They have scheduled our meetings each year and made accommodations many times when we have asked for changes to our routine.

Sadly due to new security measures for the building by the owners, we now are seeking a new location for our meetings. If any of you know of a place we might hold our meetings, please call any board member with your suggestions. Let's all brain storm and come up with a great new place. All members are invited to attend any board meeting, so think of a place we might fit around 15 people. **THANK YOU SANDRA AND ANNE.** We are really grateful for your gift.

## **Honoring Our History**

A new twenty-dollar bill will be printed next year with not only the face of the very first woman to be so honored, but this woman was a former slave. This is a tremendous act of respect by the U.S. government for the many contributions she made. Harriet Ross Tubman was born 100 years before women received the right to vote, yet at the age of 78, she became one of the women who helped to move the right to vote forward.

Tubman was more widely known for her courage as an abolitionist saving slaves through the Underground Railroad. Since there were fugitive slave laws passed requiring slaves to be returned to their owners, she and others risked their own lives to help these runaways. Many homes would hide slaves along a whole system of secret routes in northern U. S. and Canada.

When the Civil War began, Harriet did her part for the Union. She helped recruit African Americans to fight, and she also became a spy for the North. After the Emancipation Proclamation, she went back home to New York where she became a strong supporter of women's suffrage sharing her experiences. She believed in equality for all. Harriet Tubman passed away at the age of 93.

## **BERNALILLO COUNTY (BERNCO) HOME RULE ON THE BALLOT IN NOVEMBER**

Under legislation passed in the 2015 session, The Urban County Charter Commission of Bernalillo County was established to revise the County Charter basing it on a Home Rule model. Such a Charter will provide more flexibility in the management of the County, lower costs for taxpayers, and introduce administrative efficiencies. The Urban County Charter Commission, a seven-person panel with five members appointed by County Commissioners and two at-large members--is meeting every two weeks to complete a revised County Charter by early August. The Urban County Charter Commission Chair is Randy Autio, former County Chief Legal Counsel. Dede Feldman, a former four-term NM State Senator from the North Valley, is the Vice Chair.

At this time BERNCO operates under state laws which have not been efficient. For example, the City of Albu

querque under home rule can procure items such as police cars/garbage trucks in about six weeks while the County following state procedures takes about three months or twice as long. These burdensome, outdated methods and practices cost taxpayers more than is necessary. Assuming the voters approve the new Home Rule Charter at the November general election this inefficient and costly procedure should end.

It is expected that the new charter will contain a provision for Citizen Initiated changes. In addition, the County will propose changes from time to time as well. A possible change might be to increase the number of County Commissioners. First, however, the revision of the present Charter must be completed. County administrative staff will be helping the Commission understand county operations better. Further, the County elected officials other than the five County Commissioners will provide input as well.

As all LWV members know, before the General Election, the League will publish its Voters Guide with information on candidates, amendments to the State Constitution and other issues on the Ballot. This year a summary of the proposed Charter will also be included but the time available to complete this work is limited. Thus extra hands and eyes will be needed in August. Further, the Guide is likely to grow by two to four pages and more money for printing will be required. So members should consider increasing their donations to the LWV Education Fund which is tax deductible.

The major challenge for the pre-election period is sharing information on the proposed new Home Rule Charter so that voters can evaluate it before the November election. Thus, the League's Voters Guide will be very important.

## **New Member Social**

League of Women Voters Central New Mexico First VP Carol Tucker Trelease hosted a Social for about 30 members on Sunday April 17<sup>th</sup>. This included Board members as well as new members. Thanks to Sonia Lersten, Secretary for the Board, all guests were greeted at the door and provided with a name tag. Everyone had a chance to mingle and get to know one another. Membership Chair, Gail Owens, organized an informal program so current Board members and other knowledgeable leaders could provide information about League activities and answer any questions. *Continued on page 4*

### ***New Member Social continued.***

The topics covered were: volunteer work in the office (Diane Goldfarb); preparing the publication Who's Who (Margaret Krahenbuhl); preparing and distributing the Voters' Guide (Jo Porter); the tote bag acquired by our PR Director, Brenda McKenna, to which she added her native Nambe translation of the League motto *Democracy is not a spectator sport* along with English and Spanish. Gail Owens mentioned registrar training, the League presence on our website and Facebook, the annual meeting in May and the biennial National convention.

Mary Wilson, past National League president, talked about her journey to a national office which started from her work in the League here. After hearing Mary's story, new members should be encouraged to consider the volunteer opportunities as a way to support the organization as well as get to know the larger membership. We enjoyed tasty snacks brought by Board members accompanied by tea, coffee and sherry.

### **Book Review**

#### ***Let the People Rule: Theodore Roosevelt and the Birth of the Presidential Primary***

by Geoffrey Cowan, 2016, W. W. Norton & Company, hardcover, 404 pages.

This is an interesting and timely book given our current problems and uncertainty with the presidential primaries. Will the primaries really determine the nominees or will there be one or more contested conventions?

In 1910 Oregon was the first state to enact a popular presidential primary. Previously presidential nominees were selected at national party conventions where the delegates were selected by caucuses or by party or elected officials. In many cases they went to the convention uninstructed so they could vote for anyone. The National Progressive Republican League (and many democrats) were pushing for popular primaries to "let the people rule" and take the nominating process away from the party and industrial/financial establishment. Robert LaFollette of Wisconsin was leading the progressive wing of the Republicans and saw primaries as the only way he could get the nomination away from President Taft, who was going to run for a second term. Initially, Roosevelt, who had been a progressive during his two

terms (1901-1908), opposed the primaries and thought the party establishment would give him the nomination because many thought that re-nominating Taft would be a disaster. However, by 1911 many progressives no longer considered Roosevelt progressive enough based on his actions and words since leaving office. Many in the establishment favored Roosevelt over Taft. Roosevelt's speeches won him the support of many progressives, but cost him his establishment supporters. Roosevelt then changed his mind and decided that success in the primaries were his best chance for the nomination. Alternatively, if he didn't get the nomination, his primary success would provide the basis for a third party run, which he eventually did with the Bull Moose Party and the progressives. (Roosevelt won 9 of the 13 primaries in 1912.) He contended that since he won most of the primaries, he should be the candidate, but the Republican establishment re-nominated Taft. The Republican split had the usual effect. The democrats won the election with Woodrow Wilson, who got 42 percent of the vote and 435 electoral votes, while Roosevelt got 27 percent and 88 electoral votes and Taft came in third with 23 percent and only 8 electoral votes.

The book is a fascinating look at the campaign that got us started down the presidential primary path. Roosevelt supported it less from principle than as the only tactic that gave him a chance to win in nomination. You can see similarities to today's campaign. Although the book is interesting and a good read, I would have preferred less history and a little (maybe a lot) more political science discussing how the primaries evolved and lessons we can or should have learned. Obviously, popular primaries do let the people choose, but does there need to be some additional vetting related to competence so it is not just a popularity contest? If so, how? For many years there was a popular primary, but the candidates in it were essentially selected by the party establishment which provided some quality control. Most candidates were already elected officials. Eisenhower was the notable exception, but he was strongly supported by both the public and the party establishment. As the parties weakened because of both media and campaign financing effects, the primaries have become more of a popularity contest, which leaves something to be desired in any hiring decision, especially one for president. *Olin Bray*