

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO

2315 San Pedro Drive NE, Suite F-6 ♦ Albuquerque, NM 87110-4158 ♦ 505.884.8441 ♦ www.lwvcnm.org ♦ https://www.facebook.com/LWVCNM

August 2016

## The VOTER

Volume 81 Issue 08



### LWVCNM August Program Focuses on Election Integrity

Paul Stokes will discuss election integrity and activities of United Voters of NM in his address to the

LWVCNM August General Meeting on Thursday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 11:45 am, at the MCM Elegante (2020 Menaul Blvd NE).

LWVUS requested that state and local leagues focus 2016-18 program efforts on the “**Campaign for Making Democracy Work:** Protecting Voters, Educating and Engaging Voters, Reforming Money in Politics, and Defending the Environment.” Protecting Voters includes both efforts to ensure voting rights and improve elections. LWV works to modernize our voting systems, streamline the voting process, promote transparent and accountable redistricting and make it easier for all eligible citizens to become active participants in our electoral process. In efforts to improve the voting experience, the League focuses on efforts to establish permanent and portable statewide voter registration, expand early voting, improve polling place management, expand online voter registration and implement electronic streamlining. LWV also works to ensure compliance with laws like the Voting Rights Act (VRA) and the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA).

Paul Stokes spent most of his career at Sandia National Laboratories conducting research, development and analysis of technologies for arms control compliance verification and intelligence, and later at the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, Austria, con-

ducting nuclear inspections in Iraq, and at the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization, also in Vienna, developing on-site inspection techniques.

He has been engaged in election integrity activities since the 2004 election, when he worked with national organizations to pursue a recount, followed by support for legal action to investigate the accuracy of voting machines. Since that time, as coordinator for United Voters of New Mexico, Paul has continued to work with state election officials and the Legislature to bring the uniform use of paper ballots throughout the state, and post-election audits to verify with high confidence the accuracy of election results produced by voting machines. He continues to work on Election Integrity by advocating methods to improve voter access to the polls.

*Please make reservations for the August 11th Luncheon Unit Meeting by emailing [lunch@lwvcnm.org](mailto:lunch@lwvcnm.org), or calling the LWVCNM office (884-8441) by 10:00 am Monday, August 8<sup>th</sup>. Please specify if you would like a vegetarian meal.*

**SAVE THE DATE:**  
**Women's Equality Day Celebration**  
**Friday, August 26, 2016**  
**11 AM and 1 PM**  
**Albuquerque Civic Plaza**

The VOTER  
Published Monthly  
The League of Women Voters<sup>(t)</sup> of  
Central New Mexico  
2315 San Pedro Drive NE, Suite F-6  
Albuquerque, NM 87110-  
505.884.8441  
www.lwvcnm.org  
https://www.facebook.com/LWVCNM

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**  
Carol Tucker Trelease

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President - MLD**  
Andrea Targhetta

**3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President - Programs**  
Karen Douglas

**Secretary**  
Sonia Lersten

**Treasurer**  
Jan Strand

**Director - Membership**  
Gail Owens

**Director - Fundraising**  
George Richmond

**Director - Public Relations**  
Brenda McKenna

**Director - Voter Services**  
Michelle Meaders

**Unit Coordinator**  
Judith Binder

**Technology**  
Cheryl Haaker

**Newsletter Format  
Administrative Coordinator**  
Margaret Guinn Magee  
mageelwvcnm@gmail.com

---

**Summer Office Hours**  
**August 2016**

**Monday - Wednesday - Friday**  
**10 am to Noon**

**Closed Labor Day**

## August 2016

**No LWVCNM Board meeting this month**

**Monday, August 8<sup>th</sup> 10:00 am Luncheon Reservation Deadline**

**Thursday, August 11<sup>th</sup> 11:45 am Luncheon Meeting**  
MCM Elegante Hotel Albuquerque  
2020 Menaul NE

**Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup> 11 am—1 pm Women's Equality Day**  
Albuquerque Civic Plaza

## **Women's Equality Day! (You are invited)**

Pamelya Herndon, Executive Director of the Southwest Women's Law Center here in Albuquerque, will hold an event on Friday August 26 to rejoice in Women's Equality Day. As you know, August 26, 1920 was the day the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified and women received the right to vote.

The Albuquerque Civic Plaza will be the venue for a program between 11 AM and 1 PM on Friday, August 26, 2016 and we invite everyone who wants to come down and celebrate this momentous occasion. This is the time to make noise about ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment and celebrate the progress which has been done. This year's national election brings a tremendous opportunity since women are forefront in the political process. The Democratic Party has nominated the first woman candidate for the office of U.S. President.

There will be a voter registration drive by our League as well as others at Civic Plaza from 11 AM to 1 PM. Women in communities all over the state will link in and be shown on a giant teletron talking about women's rights and pertinent issues in their own towns. This will be a huge event, so please come and join your League and other organizations and citizens.

*Democracy is not a spectator sport!*

## LWVUS Convention Report

Three Los Alamos LWV members, Wendee Brunish, Akkana Peck and Becky Shankland, attended the LWVUS Convention last month. Here is a summary of their report.

Plenary session presentations were thought-provoking with excellent speakers; here are some things they learned from the sessions.

- When “Engaging Millennials in Our Elections,” keep in mind that surveys show young people avoid involvement in politics because they find even political discussions divisive and rarely resulting in real change.
- Voter suppression laws have affected Latino voters’ turnout in several states. According to the Director of National Association of Latino Officials, only 13 million of 27million eligible Latino voters are expected to go to the polls in November. To help this problem, he suggested attending naturalization ceremonies to register new voters, a policy the LWVCNM already has.
- National Public Radio Correspondent, Peter Overby spoke about efforts to decrease the effect of big money in politics by educating the electorate. He reported on the Citizen Initiative Review boards in Oregon as an example of a cost-effective way of doing this.

The Saturday banquet speaker, author Ari Berman (*Give Us the Ballot: The Modern Struggle for Voting Rights in America*) spoke on the Voting Rights Act and our history. He said that the Citizens United decision came of a concerted effort, claiming that Justice John Roberts has been an active opponent of the Voting Rights Act since he was in law school.

The convention voted to adopt the proposed LWVUS Program for 2016-18: Campaign for Making Democracy Work. New study proposals were discouraged and none were presented. However two concurrences on LWV positions were discussed: the National Redistricting and Behavioral Health. Both concurrences passed. Other actions taken were a Bylaws amendment regarding the requirement for full members; non-citizens and youth 16 years of age can now be members. And several resolutions were passed: Restoring funding for gun violence research at the CDC, Supporting actions to reduce fossil fuel consumption and US ratification of the UN COP 21

Paris Agreement, and directions to LWVUS to work for full implementation of the EPA Clean Power Plan. The summer La Palabra will have more news of the national convention.

## Steps Every League Member Can Take To Empower Voters in 2016

- Contact your local elections officials to discuss challenges & provide feedback for improvements.
- Identify 5 key media contacts and communicate monthly.
- Get-out-the-Vote! Send election alerts to new registrants, volunteers & partners.
- Consider participating in an election observer program.
- Use LWVUS/EF and state League resources, trainings & templates.
- Sign up as a National Voter Registration Day

***Crisis Point: Why We Must – and How We Can – Overcome Our Broken Politics in Washington and Across America*** by Trent Lott and Tom Daschle, 2016, Bloomsbury Press, New York, Hardcover, 284 pages.

This is an interesting book in part because it is by a Democrat and a Republican who served together in both the House and Senate and who both became Senate Majority Leaders. They are now both associated with the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC). They repeat many of the standard arguments but with a much greater credibility.

Partisanship has been around since the founding fathers and is essential to make the best possible case for your positions. However, once that is done, you need to be willing to compromise to get anything done. The problem today is not partisanship. It is extreme partisanship and an unwillingness to compromise. Another problem is the permanent campaign. They say new congressmen are being told that they need to spend at least four hours a day calling to raise money – and that doesn’t count  
*Continued on page 4...*

*Continued from page 3...* other fund raising events that they need to go to for another ten hours a week. When do they have time to be a legislator? They never get out of the candidate mode and into the legislative mode. And these are two very different ways of thinking and operating. For candidates everything is black and white, no compromise, and attack the “enemy” often personally with negative ads. For legislators everything is gray. Compromise is critical so you have to be civil to those you disagree with since you have to work with them. They mention as a key change how in 2004 Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist came to South Dakota and campaigned against Tom Daschle. Since you had to work with them, members of congress simply did not campaign against other members.

Money is also a problem since you need so much of it for long and expensive campaigns. To get around contribution limits PACs and superPACs have become critical, often having more money than the candidates and the parties. Furthermore, neither the candidates nor the parties have much control over them. During the campaign negative ads by these groups harden positions and make the necessary legislative compromises difficult after the election. Given relatively safe districts, most incumbents fear an election challenge less than they fear a primary challenge from these extreme but well funded groups if they do compromise.

They recommend changes in four areas – electoral and campaign reform, campaign funding, congressional reform, and attracting new blood into politics. The parties have lost control of the nomination process and need to regain some control. It should not be simply a popularity contest with no concern for electability, willingness to compromise and work with others, experience, and competence. They think the money problem will be hard to solve until the Court changes its position that money is speech. However, one thing they propose that would significantly cut back on the money requirement is to drastically shorten the campaign, say to only several months. They think it would cut the costs of campaigning and would focus peoples’ attention on the campaign and the issues. They think change is possible, but they don’t sound overly optimistic.

Although many of their points have been made elsewhere, they reinforce the case given their experience. Why is it only former elected officials seem to see the problem and the need to change so clearly?

*Olin Bray*