



THE VOTER

May 2008

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Albuquerque, NM 87110
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Diane Goldfarb
President

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Voter Editor

ANNUAL MEETING
SATURDAY, MAY 3, 2008
Albuquerque Grand Airport Hotel
2910 Yale SE

Speaker: Roberta Cooper Ramo
Attorney at Law

**Topic: "Why Judicial Independence Is Critical
to Our Democracy"**

Roberta Cooper Ramo, a nationally and internationally recognized speaker, has had a diverse legal career. She has worked in small-firm and solo practices prior to her current position as a shareholder at the Modrall Sperling Law Firm. Her areas of practice are mediation, arbitration, business law, real estate and related matters including probate and estate planning. Mrs. Ramo also has expertise in working with large institutional and corporate entities in governance, strategic planning and problem solving.

In 1995, Mrs. Ramo became President of the American Bar Association — **the first woman to head the world's largest organization of attorneys.** She is President Elect of the American Law Institute (ALI) and an advisor to the ALI Project on Nonprofit Organizations. President Clinton appointed her to serve on the National Advisory Council on Violence against Women. Governor Richardson appointed Mrs. Ramo to the New Mexico Board of Finance in 2003 and to a second term in 2007.

Mrs. Ramo graduated magna cum laude from the University of Colorado, earned her law degree from the University of Chicago and has received a number of honorary degrees. She is recognized in *Who's Who in America*; she also served for six years on the University of New Mexico Board of Regents — acting as President of the Board for two years.

Included in Mrs. Ramo's talk at the Annual Meeting will be a discussion on the importance of the separation of powers, and how we, as members of the League, can convey this to the general public as part of the League's advocacy role. Make your reservations now to join us for this timely presentation.

Please see page 3 for the Annual Meeting schedule of events and reservations information.

More May Events...

HEALTH CARE FORUM
1ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT CANDIDATES

Thursday, May 8, 7-8:30 p.m.
First Unitarian Church
3701 Carlisle Boulevard NE

Sponsored by:
League of Women Voters and
Health Action New Mexico

(See page 3 for additional information)

COUNCIL 2008
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW MEXICO

Saturday, May 17
First United Methodist Church
715 Diamond Dr.
Los Alamos, NM

*(Agenda and registration information in Spring 2008 issue
of La Palabra)*

And in June...

48th LWWUS CONVENTION
"Reaching New Heights Together"

June 13-17, 2008
At the Hilton Portland
Portland, Oregon

(LWW/ABC delegates announced on page 2)

**LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
ALBUQUERQUE/
BERNALILLO COUNTY**

Board Meeting

1st Thursday of each month
5:30 p.m.
Offices of
Sutin, Thayer & Browne
6565 Americas Parkway NE

Program Committees

Check with the following
League members about
community activities:

Advocacy

Delores Watkins

Drug Policy

Delores Watkins

Natural Resources

JoAnne Ramponi

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

All League members
are welcome at all
unit meetings, committee,
and board meetings.

The *VOTER* is published
each month by the
League of Women Voters
of Albuquerque/Bernalillo
County.

President's Corner

I hope to see a good crowd at Annual Meeting on May 3. We will vote on changing the bylaws to give our local League a new name – the League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico. After 60 years of operating with our current name, this will be an important vote. In addition, Roberta Cooper Ramo, an excellent speaker, will talk to us about the importance of judicial independence.

Roberta's speech will kick off a yearlong project on judicial independence. She will address how Leaguers can educate the public about the importance of the separation of powers. Then in the fall we will sponsor a candidate and educational forum on the judiciary. Our *Voters' Guide* will also be expanded to highlight judicial races. LWV/ABC has been fortunate to receive grants through our national organization to do the last two projects.

When you see Josephine Porter, please thank her for her terrific work on the public meetings for the APS superintendent candidates. The League was asked to help with those meetings because of our reputation and experience in moderating forums. Jo represented us and saw that the meetings were handled well. The result was the *Albuquerque Journal* editorial published in this newsletter, and we could not have asked for better publicity. I am amazed and delighted at how many of my acquaintances read it.

Our Board will say "goodbye" to two very special Board members this year, Therese Quinn, our Treasurer, and Helen Wright, our 2nd Vice President. We thank these two sisters for their years of Board service. We'll miss them but are happy in the knowledge that they will still be active League members.

Thanks, also, to all our members who made 2007-2008 a good year for the League of Women Voters of Albuquerque/Bernalillo County. We will soon begin our new fiscal year with a new name and many new activities.

Diane Goldfarb

LWV/ABC Board Highlights:

- The delegates to the June 2008 LWVUS Convention in Portland, OR will be Diane Goldfarb, Josephine Porter, Marilyn Morgan and Jan Bray.
- LWV/ABC has agreed to manage the April 25 Albuquerque Transportation Workers election.
- The Membership Chair announced that a meeting has been scheduled with League members in Valencia County regarding establishing a Unit in that area.
- The LWV/ABC internet policy will be review by the Technology Committee and recommendations for changes will be presented to the Board.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Gifts to the LWV/ABC Education Fund in memory of Elsie Hampleman have been received from Diane and Don Goldfarb, and Louise and Bill Prowell.

Betty W. Burnett, Memorial Fund Coordinator

ANNUAL MEETING

May 3, 2008
Albuquerque Grand Airport Hotel
2910 Yale SE

Schedule of Events

Registration	9:00-9:30 a.m.
Business Meeting	9:30-11:00 a.m.
Brunch	11:00 a.m.

Speaker at Brunch: Roberta Cooper Ramo

- Information packet for the Annual Meeting is in the April 2008 *Voter*.
- Cost of the brunch is \$16, payable at the door. Reservations are required. Call the League office at 884-8441 by 10:00 a.m. on Monday, April 28. If you prefer a fruit plate rather than the menu item, please let us know at the time you make your reservations.

HEALTH CARE FORUM**1ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT CANDIDATES**

Thursday, May 8, 7-8:30 p.m.

First Unitarian Church, 3701 Carlisle Boulevard NE

Candidates confirmed to participate in the forum:

Democrats	Republicans
Michelle Lujan Grisham	Joseph Carraro
Martin Heinrich	Darren White
Robert Pidcock	
Rebecca Vigil-Giron	

Candidates will discuss their positions on Medicare, SCHIP, the cost of pharmaceuticals, the cost of health care, expanding health care coverage and other important health care issues.

The Health Care Forum is sponsored by the League of Women Voters and Health Action New Mexico. For more information call 505-884-8441 or 505-867-1095 or visit the following websites:
www.healthactionnm.org or www.lwvabc.org

LWV/ABC Voter Services will have registrars at the Health Care forum to register new voters or make changes for citizens who are already registered.

ADVOCACY CORNER CALL TO ACTION

The Issue:

Help advance S.1843, the Fair Pay Restoration Act. The May, 2007 Supreme Court decision in the Ledbetter v. Goodyear case severely limits the ability of victims of pay discrimination to sue under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This ruling requires the time allowed for a challenge of discrimination to be changed from 180 days from the last pay check (which was alleged to be unfair) to 180 days from the first paycheck. The Fair Pay Restoration Act restores the law to how it was previously applied to be consistent with Congress' intent. The House of Representatives passed its version of the Fair Pay Restoration Act, H.R.2831, in July, 2007.

Action:

Call or write Senator Domenici to urge him to co-sponsor and support the Fair Pay Restoration Act. As a constituent, send your personal note or call to:

Senator Pete V. Domenici
Attention: Joe Trujillo, 201 3rd Street NW #710
Albuquerque, NM 87102
Telephone: 505-346-6971

Background information:

Pay equity is a long-time League concern. This is reflected in the LWVUS' Social Policy Statement on Position on Equality of Opportunity: "...equality of opportunity for education, employment and housing for all persons..." *Impact On Issues 2006-2008*, p. 62. This position is supported by the history of past actions on this and similar issues. Under "Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action" it is stated that "[t]he League has worked to combat administrative initiatives to restrict the enforcement authority of...the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission." League has also been active in "successfully urging Congress...to pass the Civil Rights Act, which reversed a series of 1989 Supreme Court decisions that seriously weakened federal employment discrimination laws..." *Impact On Issues 2006-2008*, p. 60. More on pay equity can be found at www.AAUW.org. Type in search: Behind the Pay Gap (2007).

Next Meetings:

The Steering Committee will meet the first Wednesdays of May, June and August, not in July. Meetings are usually at the League office; to verify location, contact the Committee Chair at 823-2308. We will be creating materials to engage League members in action activities next year and we will be learning about Observer Corp programs. Come join us.

Dee Watkins, Chair

Fair Representation Study Group

The study group has conducted unit meetings for the Santa Fe County, Los Alamos County, and Greater Las Cruces Leagues. After each unit, the presentation, handouts, and discussion questions are improved and refined. In April, the group held units in the Albuquerque area. Because the scope of the Fair Representation study is so broad, encompassing

- redistricting,
- who is responsible for redistricting,
- other systems of representation than our one representative per geographic area,
- and ranked choice voting and how winners may then be determined (it isn't as easy to count as it sounds),

the goal of this first series of unit meetings is to get the sense of what parts of the study that the membership considers important to pursue and which to work on first. The study group seeks to have a position in place in order to lobby the 2009 Legislature, the last Long Session before the decennial Census of the United States, which is then followed by redistricting.



However, this immediate goal need not mark the end of the two year study, or of action based on the study. The opinions of the first series of units has been strongly in favor of continuing to study and educate the membership and the public on alternative systems of representation and the different types of voting which accompany them. There has been real excitement when these topics are discussed. However, the members in Santa Fe, Los Alamos, and Las Cruces recognize that this is a long term project, and the immediate focus of the study group for the next year should be working for a better system of redistricting, with less control by parties having a conflict of interest in the results.

Each different unit meeting has brought in new thoughts and concerns. By the time of the LWV/ABC Annual Meeting and the LWVNM Council meeting, the Albuquerque responses will be integrated and the Study Group will have a full report. This will be used to develop consensus questions, which will be presented in another series of units in the fall.

To join the Fair Representation Study Group or get more information, contact Cheryl Haaker. More information is also available at the group's web page, www.lwvabc.org/fair/.

The next meeting of the Fair Representation Study Group will be on Tuesday, May 20 at 1:00 p.m., at 5701 Klondike St. NE, with accompanying teleconference.

Cheryl Haaker, Chair

Fair Representation Trivia Questions

1. **A "wasted vote" occurs when:**
 - a. A third party candidate is on the ballot
 - b. The Electoral College is involved
 - c. The vote does not contribute to putting any candidate in office
2. **True or false: There will be one best solution to most redistricting problems.**

(Answers on page 7)

LWV/ABC IN THE NEWS

We know that the League has an outstanding reputation, and we work hard to maintain it. It's nice occasionally to see our organization receive recognition. Recently LWV/ABC received the following commentary in a couple of local newspapers.

In February the League participated in an Edgewood mayoral forum sponsored by the *Independent*, a weekly newspaper covering the East Mountains and Estancia Valley. The following appeared on the front page of the newspaper's January 30, 2008 edition:

The *Independent* asked the League to moderate the forum because it is not directly involved in the community, has an unchallenged reputation for fairness and objectivity, and has managed hundreds of similar forums around the state, including previous Edgewood forums.

And many members have seen the editorial in the March 11, 2008 edition of the *Albuquerque Journal* following the public forums with APS Superintendent candidates:

....Considering the time limitations, it went well, largely because district officials partnered with the League of Women Voters of Albuquerque/Bernalillo County to run four forums.

The League brought its experience at organizing forums along with a reputation for impartiality. With time at a premium, moderators wasted none of it on what has become a staple of forums: the long-winded statement lightly disguised as a question. League volunteers took written questions and categorized and distilled similar ones into a single question for each of the candidates...

...Thanks to the League for wringing as much community exposure and information as possible from the short schedule.

DRUG POLICY UPDATE

- Awareness of the need to relieve pain suffering is taking place in Congress with H.R.2994 and H.R.5465. When LWV/ABC has a position to support education and developing awareness, we can request permission to lobby our Congressional delegation. A question about whether the candidates in this election year would support H.R.2994 and/or H.R.5465 might be asked at future candidate forums or meetings. (Your opportunity to speak!)
- In March, the Drug Policy Study Committee continued to learn about addiction treatment programs with a visit to the Bernalillo County Assessment and Treatment Services. A few interesting facts about the Treatment Services are:

It is a voluntary program and does not retain clients against their will.

The average length of stay is 3-5 days up to 30 days.

The program serves both men and women with 30 beds for men and 12 for women.

Therapeutic intervention, motivational counseling and eight additional services are provided.

The Committee also visited a privately funded program: the Endorphin Power Company. I found the history of the development of this company inspiring because it came out of a perceived need to improve "the lives of people with a special focus on substance-dependent and homeless, thus alleviating many of the challenges faced by current emergency medical systems." The documentary on their website, www.endorphinpower.org, will give you an idea of the power of people and unique ideas.

- In the April Committee meeting the focus for the May and summer meetings was decided, guided by local and state interests. Under consideration were: producing the dramatizations about pain developed in the last few years; continuing the study of addiction treatment programs; topics of legislative bills related to our local and state positions; drug testing in the schools and treatment for methamphetamine problems. Additionally, the Drug Policy Study Committee has been asked to participate in the New Mexico Conference on Aging. This Study is a multifaceted and fascinating group effort. Let me hear of your interests.

Dee Watkins, Chair

The proposed change in name and expansion of our Local League (to be decided on May 3) prompted the LWV/ABC Board to ask if members might be interested in what was written about League activities years ago.. The following, offered here for your review, is taken from a *HISTORY AND PROGRAM*, written in 1982 by LWVNM Historian Mariette Cunico.

**(ALBUQUERQUE/BERNALILLO COUNTY LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS)
SERVICE TO VOTERS**

The services provided to the voting public have from the beginning been a vital expression of League activity. The strict nonpartisan policy of the League quickly established its credibility in the community as a purveyor of accurate, unbiased information about candidates and issues.

In 1947, while still a Provisional League, volunteers staffed a booth at the State Fair. The effort that first year was the distribution of educational material about atomic energy as part of a National League project. In subsequent years, the volunteers dispensed voting information, demonstrated the voting machine, and registered individuals to vote. Over the years, staffing the State Fair booth to provide registration and voter information in general election years has remained a major project for the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County League.

The Albuquerque League enthusiastically supported the use of voting machines, and in 1948 was instrumental in bringing the machines to the attention of civic leaders and service organizations. The League obtained the first voting machine to reach Albuquerque and used every opportunity to demonstrate its use and rally public supports, [sic] including a demonstration before the New Mexico House and Senate given by League president Fern Porter. The machines had their first official use in Albuquerque in 1952. Voting by machine became official procedure in 1954 and the League celebrated with Voting Machine Week in April.

As one of its first projects in 1948, the Albuquerque League sponsored a school for election officials. The need for one had been noted by the grand jury. Instructors in election procedures and laws were provided by the District Attorney's office; the two sessions attracted 300-400 officials. The League arranged two more schools the following year and continued to provide this service throughout the 50's until the responsibility was assumed by the County Clerk's office.

Every avenue to reach the public was, and still is, used by the League to encourage the public to register and vote. The support of radio, newspapers and television was enlisted early on. Campaigns to provide information on how to register were conducted in the first years — tables appeared at strategic locations throughout the city manned by the League volunteers. "Register and Vote" pamphlets appeared on the doorstep with the milk in 1955. Since it became possible to do so, the League has maintained its corps of member-registrars who take part in registration drives before each major election. When the voting age was lowered to 18, the League took a van with voting machines to each high school in the county to register and prepare the new group for voting.

The public forum has been used to provide an opportunity for citizens to see and hear all candidates in a nonpartisan setting. As the city grew larger and attendance at the forums declined, the League was often able to arrange televised forums to reach a larger audience. Among these, in 1978, a series of programs on KNME, the public television channel, presented all candidates on the ballot for judicial positions; in 1980, on the same channel, the League produced a nine-week series of programs with a League panel questioning the candidates for each ballot position.

Public forums were often used to present pro's and con's of issues as part of the League's responsibility to inform voters. Some of the issues which have been brought before the public by the League are: siting of the Civic Auditorium, the Metropolitan Arroyo Flood Control, City Charter Amendments, Constitutional Amendments, City-County consolidation, reapportionment and districting for the city commission.

Printed information on candidates and their views on current issues were prepared and thousands of copies distributed before elections. A *HANDBOOK FOR VOTERS OF BERNALILLO COUNTY* was published in 1957 and updated three years later, made possible by the purchase of 5000 copies by Sandia Corporation. *WHO'S WHO, A POLITICAL DIRECTORY*, a listing of all elected officials in the county, was first prepared in 1973 and has been updated after major elections in the years since. Publication by the business community has made wide distribution possible.

*LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, NEW MEXICO
STATE AND LOCAL LEAGUES, HISTORY AND PROGRAM, 1982, pages 18-20*

WELCOME NEW AND RETURNING MEMBERS

Winnifred Averbuck
4107 Ravenwood Court NW 87107

David Campbell
4704 Westridge Place NE 87111

Change of Address:
Ardyce Burnett
7201 Triana Place NW 87114

Faith Blumenfeld
2536 Wheeler Peak Drive NE
Rio Rancho 87144

Karen Reagan
1005 Girard Blvd NE 87106

Email addresses available from office
or JoAnne Ramponi for: Winnifred
Averbuck, Faith Blumenfeld, Patt
Cain, Alice S. Thiele

Patt Cain
43 Agua Sarca Rd
Placitas 87043

Alice S. Thiele
259 Sunset Rd SW 87105

Submitted by Kathleen Kimler Altobelli
April 3, 2008

ANNOUNCEMENTS/NOTICES

LEAGUE OFFICE: JUNE PRIMARY

We need your help in the office on Monday, June 2 and Tuesday, June 3. We expect people to be contacting us about where they are supposed to vote for the primary election. The office will be open from 9:30 a.m. to noon on June 2 and from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on June 3. We will have two telephones working and will need two teams for each shift. This is a great time for you to help the community and to meet other members of League. Call the office, 884-8441, and volunteer. Thank you.

JoAnne Ramponi
Temporary Office Manager

Answers to Fair Representation Trivia Questions

1. The definition of “wasted vote” is “c” according to Electoral Theory. Thus, in a system with two dominant parties, it’s not merely the votes for minor party candidates which may be considered “wasted”; the votes for the losing major party candidate are also wasted. The wastage may encompass more than 50% of the total votes cast! No wonder many voters have become cynical ex-voters!
2. False, given that the criteria used to determine districts are so numerous and varied, and often contradictory: for example, if you want to both increase the diversity of districts while preserving communities of interest.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The membership year for LWV/ABC is October 1 through September 30. Join any time during the year. Dues are not tax-deductible. With membership in LWV/ABC you also belong to LWVNM and LWVUS. The first membership in a household costs \$50. Add \$25 for each additional membership in a household (all mail goes to the same address). Student memberships are \$25. Make your check payable to LWV/ABC and mail with this form to:
Membership, LWV/ABC, 2403 San Mateo NE, Suite W-16C, Albuquerque, NM 87110

Name(s)

Street Address

City State Zip Code

Home Phone

Work Phone

Renewal _____ New _____ Student _____

Email _____

UNIT	LOCATION	LEADER	MEMBERSHIP
Luncheon 2nd Thursday 11:45 a.m.	Albuquerque Grand Airport Hotel 2910 Yale SE Reservations required \$16*	Marilyn Morgan	Vivian Boyle
Midtown 3rd Monday 1:30 p.m.	Manzano del Sol 5201 Roma NE Hobby Room (on first floor)	JoAnne Ramponi	Lois Reed
Evening 3rd Tuesday 6:00 p.m.	Cherry Hills Library 6901 Barstow NE Optional dinner after meeting	Jan Bray	Delores Watkins
Sandoval County 3rd Wednesday 12 noon	Corrales Community Center Meeting Room 4234 Corrales Road Brown Bag Lunch	Mary Mulvany	Carolyn Lindberg

* Luncheon Unit reservations: call the League office (884-8441) by 10:00 a.m. the preceding Monday. If you do not attend and have not cancelled by the deadline, you will be billed for the cost.

May
Calendar

- 1 LWV/ABC Board
- 1 Voter Deadline
- 3 LWV/ABC Annual Meeting
- 7 Advocacy Committee
- 8 Health Care Forum
- 17 LWVNM Council
- 20 Fair Representation Study Group
- 22 Drug Policy Committee

Membership
You can join LWV anytime of the year. Contact JoAnne Ramponi at 884-8441.

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League of Women Voters
Albuquerque/Bernalillo County
2403 San Mateo NE, W-16C
Albuquerque, NM 87110
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The League of Women Voters, 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.