



The

Voter

February 2011

League of Women Voters
of Central New Mexico
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Lwvcnm home page: <http://www.lwvcnm.org>

Metro Judge Frank Sedillo to speak at February luncheon meeting

State of legal services available in New Mexico; relationships between the local, state and national leagues; and mission of the organization Law Access will be among the topics to be discussed at the February League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico unit meetings.

The following are February's units, topics and speakers.

Luncheon Unit Meeting: Feb. 10, 11:45 a.m., MCM Elegante Hotel, 2020 Menaul NE.

Speaker & Topic: Metro Court Judge Frank Sedillo will speak on the state of legal services available in New Mexico. He will discuss current legal services and what needs to happen in the future to ensure these services for the poorest citizens of the

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Annual League theater birthday party to feature mystery play *Wait Until Dark*

LWVCNM's traditional birthday theater party will be at the Adobe Theater on Sunday, Feb. 20 at 2 p.m. followed by a party in the Green Room. The Adobe Theater is at 9813 4th St NW (just north of Alameda).

The play is a mystery/suspense, *Wait Until Dark*. Of course there is no mystery or suspense about the party afterwards -- everyone will have a lot of fun, as always. The board will provide the food and drinks.

The story centers around Suzy Hendrix, a recently-blinded housewife in Greenwich Village. She becomes the target of three con men who are desperate to get their hands on a heroin-filled doll that has wound up in Susy's possession. The trio tries to convince Susy that her husband has been accused of drug smuggling, and the only way to protect him is to give them the doll. Incredibly clever and resourceful, Suzy,



with the help of her young neighbor, realizes the true identity of the men and plans to defeat them in this terrifying cat and mouse thriller by Frederick Knott.

This theater party is one of the League's fun and easy fundraisers for the operating fund. We need to confirm the number with the Adobe by Feb. 7, so please call the office with your reservations by the end of the day Sunday, Feb. 6. The price will be \$25. Please send your checks to the office, 2315 San Pedro NE, F-6, Albuquerque, NM 87110. -- Olin Bray

February Calendar

February 4	Board meeting, 5:30 p.m.
February 5	<i>Voter</i> deadline
February 8	Evening Unit, 6 p.m.
February 10	Luncheon Unit, 11:45 a.m.
February 17	Drug Policy Committee, 1 p.m.
February 20	Birthday theater party, 1:30 p.m.
February 21	Midtown Unit, 1:30 p.m.
February 28	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 Americas 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.

Membership Report

Welcome to new and returning members:

Janet Espinosa, 2424 Windward Dr., NW
87120, 888-9435, 262-9045 (W), 235-7689 (Cell)

Marilyn Fifield, 8502 Aztec NE 98111,
299-9019

David & Tanner Gay, 900 Sierra Place SE
87108, 232-0992

Dixie Hornby, 9105 Luna del Oro NE
87111, 821-1989

Member address changes:

Joy Price: please correct spelling of town
name to Catonsville

Pat & Rebecca Bell, 409-2677

Presidents' Corner

Happy birthday everyone! It is our 91st LWVUS birthday. Our League's birthday theater party at the Adobe will be Sunday, Feb. 20. See the details in the article in this *Voter*. We have in our office a fascinating book on the women's suffrage movement and the development of LWVUS from that movement. It can be checked out. Have a look.

League Day at the Legislature is Tuesday, Feb. 1. See the details in *La Palabra* or call the office. The legislative session should be very interesting this year. In addition to the budget, several issues will be coming up that you can take action on with your legislator. There will be bills on ethics and campaign transparency sponsored by Think New Mexico and others. There will be multiple bills restricting reproductive freedom. Representative Kintigh will introduce a bill requiring criminal penalties for a mother if there are drugs in a newborn. There will be an attempt to ban abortion coverage in the new insurance exchanges set up under the federal health care reform. The perennial voter ID will come up again. If you want to follow the action, the state action committee meets every Friday at the office at 2 p.m. Call Dick Mason for more information or to be put on the Action Listserve.

This is our first *Voter* to be distributed electronically. Those of you who asked for it will get it electronically by email and it will also be available on the website (www.lwvcnm.org). This will result in an earlier delivery for many of our members and lower printing and mailing costs for the League. This transition is a work in progress, so let us know what you think and how we can improve it.

-- Olin and Jan Bray

Drug Policy Study and action news

The next meeting of the Drug Policy Study Committee will be Feb. 17 from 1-3 p.m at the League Office. Come and see what's happening as we learn more about the impact of alcohol on our community.

The committee will be doing extensive outreach activities Feb. 23-25 during the New Mexico National Social Workers Conference.

The title of this year's conference is "Advocacy: Empowering Ourselves, Empowering Others." Eileen Longworth and Dee Watkins will present "Developing Personal Advocacy Skills" at the con-

ference. In 90 minutes, participants will develop practical skills needed to be effective lobbyists with power brokers, such as doctors, landlords, caregivers, managers, legislators and others who command needed resources. LWVCNM will also have use of a table to display League and pain management materials and to speak with people from around the state during the three-day conference.

The committee sees this as an opportunity to alert a statewide community of the purposes, study and action of the League as well as to provide education materials about pain management.

-- Dee Watkins (505-823-2308)

LWVCNM Program Planning recommends studies for new year

LWVCNM members met on Dec. 11 to do Program Planning for 2011. Since the LWV of New Mexico holds its convention in 2011, the group reviewed both the local and state programs and positions. The positions are available in the front of the *Member Handbook*. Below are the results of the meeting.

Local Studies -- Members attending the meeting recommended approval of an extension of the drug policy study being conducted by the LWVCNM Drug Policy Committee. The meeting also recommended that the committee consider a study of medical marijuana, if the resources are available.

Approval of a new study on transparency in the Bernalillo County Government was also recommended. This study will be led by Karen Wentworth. Anyone who is interested in participating in this study should contact Karen at kwentworth17@comcast.net

Local Program (Positions) -- Meeting attendees recommended that local program be adopted in its present form. There was a recom-

mendation that the positions under "Local Government" be reviewed to determine which units of government (municipal, county or regional) are being included under each section.

State Studies -- Members attending the meeting recommended that the LWVCNM conduct two new studies: 1) The impact of alcohol use beyond DWI, to be led by the LWVCNM Drug Policy Committee; and 2) A study to be led by Jan Bray on whether public funds should be used to support private education.

No recommendations were made to change state positions. The members did ask that certain language be clarified, specifically language under Government -- The Executive. It currently reads, "LWVNM supports a shortened ballot." The program planning group was uncertain of what was meant by "a shortened ballot."

The board of the LWVCNM has endorsed the program. It will be presented to the full membership at the May general meeting.

-- Karen Wentworth

Units

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state are viable. He will also explain what kind of legal services New Mexico offers and the kind of problems he sees in his work.

Sedillo was elected as a Metropolitan Court Judge in November 2000. Prior to that he worked as a court clerk for the U.S. District Court and was a practicing attorney in private practice for 14 years. His law practice included real estate, small business, collections, personal injury, domestic relations and criminal law.

Sedillo received his J.D. degree from the University of New Mexico School of Law in 1987.

Note: The location of the luncheon unit has been changed. It is now being held at the MCM Elegante Hotel, 2020 Menaul NE. The lunch will start at 11:45 a.m. and the cost is \$15. Reservations must be called into the office (884-8441) by Feb. 7.

Evening Unit meeting: Feb 8, 6 p.m., Erna Fergusson Library

Speaker & Topic: LWVCNM Co-president Jan Bray will speak about the relationship between the local, state and national leagues.

Midtown Unit, Feb. 21, 1:30 p.m., Manzano del Sol Hobby Room

Speaker & Topic: Pending

Northeast Heights Unit, Feb. 28, 10 a.m., La Vida Llena Card Room, 10501 Lagrima de Oro NE.

Speaker & Topic: Sandi Gilley of Law Access NM will discuss the mission of Law Access and explore how the organization assists 10,000 New Mexicans each year with their civil, legal issues.

Gilley earned her degree from the UNM School of Law in 1986 and currently serves as an adjunct professor teaching poverty law.

Top LWVCNM web pages accessed in December

Units	217
Voters' Guide pdf	184
Contact Us	173
Old Membership application	167
Old 2009 APS election info	155
Voting Information	153
Speakers Bureau	152
Newsletters	129
Who's Who (2010 edition)	127
Elections Info (2010 General)	118
Donate	112
League Positions	107

Analysis: The list of top pages accessed in December reveals some real problems -- how are people linking to the old, outdated membership application? (At least the fees are correct...) How are they even finding the 2009 APS/CNM elections page? Interest in the Speakers Bureau is good, but the page contains almost no information. That's got to be disappointing. The same can be said for interest in the Donate page. Since nobody ever actually donates, it clearly needs work.

Before proceeding with the planned redesign of the lwvcnm.org website, there will be more analysis of recent access statistics, and obvious problems will be corrected immediately.

-- Cheryl Haaker

Thank you to Handbook team

By now all LWVCNM members should have received the new League Handbook. We hope you will enjoy finding contact information for all League members as well as information on local, state and national League issues.

The Handbook was a months-long project which involved several dedicated members. The membership list had to be updated continuously throughout the year by Susan Walton, with the help of membership chair Andrea Targhetta and technical assistance from Kathy Altobelli. Laura Stokes solicited sponsorships and did the research, editing and updating of information, with a great deal of formatting help from Kathy Altobelli.

Once all the information had been entered, the proofing team, composed of Kathy Altobelli, Laura Stokes, Diane Goldfarb, Susan Walton and Andrea Targhetta got together for final approval. After picking up the Handbooks from the printer, the mailing team, consisting of Chris Burroughs, Kathy Altobelli, Andrea Targhetta and Terry Quinn, did the mailing.

This team effort is a wonderful example of how groups can work together to accomplish our goals. We had one organizational meeting and the rest was completed by email and phone. It was a pleasure to have the support of a willing and dedicated group of people who shared the responsibility for getting the job done. Short-term projects like this one can be done on a one-time basis or our members might wish to continue helping on a variety of short-term projects. Volunteers are always welcome. -- Laura Stokes

League moderates State Legislative Town Hall meeting

On Jan. 6 Diane Goldfarb, former president of the League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico, moderated the Legislative Town Hall featuring a number of state leaders. Participating were Representatives Sheryl Williams Stapleton, District 19; Gail Chasey, District 18; and Al Park, District 26; Senators Tim Keller, District 17; and Cisco McSorley; District 16.

Held at the African American Performing Arts Theater, Diane was assisted by League members Don Goldfarb, time keeper, and Josephine Porter, director for participant questions.

This was one of the best "forums" I have ever attended.

Nearly filling the 300-seat auditorium, the audience was attentive as the accommodations made one feel very close to the action. Following fairly short introductions by the legislators, perhaps 35 constituents lined up at the microphone. Those who came identified problem areas like delayed ethics bills from previous legislative sessions along with certain "neighborhood" issues. Many request-

League members remember their League experiences

Editor's Note: In 2010 the LWVCNM celebrated its 60th anniversary. Last February Judith Binder put together a retrospective program presented at all unit meetings that consisted of members sharing in their own words memories of League. This is the eighth in a series of articles that includes some of those memories.

Sandra Browne

What I enjoy most is that belonging to the League is in the context of belonging to a condensed book club. I'm with smart and involved individuals whose opinions you can respect and trust, and it's like a big family where everyone shares their knowledge and experiences. A terrific place to be.

When I was president, I was impressed with the openness and objectivity that so many members brought to the group. The drug study committee, for instance took off in the early 1990s and was chaired by a 75-year-old former school teacher. I was amazed by her objectivity, the flat willingness to learn.

One characteristic of League committees is the conscientious effort to educate and inform themselves, without condemnation of events over which no one has control, but are willing to study, to form an educated opinion, an open mindedness, and the desire to share what they learn.

I felt my presidency was similar to being a traffic cop, a facilitator, because members are so "with it, man." There is no other organization that allows debate and it does not become vindictive. League is never boring.

Merri Rudd

During my first year as Bernalillo County probate judge, I had the honor of interviewing Agnes Fanning, a longtime League member, for a column I was writing for *Prime Time*. Agnes had joined the League in 1927. She impressed upon me how great a privilege one's vote is. I have never forgotten her lessons. It's also important to be as informed a voter as one can be. The League does a great job of helping voters with the *Voters' Guide* for each election.

From my perspective, it is not that difficult to be a good public servant. Candidates who seek election to public office should be good at what they do, be knowledgeable, take their jobs seriously, be down

to earth, and most importantly -- be ethical. Some of us are meant to do what we do best and, ideally, those are the candidates whom voters should seek on the ballot.

Judith Binder

In 1978, I was introduced to the League of Women Voters by the young wives of University of Delaware mathematics professors. These lovely, fascinating, intelligent women wanted me, an ordinary department secretary, to join them! But it wasn't until I had moved just outside Philadelphia that I joined the Plymouth/Whitemarsh Townships LWV.

One of my first studies was to investigate PACs -- Political Action Committees. I thought it was the greatest thing since sliced bread. But, oh boy, has my thinking changed! I also was our local editor for the Eastern Montgomery County coalition of Leagues' *Voters' Guides*.

This is important. I'd like our younger members to consider the excellent training we receive by volunteering for the League. For me, it was by editing the *Voters' Guide* that laid the groundwork for my future career as a technical editor -- which I was for almost 20 years -- at the University of New Mexico.

Speaking of UNM. I consider one of our greatest achievements was sponsoring the University Unit of our League. A sponsor only has to present a copy of our by-laws to the Student Services Department, set up a table in the Student Union Building and encourage the young people to register to vote and sign up for League. Two of our girls made it big. One set up our original web page and the other eventually sat as an advisor on the National Board of the League.

In 2001, several pairs of League members went to Africa to enhance the position of women in emerging democracies -- countries where public voting took place. My partner from Louisiana and I were sent to Zimbabwe."

The League is many things to many people, but most of all it brings together individuals who believe an educated public is necessary to continue our representative democracy. Mainly, we work to assure adequate health care and eliminate discrimination in the work place or at the voting booth. Thank you for letting me be your League friend.

Town Hall

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ed keeping the state budget flexible enough to include funds for the Developmentally Disabled. Teachers and students urged that education must advance student achievement and reduce administrative costs. Panel members spoke openly about raising income from previously untaxed entities. If other states tax industry, why can't New Mexico? Certainly, those corporations will not abandon our state; there is still too much profit to be made here.

Diane, Don and Josephine did a great job guiding the questioners and holding the legislators to their allotted minutes for answering. It was too bad there were no TV or video cameras to record this very informative session with in-depth discussion among the legislators. Sadly, there were almost 20 questioners still waiting patiently for the microphone when I had to leave. -- Judith Binder

Join League

The membership year for LWVCNM is Oct. 1 to Sept. 30. You can join any time. Dues are \$60 for the first member of a household and \$30 for each additional household member. Send a check made payable to LWVCNM and fill out the information below for new members.

Yes! I want to join LWVCNM (This includes LWVNM and LWVUS.)

Name(s): _____

Street Address: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Send your membership check to:
League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico, 2315
San Pedro Dr., Suite F-6, Albuquerque, NM 87110

If you have questions, call us at 505-884-8441.

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