

League of Women Voters
of Central New Mexico
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LWVCNM homepage: <http://www.lwvcnm.org>

Police Chief Ray Schultz to Speak at Annual Meeting Brunch

Albuquerque Police Chief Ray Schultz will speak at the League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico Annual Meeting May 4. His talk will culminate the meeting to be conducted at the MCM Elegante Hotel, 2020 Menaul NE.

Registration for the Annual Meeting will be from 9-9:30 a.m., followed by the business meeting from 9:30-11 a.m. and brunch at 11 a.m. Schultz will give his talk during the brunch.



Chief Ray Schultz

During his talk, Schultz will focus on ways to reduce gun violence in Albuquerque. Schultz has been police chief since 2005 when he was appointed to the

post by then Albuquerque Mayor Martin Chavez. Mayor R.J. Berry retained Schultz as chief through most of his first term. Schultz has announced that he will retire in July.

Schultz has led the department through difficult times. Since 2010 Albuquerque police have shot 28 people. But he has also lost officers who were shot and killed by a mentally ill man.

This is a particularly relevant topic for us because this year the league will begin a study of mental illness. The study will be led by Jan Bray and Shelly Shepherd.

The cost of the brunch is \$20. Please telephone your reservation to the League office by 10 a.m. May 1 at (505) 884-8441 or email a reservation to lunch@lwvcnm.org.

LWVNM Convention set for May 18-19

“New Mexico Economy and the Early College High School” will be the topic of Garrey Carruther’s talk at the May 18 banquet which will be part of the 2013 League of Women Voters of New Mexico convention. Carruthers is a former New Mexico governor.

The conference will be May 18-19 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Las Cruces. Conference registration will start at noon Saturday, followed by lunch from 1-2 p.m. The luncheon speaker is Jake Rollow, U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich’s field representative in the Las Cruces office. He will discuss “U.S. Immigration Reform.” The first plenary session will be from 2-5:30 p.m. The conference continues on Sunday with a plenary session starting at 8:30 a.m.

For more information see the state web page at lwvnm.org/Convention2013 or call Bonnie Burn at (575) 524-8683 or email her at burnb@comcast.net. See registration form on page 4.

Annual Meeting May 4

Be sure to bring the April Voter to the Annual Meeting

Registration	9-9:30 a.m.
Business Meeting	9:30-11 a.m.
Brunch	11 a.m.
MCM Elegante Hotel, 2020 Menaul NE	

May Calendar

May 4	Annual Meeting, 9:30 a.m..
May 4	Board Meeting following Annual Meeting
May. 5	Voter deadline
May 18-19	LWVCNM Convention, Las Cruces
May 19	New LWVNM Board meeting, Las Cruces

**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.

Convention Silent Auction

The Silent Auction held at Convention time is a fund raiser. Members are encouraged not only to donate an auction item but also to bring some extra cash or your checkbook to buy some of the wonderful items that are offered. No credit cards, please

Search your cupboards, storage areas, and households for items in good condition that you can donate to make the 2013 LWVNM Convention Silent Auction a success. Bring them early to the open luncheon meeting on Saturday, May 18. Final bids will be on Sunday morning. Any item not bid upon must be taken home with you.

We appreciate your support and hope to earn lots of dollars for the LWVNM treasury.

Silent Auction Chair is Andrea Targhetta, atarghetta@comcast.net.

Membership Committee

New Member

Sharon Higgins, 3216 Carlisle NE, ABQ 87110, 881-9149

Presidents' Corner

By Shelly Shepherd & Sandra Brown, Co-Presidents

This is our last column as your co-presidents. It has been an honor serving in this capacity for LWVCNM. The Board has worked very hard on your behalf and LVCNM has accomplished a lot. The slate of candidates for 2013 through 2015 is impressive. We hope you are planning to attend the Annual Meeting Saturday, May 4th at the MCM Elegante Hotel. Registration begins at 9 a.m. We are fortunate to have Albuquerque Police Chief Ray Schultz as our speaker on the timely topic of "Ways to Reduce Gun Violence."

We have a new desk at the league office due to the generous donation by Dee Trester. Office volunteers have expressed that they appreciate the extra storage space, work space and appearance of the new desk. Thank you, Dee.

We have hired an Administrative Coordinator, Margaret Magee. The Board followed the instruction of the last Annual Meeting, evaluated the need for a part-time staff person, and decided it was necessary. Margaret has a wealth of professional experience. She has a B.S. from New Mexico State University, an M.L.A. from Louisiana State University and a Computer Science Certificate from Central New Mexico University. Margaret has excellent organizational skills and communication skills. Welcome, Margaret.



Margaret Magee (and pups)

The *Hello, Dolly!* theater fundraiser was very successful, raising approximately \$632 for the LWVCNM Operating Fund. We celebrated League of Women Voters 93rd birthday with delicious food, birthday cake and sparkling apple cider provided by the LWVCNM Board.

The League of Women Voters of New Mexico 2013 Convention is being held in Las Cruces May 18 and 19. LWVCNM has 10 delegates. The convention will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn. The convention is open to all the state membership as observers, if they are not delegates, as is the banquet May 18th. Former Gov. Garrey Carruthers will be the speaker at the banquet.

Again, it has been an honor serving LWVCNM as Co-Presidents. We will continue to be active in other capacities

Book Review – *The Creative Destruction of Medicine*

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 Creative Destruction of Medicine: How the Digital Revolution Will Create Better Health Care by Eric Topol, 2012, Basic Books, 303 pages

League members have a strong interest in health care reform. According to Dr. Topol, the Affordable Care Act was a major change in health care access and health insurance. It did not represent a major change in health care delivery and quality. That transformation will be the result of the convergence of several trends in digital and information technology – specifically wireless remote sensing, genomics, imaging, and health information technology (e.g. the electronic patient record).

These technologies and improved communications through the Internet, smartphones and social networks can dramatically change the way health care is delivered and significantly improve both quality and cost. For example, he believes they can significantly reduce hospital admissions and lengths of stay, as well as eliminate many routine office visits. I will describe some of his examples below.

Unfortunately, he does not believe physicians and the health care industry will make these changes on their own. Many of these changes will have to be driven by consumers/patients. He contends that medicine is one of the most conservative and slowly changing of industries. Several studies have shown that from the time research findings are confirmed in the lab it takes about 17 years before they become common practice in the medical community. Paper records still dominate the medical profession, although there is a slow movement to an electronic record. While almost everyone uses email, there is very little doctor/patient communications using email – primarily in a few of the very large integrated health care systems, such as Kaiser Permanente. However, clinical studies have shown improved outcomes from this type of closer communications, which can incidentally reduce the need for more expensive office visits. Social networks and web sites on health care issues and diseases are making patients much more informed and generating questions they bring to their office vis-

its. One of the changes is physicians are no longer the sole, unquestioned source of medical knowledge and the latest research.

Topol contends that we are now able to begin shifting from medicine for populations to medicine for individuals. This will address problems at the molecular level and identify individual differences rather than treat the average patient in a large clinical trial. As an example he uses Plavix, a widely prescribed brand name drug to prevent blood clots. It turns out you need a specific enzyme to convert the drug into its active component. At least 30 percent of people don't have that enzyme so for these people Plavix does not work. Without the genetic test, which is rarely done, the physician does not know whether or not it will work or what the acceptable dose is. The normal approach is to simply prescribe the drug and if it doesn't work increase the dosage. This wasteful and expensive trial and error approach is no longer necessary with a single test. At this point Topol believes that the real medical value of genomics is to evaluate and customize therapy – pharmacogenomics.

Unfortunately, he says only a handful of medical schools offer courses in this area and most practicing physicians have little or no exposure to it.

Remote sensing is another technology that can dramatically change health care delivery. He says that many people are in the hospital temporarily so their condition can be closely monitored. However, with remote monitoring and wireless communications (such as smart phones) this can be done from home, work, or wherever. Such systems already exist for monitoring blood pressure, blood glucose, blood oxygen, electrocardiograms, and other measurements. This continuous monitoring for several days or over a critical period provides much better and more accurate information, much cheaper than a hospital stay or even an office visit. If a problem is detected, the system can notify emergency responders, sometimes even before the patient realizes there is a problem.

Imaging can also provide dramatic changes. Topol is a cardiologist and describes a small pocket-size echo imaging device he uses in his office. Within a few minutes during an office visit he can image the patient's heart, interpret the results and discuss it with the patient. The normal approach is

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Book Review

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during an office visit the patient is scheduled for an imaging session at a lab, the imaging is done and interpreted and the results sent back to the physician, who discusses the results with the patient at another office visit. This process costs about \$3,000 and can take several weeks, instead of all being done in the initial office visit. Imaging is now a widely used diagnostic tool, but there is a downside of most imaging – high, unnecessary radiation exposure. (Note sound and MRI imaging don't use such radiation so they are much safer.)

Unfortunately, Topol does not see most physicians and the health care industry driving these changes in medicine. He sees the real driver

as more informed patients asking questions and demanding better results. This in turn will require much greater transparency in medicine. When we buy a car or a TV, we go to Consumer Reports and look at the various options in terms of quality and costs. However, for open heart surgery or stroke or cancer treatment such data often does not exist. And even if it does exist for the practitioners, it is not available to the public. Topol supports patient use of web sites and social networks to get the type of information that can help drive the desired changes in health care.

This interesting and important book is not your typical health care reform book. It ignores the politics and gets at the real technologies and trends that can solve many of the health care quality and cost problems. free of ideology and political posturing.

Registration Form

Name _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Delegate _____ State Board

_____ MAL Rep.

_____ Observer

(Select only one)

Registration Fee: Postmark by April 30 \$65 _____

After April 30 \$70 _____

Saturday Banquet \$20 _____

An Italian buffet with one meat and one vegetarian entrée.

Guests _____ Number of guests for banquet \$20 _____

_____ Number of guests for Sat. lunch \$15.50 _____

_____ Lunch for 2013-15 Board Members \$12.95 _____

Board Meeting follows Convention Adjournment

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Mail registration form with check payable to LWV of Greater Las Cruces to:

League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces

P.O. Box 8322

Las Cruces, NM 88006

Proposed New Mexico Mental Health Care Study

Editor's Note: LWVCNM is proposing that the LWVNM adopt the following study on mental health care. It will be discussed at the LWVNM Convention.

Purpose: The League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico is proposing a thorough study of Mental Health Services currently available in all counties of New Mexico. New Mexico is unique due to its territorial nature. Most of the population and services are concentrated in several areas, with the rural areas having little to no services. Funding is changing with implementation of the Affordable Care Act. It is uncertain what the effect will be on mental health care.

Background Information: An op-ed article appeared in the *Albuquerque Journal* dated Feb. 14, 2013 entitled "Mental Health Care Services in N.M. is in Dire Straits." It was authored by Vincent Ortega, CEO, Southern New Mexico Development and Vice Chair Health Behavioral Health Provider Association. Mr. Ortega explained that mental health services in NM are currently in an extremely fragile state. In the wake of recent shootings and other violence across the state and country, Mr. Ortega noted that mental illness has become an area of discussion among the public, government and mental health professionals. However it will not do any good to identify those needing mental health services if there are little or no services available. He reported that many of the community mental health centers are struggling financially. Many rates for reimbursement of services are the same or less than what they were over 20 years ago.

One of the most significant impacts of these financial issues is that it is increasingly more difficult to recruit and train behavioral health professionals in New Mexico. There is already a significant shortage of providers in New Mexico.

There is a real concern among mental health professionals due to mental health being folded into traditional medical services under HMOs. There is concern that mental or behavioral services will become even less of a priority. It is much easier to fix a broken leg than it is to identify and treat mental illness.

Study plan:

The most important element of the study is that it focuses on all counties in New Mexico currently, because New Mexico is unique, and the counties differ in what mental health services are available, if any.

The committee will contact professionals and mental health organizations, such as the New Mexico Psychological Association, who are currently discussing the above issues at length. One of the things they are discussing is an expanded network throughout the state that involves physicians and mental health professionals. Also discussed is using telehealth as an avenue to consult and work with patients long distance.

All of the information gathered will be compiled and presented to the membership so that recommendations can be made on appropriate questions to begin the process of developing positions regarding mental health.

Time Keeper Training Set for May 29

One of the services the League of Women Voters provides is work in managing candidate forums. Often when our help is requested, we explain that we *assist* in candidate *forums* -- a bit different from actual debates between the candidates.

We provide moderators and time keepers. The moderators are in charge, explaining the protocol and sorting and presenting questions to the candidates. Time keepers have stop watches and signs indicating the amount of time allotted for answers and time remaining as answers proceed.

We have only a few time keepers, and I am

soliciting some volunteers for a time-keeping training to take place on Wednesday, May 29 at 7:30 p.m. This one-hour training will be presented by Cheryl Haaker, experienced time-keeper, at my apartment in The Towers, 5400 Montgomery Blvd. NE, between San Mateo and San Pedro, just east of the IRS building

Please let me know if you plan to attend. You will probably agree that Voter Services are a key function of the League. I look forward to hearing from you at gayle333@aol.com or 872-3933.

-- Gayle Prinkey

