

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO

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

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## The VOTER

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### **LWVCNM to consider Ethics in NM Government in November**

NM State Representative Jim Dines (District 20, Albuquerque) will address Ethics in NM Government with a focus on the legislature including ethics training or the lack thereof, ethics complaints

and the process, lack of public trust in government and where do we go from here during the November LWVCNM Luncheon Unit, which will be held Thursday, 11/10/16, 11:45 am, at the MCM Elegante Hotel (2020 Menaul Blvd NE).

Representative Dines introduced legislation 2016 to amend the NM State Constitution to establish an Independent Ethics Commission which was killed in the NM Senate Rules Committee. Proposed Ethics Commission activities would have included publication of all Ethics complaints regarding state officials following Commission review.

LWV has long supported improving Ethics and Transparency principles and practices in our government. In addition to the 2016 LWVUS Money in Politics Position, LWVNM has established Positions on Ethics (2007) and Transparency (2011), including:

LWVNM supports limits on gifts and contributions to candidates for elective offices and to the holders of elected and appointed offices.

LWVNM believes that methods of financing political campaigns and public offices should ensure the public's Right to Know, combat corruption and undue influence, maximize fiscal accountability and transparency, and allow maximum

citizen participation in the political process.

Representative Dines currently serves on the NM House Education and House Judiciary committees. Interim committee assignments include Courts, Corrections, and Justice Committee, House Special Investigative Committee, Military and Veteran Affairs Committee, and Legislative Education Study Committee. Representative Dines graduated from the University of New Mexico and the University of New Mexico Law School. He retired from his 35 year law practice 2011, his law firm was nominated for the Ethics in Business Award—Samaritan Counseling Center in 2004. He was also the Recipient of New Mexico Foundation for Open Government's (NMFOG) inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award in 2012 and the initial William S. Dixon First Amendment Freedom Award in Law in 2002.

First elected to NM House of Representatives District 20 (R) in 2014. Dines has a policy of not accepting lobbyist or PAC money. When he arrived in Santa Fe adopted policy of not accepting any free gifts or free meals from anyone.

Representative Dines fought successfully for over 20 years in the courtroom for public access to government records and open meetings.

Was awarded initial Lifetime Achievement Award from NM Foundation for Open Government.

Named a Best in Government Rookie 2015 by Common Cause for sponsoring bipartisan lobbying reform bill.

E for Effort Award 2016 by the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce for sponsoring bipartisan

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**The VOTER**

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**Office Hours**

**November 5 - 30**

**Monday - Friday**

**10 am to Noon**

**Extended Office Hours for  
Election Day**

**November 2016**

**Thursday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> 5:30 pm Board Meeting**  
Landmark Apartments, Library  
6303 Indian School Rd NE

**Monday, November 7<sup>th</sup> 10:00 am Luncheon Reservation Deadline**

**Tuesday, November 8<sup>th</sup> 8:00 am-5:00 pm Election Day**  
**Extended Office Hours**

**Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup> 11:45 am Luncheon Meeting**  
MCM Elegante Hotel Albuquerque  
2020 Menaul NE

**Friday, November 11<sup>th</sup> Office Closed for Veterans' Day**

**Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup> 6:00 pm Evening Unit**  
UNM Law School, Room #2406  
1117 Stanford NE.

**Thursday, November 24<sup>th</sup> Office Closed for Thanksgiving**

**Friday, November 25<sup>th</sup> Office Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday**

*.....continued from page 1* legislation to establish an independent and transparent Ethics Commission.

He is married to Nancy Wood, a former Albuquerque Public Schools Spanish/English teacher and they have two sons.

*Please make reservations for the November 10<sup>th</sup> Luncheon Unit Meeting by calling the LWVCNM office (884-8441) by 10:00 am Monday, November 7th. Please specify if you would like a vegetarian meal.*

**Evening Unit** - LWVNM Vice President and Action Co-Chair Dick Mason will discuss Lobbying Techniques during the LWVCNM November Evening unit meeting. Dick will also host the LWVNM Workshop "How to be an Effective Citizen Advocate at the Roundhouse (Citizen Advocacy)" in Santa Fe December 10, 2016.

The evening unit will meet at 6:00 pm Tuesday November 15<sup>th</sup> at the UNM Law School, Room #2406, 1117 Stanford NE.

**NE Heights Unit** - No Meeting in November

## ***Book Review***

*The Second Machine Age: Work, Progress, and Prosperity in a Time of Brilliant Technologies* by Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee, 2014, W. W. Norton and Co., Hardback, 306 pages.

This is a well-written, readable, and insightful book by two MIT researchers. They identify what they mean by the second machine age, explain its technologies and how they are dramatically changing our economy and jobs, the implications of those changes, and some policy recommendations to help us adjust to those changes. Although we hear a lot about job loss because of trade, this book is important because 85 percent of the job loss is from technology change, not trade.

The first machine age saw steam, electric, and internal combustion engines replace human and animal muscle power. This lets us produce many things cheaper, faster, and with much less human labor. US manufacturing is not declining. Adjusted for inflation we are producing much more than in the past. However, manufacturing employment is dropping because we are doing it with much less labor. And those manufacturing jobs were good jobs. They are being replaced with service jobs – some low skill and low wage jobs, but the many high wage service jobs require higher skills, education, and training.

In the second machine age computers, sensors, and sophisticated control systems are replacing many of the best service jobs that require thinking, analysis, and decision making. The problem now is that it is not clear what types of jobs these displaced workers will move into and how to train them for those jobs, not to mention the low skilled low paying service workers. The authors do suggest one area of possible job growth. Computers are becoming smarter and taking over more analytical jobs. An example is supercomputer chess programs consistently beating grand masters. However, they say that simply good chess players using much less powerful computers are beating these supercomputers. So work blending humans and computers can provide synergy and better performance than just computers.

The book explains how these new technologies are changing the economy and the consequences of these changes. The second machine age has three major

drivers for more and faster change – exponential growth in computer performance, digitization of massive amounts of information, and rapid innovation by putting things together in new ways.

First, for decades improvements in computer performance has been driven by Moore’s Law, which says that for the same cost you get double the performance every two years. The performance of a \$35 million supercomputer several decades ago is now available in a \$150 playstation. This exponential performance improvement is allowing us to do things we couldn’t imagine five or ten years ago, such as self-driving cars, voice recognition, and artificial intelligence. Second, the capability to digitize and store vast amounts of information is changing the economy. For example, it still cost about the same to produce a book -- to write it, edit it, and produce the first copy. However, after that to produce additional digital copies and distribute them it is essentially free. Therefore, electronic books should be much cheaper, unless the publishers can still extract “monopoly rents,” but many printing and bricks and mortar distribution jobs will be lost. While readers may benefit from cheaper books, many jobs are lost. Third, contrary to what some suggest, innovation is not slowing down, it is speeding up. Innovation is not only coming up with something completely new, but also combining existing things in new and different ways. For example, Uber’s real innovation is using computers and cell phones to allow taxi drivers to be self dispatching rather than having a person as a central dispatcher. Having a dispatcher and converting drivers from employees to contractors are old business models that were already being used by most taxi companies.

They talk about bounty and spread or benefits and costs. The bounty is a that we are getting more and cheaper products and services. As with trade, while this may be a good thing for society as a whole, there are distinct winners and losers. The spread (which others are calling inequality) is that we are losing jobs and seeing much greater inequality in income and wealth. Compare Amazon to a bricks and mortar bookstore. They are selling far more books (real books as well as eBooks) with far fewer employees. That means fewer jobs, lower costs, and higher profits (wealth) going to the owners of these

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*Continued....* newer, very large, networked companies – unless the prices drop dramatically, which they haven't. While the overall economy may benefit, as a few companies dominate the digital economy the income and wealth distribution become more unequal.

While the authors don't see the pace of change slowing and do not favor trying to slow it, they have a number of short term and long term policy recommendations to help adjust to the changing economy. In the short term there are a number of things economists agree on, such as better education, encouraging more start ups and entrepreneurship, facilitating cross fertilization of ideas that encourage more innovative combinations of ideas, support scientists and research and development as opposed to reducing it which has been occurring, and upgrading infrastructure. They also suggest that while we have to tax, we should do it wisely in ways appropriate for the new economy rather than the older industrial one. First, in cases such as technology and trade where there are societal gains but individual losers, we should tax some of the gains to compensate the losers. Second, in an economy where labor is becoming a smaller percentage of the economy, it should be generating a smaller share of revenue than capital which is becoming the major beneficiary of much of the economic growth. Third, unreasonable gains (what economists call monopoly rents) should be taxed to increase fairness.

In the long term we may need more basic changes to the economy. They suggest that work protects people from need and boredom. One answer some have proposed for the lack of jobs is a basic income, which would be very expensive. More practical alternatives are a negative income tax or the current EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit). They favor the EITC because it provides an incentive for work. However, if there are no jobs, that doesn't solve the problem. To deal with that, they suggest the government as the employer of last resort, like the WPA or the CCC during the New Deal. Also they suggest that much work, especially labor intensive work, is being done now for no or very low wages. This includes child care, senior services, volunteer work, and some education. Perhaps the most important point is that no one has all of the answers. In fact, we don't even know all of the right questions. Therefore, a lot of policy changes should be tentative and treated as experiments. If they work continue them and if they don't then try something else.

*Olin Bray*

***Democracy is not a spectator sport***