

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

January 2019

The VOTER

Volume 84 Issue 01

Co-President's Report for January 2019

Happy New Year! We hope you are beginning this year with a full heart and mind. On January 12 we will gather at the Special Collections Library on Central and Edith at 1:30 p.m. to discuss program planning. This year we will be reviewing our state and local positions and thinking about whether we need to work on any of the positions we have taken as a League.

This is also the time when any member of the League can propose that we study an issue and begin working on a formal position. The League at every level endorses and advocates for positions only after we have taken time to study, think about and reach consensus.

We would particularly like you to take the time to read the issues we have taken positions on. They are in your member handbook, on the website and we have attached a word document with them listed. Think about the issues we have not addressed yet. Think about what you would like to study in a committee.

It's a turbulent world out there and the calm, reasoned voice of the League is badly needed, even if it is sometimes hard to hear amid all the shouting.

The state League continues to work on a study about spent nuclear fuel storage in Southeastern New Mexico and anyone with an interest in the issue is very welcome to join that study.

Many people join the League because they are interested in an issue. If you don't see anyone talk-

ing about the issue that interests you, speak up at this meeting and we'll try to find like minded souls to work on it with you. The League is a place where you can study and learn and advocate with people who share your concerns. We need to hear your voice at this meeting.

Please Join us on Jan. 12.

Leah Ingraham

Karen Wentworth

Co-Presidents, LWVCNM



Dick Mason to present a
Legislative Preview at the
January 10th Luncheon and
the January 28th NE Heights
Unit

Dick has been active in advocacy work since 1968 and has been a member of the League of Women Voters® since 1994. After moving to New Mexico in 2004, Dick became a Board Member of the League of Women Voters® of New Mexico and is now Vice President and co-Chair of their Action Committee. In addition, he is the LWVNM representative on the Steering Committee of Health Care for All New Mexicans. Dick is also on the Executive Committee of the New Mexico Alliance of Health Councils and is on the Board of Health Action New Mexico where he serves as the chair of the Policy Committee.

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Central New Mexico
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Mary Wilson

Technology

Cheryl Haaker

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Administrative Coordinator

Margaret Guinn Magee
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Office Hours

Monday – Friday

10 am to Noon

CLOSED

January 21 MLK

JANUARY 2019

Tuesday, January 1

New Year's Day Office Closed

Thursday, January 3

5:30 pm

Board Meeting

Sutin, Thayer & Browne

6100 Uptown Blvd, 4th floor

Enter on North side of building- Doors are locked after 6:00 p.m.

Monday, January 7

Reservation Deadline for Luncheon

Tuesday, January 8

3:30 pm

The Neighborhood Presentation

6:00 pm

APS Forum

Thursday, January 10

Luncheon Unit Meeting

Saturday, January 12

1:30 - 3:30 pm Program Review/Planning

Special Collections Library

423 Central Ave. NE

Tuesday, January 15

Opening Day of Legislature

Deadline for Voter Submissions

6:30 pm

APS Forum

Monday, January 21

MLK Birthday - *Office Closed*

Monday, January 28

NE Heights Unit Meeting

February 2019

Thursday, February 7

LEAGUE DAY AT THE LEGISLATURE

LWVCNM Board Meeting

Monday, February 11

Reservation Deadline for Luncheon

Thursday, February 14

Luncheon Unit Meeting

Topic: Behavioral Health

Chair: Trish Lopez

LWVUS 99th Birthday

Friday, February 15

Deadline for Voter Submissions

Monday, , February 18

President's Day - *Office Closed*

Monday, , February 25

NE Heights Unit Meeting

Topic: International Trade

Chair: Olin Bray

AMAZON SMILE

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/85-0355179>

Dick Mason to present *continued from page 1*
Everyone is welcome at the luncheon, but you must make a reservation by 10 a.m. on Monday, January 7. You can call in your reservation to the League office at (505) 884-8441, email lunch@lwvcnm.org or PRE-PAY. "It is now possible to **pre-pay online for the luncheon** by going to www.lwvcnm.org and to **Contribute** and then **Donate**. Donate \$22 (or \$44 for 2). Jan, LWVCNM treasurer, will identify that as a luncheon pre-payment! Pre-payments must be made by midnight Wednesday, January 9."

Cost of lunch is \$22. Your reservation is your commitment to pay.

**Dick Mason will present
Proposed Legislation for the
2019 NM Legislative Session
at The Neighborhood in
Rio Rancho
Tuesday, January 8 at 3:30 pm.**

**Program Priorities Meeting
January 12
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
Special Collections Library**

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Susan Baum
Wanda Deyo
Deborah 'Marlene' Grant
Karen Knoll
Eric Metzler
Una Medina Olmstead

**Albuquerque Public Schools
Bond Election Forums**

Mary Wilson will moderate a forum for the Albuquerque Public Schools bond election. The forum, scheduled for **6 p.m. on January 8** at the KANW studio (2020 Coal SE) is sponsored by the League of Women Voters® of Central New Mexico. The forum will include APS experts to explain how the bond funds will be used. There will also be representatives from the Bernalillo County Clerk's office to explain election procedures for the mail in ballot. The forum will be live-streamed by KNME.

Judith Binder, LWVCNM League member for more than 35 years, will be moderating a FORUM TO EXPLAIN THE Albuquerque Public Schools REQUEST FOR A PROPERTY TAX RATE INCREASE. The sponsoring organization is the Albuquerque Tea Party, a Non-profit 501(c)(4) dedicated to the education of the citizens of Albuquerque on the Constitution and conservative principles. This organization is non-partisan, and also supports government officials and activities that align with the principles as outlined by the U.S. Constitution and the writings of the Founding Fathers. The Forum is to be held at the University of New Mexico Continuing Education, University Boulevard on **January 15th, from 6:30 until 8:30 pm.**

Democracy is not a spectator sport

HAVE YOU MET YOUR LEGISLATOR?

Now that the elections are over we have a clearer picture of what might happen in the next session. It is important that League members prepare themselves to speak to their legislators before the Legislative session begins in mid-January.

Several years ago, a couple of League members and I would get together and invite our local legislator to a Dutch Treat Coffee at a convenient location. In ½ hour, we chatted about a few issues that were important to us. It was quite congenial and our lawmakers really got to know us and our concerns.

Our LWVCNM Membership Handbook, not only has information about local, state & National issues, but also a list of members with their zip codes! That was something I felt we could all take advantage of. Also, in the state LWV's LaPalabra – I found notice of League members volunteering to help with the 2020 census!

League's priority issues and detailed fact sheets on each topic are available on our website. After the session begins, we will have a Reception for our Legislators in Santa Fe. Please think about contacting a few League buddies and meet with your legislator – or legislators – preferably before the Reception.

Judith Binder

Advocate

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR THE 2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Tax Reform & Funding – Tax reform and funding proposals are going to be a major focus of the 2019 session. Most funding proposals being discussed are those the League has supported in the past.

Voting Rights - Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) /Same Day Voter Registration/ Extending Voter Registration Period. These measures facilitate voter registration.

Iowa Redistricting Model - The LWVNM is the lead organization in developing legislation that would improve the redistricting process in New Mexico. The legislation would be based upon the Iowa model, which in the 1970s the LWV Iowa was instrumental in passing.

The State Ethics Commission ballot question has passed. Now, the legislature will have to pass enabling legislation. We need to assure that new legislation ensures an effective Commission.

Reproductive Rights - Make a woman's right to choose New Mexico law. Present New Mexico law makes obtaining an abortion a criminal offense. This has not been enforced because of Roe v. Wade. It is time to get this archaic law out of New Mexico statutes.

LEAGUE DAY AT THE LEGISLATURE

Thursday, February 7, 2019

Programs at New Mexico State Land Office

310 Old Santa Fe Trail

Just down the street from the Roundhouse on the same side

AGENDA OF EVENTS

8 - 8:30 am **Pick up packets of information from the League table in the Hall of History,
Ground floor of the State House.**

8:30 – 10 am **Attend committee hearings or visit with legislators**

10:15 am **Welcoming comments from New Mexico State Land Commissioner
Stephanie Garcia Richard**

10:30 – 11:15 am **Enabling Legislation for the State Ethics Commission
Former Representative Jim Dines, JD**

Representative Dines was the sponsor of HJR8 in 2017. This is the HJR that put creation of a State Ethics Commission on the ballot in 2018. That ballot question passed with over 75% of the vote. Rep. Dines was on the working group that has crafted the enabling legislation for the State Ethics Commission

11:15 – noon **Taxes and Funding for Essential Services
Amber Wallin MPA, Deputy Director, New Mexico Voices for Children**

Amber oversees New Mexico Voices for Children's research and policy work. She also manages the KIDS COUNT program and does policy research on education, tax and budget, hunger, and economic issues. She joined NM Voices in 2012 as a Center on Budget and Policy Priorities Fellow, after which she was a Research and Policy Analyst and later KIDS COUNT Director. Amber has worked in the public sector at the municipal, state, and federal levels, working in the government department at New Mexico State University and the budget department at the city of Las Cruces prior to joining the Voices team. She received her MPA from NMSU. Born and raised in New Mexico, Amber lives in Albuquerque with her husband and two young children.

1 - 5 pm **Visit Your Legislators**

If they are not in their offices, seek them out on the floor of the appropriate chamber. Ask the Sergeant at Arms to call them. (See "How to Find Your Legislator..." in your packet) Present them with the one-page list of League priorities and tell them which is YOUR priority and why. Attend Committee hearings or House & Senate sessions

**Your Action Committee is interested in your day's experience and
welcomes comments on League issues, priorities, and actions.**

Please provide comments by e-mail to: act@lwvnm.org

BOOK REVIEW

One Nation Undecided: Clear Thinking About Five Hard Issues That Divide Us
by Peter H. Schuck, 2017, Princeton University Press, hardcover, 425 pages.

This is an interesting, important book that identifies a number of the reasons our politics is so divided now. It then provides some background and explains the complexity of five key issues — poverty, immigration, campaign finance, affirmative action, and religious exemptions from secular public policies. (Perhaps one reason I like it is that it agrees with and extends some of the points I made in my ebook, *Political Incompetence*.)

Schuck identifies six characteristics of hard policy issues. First, they are public and federal issues. Second, they are highly salient to many people. Third, they are a collection of interrelated and disputed questions. Fourth, they are complicated by a long historic background not just the current situation. Fifth, they consist of complex empirical disputes, i.e. there is no authoritative agreement on what the facts are or even which ones are important. Sixth, they are embedded in normative disputes, i.e. value judgements where compromises are inherently hard. If you see the alternatives as good or evil, it is hard to compromise with evil even if not everyone agrees with which ones are good or evil. Unfortunately, as our politics becomes more polarized the hard issues become even harder to resolve — or even seriously debate as opposed to just ranting and raving.

He contends that we need much more clear thinking about the many hard issues. He identi-

fies five characteristics of clear thinking. First, it is based on accurate, factual, current, and relevant information. People must recognize and value factual information, not just information they agree with. Second, since some of these disagreements are over values, it must clearly identify the relevant values and accept that there may be disagreements about them. Third, it must analyze the consequences of policy alternatives, not simply a person's most favored alternative. Fourth, it must explicitly identify and evaluate the tradeoffs implied by these alternatives — and there are always tradeoffs whether we like them or not. Fifth, it favors the policy alternatives that are the most cost-effective and implementable. An ideal alternative that won't be accepted or implemented is not nearly as good as a less effective one that can and will be implemented. A point he does not explicitly address is that the value of policy alternatives may vary over time. What may have worked 10 or 20 years ago may not work today and what may work in 10 years may not be doable today. (However, he implicitly addresses this under the historic background of hard issues.) Unfortunately, such clear thinking is hard and time consuming so many people will not do it to the extent needed. Two partial solutions include better structured and informative debates during campaigns and a greater reliance on experts for the detail analysis and implementation of policy alternatives. Bureaucrats and experts really do know more about policy areas than the general public and need to be relied on for their expertise.

He then tries to show some of the complexity and provide a background for five specific areas,

Continued on page 7...

Book review continued from page 6 of which I will use poverty as an example. He makes the point that poverty and inequality are two related but very different issues. Inequality in the distribution of wealth is far greater than the inequality in income, which in turn is greater than the inequality in consumption. To simplify the issue, assume we are only talking about income. First, there is disagreement over what level of income is the dividing line for poverty. Also are we talking about individual or household income. Second, there is also serious disagreement over the causes of poverty — lack of education, lack of opportunity, lack of jobs, bad luck, etc. In reality there is no single cause, but a number of interrelated causes. This makes research, data collection, and analysis very difficult, not to mention the fact that most people will agree with the research that supports their own pet cause. He also disagrees with the many people who believe that the only way to cure poverty is to address its root causes. He contends that even if you can't eliminate the causes, good policies can address the symptoms and reduce them, which may actually address some of the causes indirectly. With poverty and the other issues, he tries to provide the type of background that is necessary for a serious policy debate.

Again this is an important book, which may not solve these policy problems, but it can at least help generate the type of serious and informed debate without which the problems won't be solved.

Olin Bray

1920 - 2020

League of Women Voters®
Countdown to 100 Years