

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO 2501 San Pedro Dr. NE, Suite 216 Albuquerque, NM 87110

FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS' DESKS:

The 2020 General Election is entering the final stages with Electors aware of voter decisions for their respective states. The nation awaits two special elections in Georgia which will determine the balance of power in the US Senate. However, despite social distancing measures due to the pandemic, US Voters turned out to vote in record numbers across the nation – one of LWV's greatest goals was achieved.



The LWVCNM Board decided to close the office during November and December for the safety and health of our member volunteers. Decisions about office hours during subsequent months were deferred until the December 3rd Board Meeting.

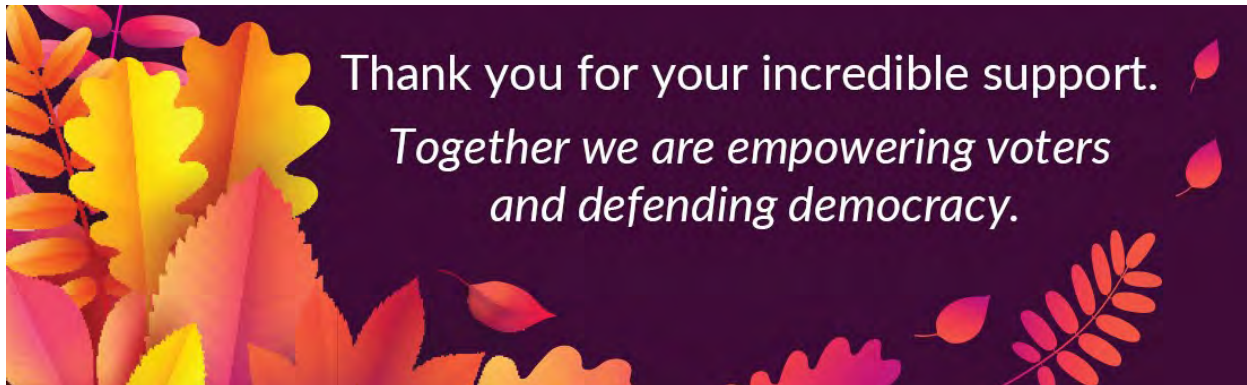


LWVCNM was grateful for the insight and perspective on elections provided by Professor Peter Kierst, our guest speaker for the November 13th general meeting. The popularity of this topic influenced the LWVCNM decision to open the meeting to attendance by all LWVNM members – LWVLA, LWVSNM, and LWVSFC members joined the audience. Professor Kierst, JD, is a UNM Political Science lecturer with expertise in Constitutional Law and he discussed the evolution of elections from the early days of nationhood when voters had scant knowledge of the candidates and name recognition was the most influential factor in voters' decisions. Governors assign Electors who will cast their votes at the state capitols on December 14, 2020. These decisions are conveyed to the US Congress who count these votes on January 6, 2021. Electors are required to act with diligence and reflect the choice made by voters for their respective states. Professor Kierst also discussed the historical basis for allotting two US Senate seats to each state, thereby ensuring that each state, regardless of population, had an equal voice in this branch of Congress. Professor Kierst's discussion was well received by all attending.

APD Forward monthly meetings have resumed. The 12th Independent Monitor's Quarterly Report was recently released and harshly criticized APD for excessive Use of Force with lagging discipline, frequently past deadlines with Albuquerque Police Officers Association challenges, resulting in no discipline applied. Judge Browning, the Federal Judge supervising Independent Monitor Dr. James Ginger, announced that he will convene a Public Hearing in early December 2020.

LWVCNM's December unit meeting on December 10 features Dr. Rachel Kleinfeld, a nationally recognized expert on the rule of law and democracy. See page 3 for details.

Karen Douglas and Karen Wentworth, Co-Presidents



THE VOTER

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2501 San Pedro Dr. NE, Suite 216
Albuquerque, NM 87110
(505) 884-8441
www.lwvcm.org

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Karen Wentworth

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Lani Desaulniers

Director and Office Manager:

Linda Adcox-Kimmel

Technology:

Cheryl Haaker

The VOTER Editor:

Mary G. Wilson
T3Wilson@aol.com

LEAGUE CALENDAR

All of the following are Zoom meetings. Members will receive invitations on the LWVCNMTopics listserv. Anyone who does not receive an invitation can email president@lwvcm.org.

December 3—5:30 pm Board meeting

December 5 — LWVNM Advocacy workshop. Details on page 4.

December 10—Luncheon unit meeting. Speaker is Dr. Rachel Kleinfeld

January 7—5:30 pm Board meeting

January 14—Luncheon unit meeting, Speaker, is Dick Mason, LWVNM Advocacy Chair, on League priorities for 2021 legislative session

January 19 —Noon NM Legislature convenes

March 20—Noon legislature adjourns

The deadline for the monthly Voter remains the 15th of each month. Articles and pictures are always welcome.

AND A WORD TO OUR NON-TECHY MEMBERS: Do not be concerned that you do not “do online stuff.” We are working on ways to make these available to you too! This may be through pairing you with a “buddy.” It may be that several members can view the sessions in the conference room at our new office building. Or if you just need a little help using Zoom or whatever meeting software we use, several of our Board members, our Webmaster, or other volunteers may be sent to help you. And summaries of the presentations will appear in the Voter issued after the date of the speaker. I am sure other ways “to make this happen” and keep us all safe will evolve as we proceed. **Contact Karen Wentworth at kwentworth17@comcast.net if you need help.**



OFFICE HOURS

Closed through January 1 due to Covid Concerns.
Phone messages will be checked daily.

JOIN US ON ZOOM FOR THE DECEMBER LUNCHEON UNIT MEETING....DECEMBER 10 at 12:15 pm

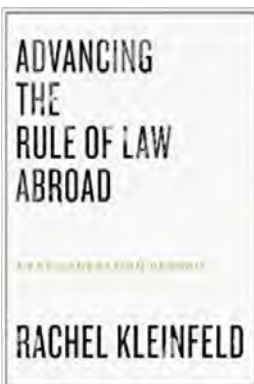
Our December speaker will be Dr. Rachel Kleinfeld. Dr. Kleinfeld advises governments, philanthropists, and activists on how democracies make major social change.

Rachel received her BA from Yale University and her Masters and PhD in Philosophy at Oxford University, where she was a Rhodes Scholar. She is a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Rachel is a leading expert on how democracies – including the United States – can improve, with a particular focus on countries facing poor leadership, polarized populations, violence, and corruption.

In 2010, Time magazine named Rachel one of the top 40 political leaders under 40 in America. As the founding CEO of the Truman National Security Project, she spent a decade building and leading a national organization headquartered in Washington, D.C., with a membership of over 80,000 supporters and chapters in most major U.S. cities. Under her leadership, the Truman Project assisted scores of national, state, and local candidates and elected officials, advocated for legislation nationally and in multiple states, and fostered a new generation of military veterans and national security leaders to advance policies that would enhance global security, democracy, and human dignity.



Her writings include the following: *Advancing the Rule of Law Abroad: Next Generation Reform* (Carnegie, 2012), which was chosen by Foreign Affairs magazine as one of the best foreign policy books of 2012. She has also co-authored *Let There Be Light: Electrifying the Developing World with Markets and Distributed Generation* (Truman Institute, 2012). She has contributed to the following publications: *Relocating the Rule of Law* (Hart, 2009), *Promoting Democracy and the Rule of Law: American and European Strategies* (Palgrave, 2009), *The Future of Human Rights* (Philadelphia UP, 2008), *Promoting the Rule of Law: The Problem of Knowledge* (Carnegie Endowment, 2006), *With All Our Might* (Rowen and Littlefield, 2006).

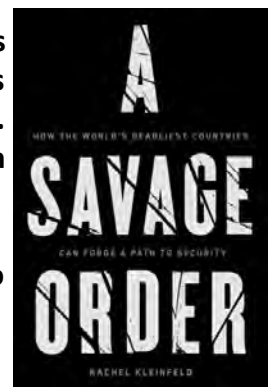


Dr. Kleinfeld serves on the boards of various for-profit companies and social sector organizations that align with her passion for issues on the intersections of security, human dignity, and empowerment.

From 2011–2014 she served on the State Department's Foreign Affairs Policy Board, which advised the Secretary of State quarterly.

Rachel lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico, with her husband, a sculptor, and their two daughters.

The LWV meeting time starts at 12:15 PM, Dr. Kleinfeld will join us at 12:30 PM. Due to COVID-19 restrictions this will be a zoom meeting. Watch the LWV topics list and our website for details. You may invite your friends to join this Zoom presentation.



Advocacy Workshop – Prepare for the 2021 Legislative Session

This will be a virtual event – details to follow
The League of Women Voters of New Mexico Presents

Effective Citizen Advocacy at the Legislature.
Saturday, December 5, 2020 (10 am to Noon)

The public is invited.

Learn tips from legislators and a professional citizen lobbyist on how to interact with legislators, speak at hearings, and advocate for your cause. This workshop is about the legislative process, not specific issues.

Speakers:

Senator Nancy Rodriguez: D-Santa Fe

Representative Rebecca Dow: R-Grant, Hidalgo & Sierra

Jim Jackson, Former Chief Executive Officer of Disability Rights New Mexico, an independent private non-profit organization authorized through federal law to protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities.



WE NEED YOU!

The LWVNM Nominating Committee has started its work for the 2021-2023 Board. We need volunteers to fill the following positions:

Co-President
1st VP
4th VP
Membership Director
Public relations Director
Advocacy Director

If you are interested, call or email:

Andrea Targhetta
atarghetta@comcast.net
505-280-8892

The LWVNM education committee is looking for volunteers from Central New Mexico to help revise the league's education position. The recent Yazzie vs. Martinez decision required the state to do much more to improve education practices in schools serving rural and low-income areas. We need two or three volunteers with some background in education if possible. The committee already has some proposed changes to the policy but they want more input. If you are interested and can spend a little time working with the committee over the next few weeks, please contact Karen Wentworth or (505) 263-9066.





NEW MEMBERS.....

Vicki Farrar
2941 Del Rey NE
Albuquerque, NM 87112-2139
Vicki_farrar@comcast.net
(505) 264-1368

Sophia Tracey-Gay
8415 Bouvardia Ave. NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120-4267
nymomoof4boys@yahoo.com
(505) 752-1048

Lissa Knudsen
712 Roma Ave. NW
Albuquerque, NM 87102-2039
lissaknudsen@gmail.com

Ed Ripp
2424 Vicic Road
Albuquerque, NM 87104-3017
jblack8162@gmail.com
(847) 431-1359

The new Membership Handbook has arrived. If you did not get your copy in the mail, contact Donna Rigano at djrigano@swcp.com

INVITE YOUR FRIENDS TO JOIN THE LEAGUE.

TO KEEP YOU IN THE LOOP ON CHANGES IN RANKED CHOICE VOTING:

Here's a rundown of wins and losses just this month:

1. State of Alaska passes ranked choice voting:

Alaska voters voted 50.6%-49.4% in favor of Ballot Measure 2, establishing ranked choice voting for presidential elections and all state and congressional races with a Top Four open primary. See FairVote's news release and the Alaskans for Better Elections website.

2. Boulder, Colorado passes ranked choice voting:

Boulder voters voted 78.1%-21.9% in favor of Ballot Measure 2E, establishing direct election of their mayor directly with ranked choice voting. For more information, visit the Our Mayor, Our Choice campaign.

3. Minnetonka, Minnesota passes ranked choice voting:

Minnetonka voters voted 54.7%-45.3% in favor of the City Question, which folds the city's nonpartisan primary elections into a single general election held with ranked choice voting for mayor and city council. For more information, visit Ranked Choice Voting for Minnetonka.

4. Bloomington, Minnesota passes ranked choice voting:

Bloomington voters voted 51.2%-48.8% in favor of City Question 3, bringing the total number of Minnesota cities using ranked choice voting up to five. For more information, visit Ranked Choice Voting Bloomington.

5. Albany, California passes the proportional form of ranked choice voting:

Albany voters Measure BB 73.3% to 26.7% to enact proportional ranked choice voting for citywide elections to the city council and school board. For more information, visit the Voter Choice Albany campaign website.

6. Eureka, California passes ranked choice voting:

Eureka approved Measure CC 61.5% to 38.5% to enact ranked choice voting for elections to mayor and city council. For more information, visit the Ranked Choice Voting in Eureka campaign website.

By George Richmond

EDITOR'S NOTE: Albuquerque voters may be asked next year to vote on whether to adopt ranked choice voting for mayoral and city races. We will keep you informed.

THE LWVCNM OBSERVER CORPS MEMBERS HAVE JUST COMMENCED THEIR WORK. EACH MONTH YOU WILL FIND REPORTS FROM THE CORPS ABOUT GOVERNMENT MEETINGS THEY HAVE OBSERVED....

Observer programs (or Observer Corps) are a structured way for individuals to exercise their right to know. Organized under the auspices of a grassroots organization (such as the League of Women Voters, which is referenced throughout this publication), they provide a valuable service to the community. They help ensure that citizens are aware of the decisions that impact their lives, and they promote government transparency and accountability. An observer is an individual who attends a governmental meeting, notes what happens at the meeting, and reports back to the League and the community. By attending public meetings of local governmental bodies/agencies, observers learn more about what their government is doing. They learn about the issues facing their community and are empowered to take action, if warranted. They also learn how issues are being addressed. Observers keep elected and appointed officials on notice; they let them know that someone is watching what decisions are being made and how they are being made. They help ensure that the issues facing their community are being handled "in the sunshine," in the open. Ideally, observers are monitoring both the issues being discussed as well as the process by which they are being discussed. While not every item up for discussion will relate to a League's priorities, ensuring that the meeting is being conducted in an open and acceptable way is critical to all of the League's efforts and the health of democracy.



CONTACT KAREN DOUGLAS IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE OBSERVER CORPS. THERE ARE MANY AGENCIES AND COMMITTEES TO OBSERVE!

THIS MONTH'S OBSERVER CORPS REPORTS ARE SHOWN BELOW :

Valley Community Policing Council – Juvenile Justice Experience in Albuquerque 10/22/20

BY Karen Douglas

Albuquerque has six Community Policing Councils offering an opportunity for residents to interact with the APD officers assigned to their area. The 2014 US DOJ (US Attorney)/City of Albuquerque (APD) Consent Decree/Court Approved Settlement Agreement (CASA) mandated establishment of the CPCs which hold monthly meetings. Karen Douglas has served as the LWV Observer to the Valley CPC since 2016 – LWVCNM seeks additional observers for other CPC meetings.

The 10/22/20 meeting of the Valley CPC featured a panel discussing juvenile justice. Panel members were:

- Judge Marie Ward who has presided over Children's Court since 2014 and prior 8 years served as a hearing officer for Family Court. NM child welfare cases exceed all other case categories.
- Eva Buchwald, Social Worker and children's advocate assigned to Juvenile Defense Division and child welfare
- APD Lieutenant Saunders who manages oversight for Albuquerque Crimes against Children Division with the Special Victims Section which includes sex crimes. The Bernalillo County Juvenile Detention reform has served as a national model since 2005.

This juvenile justice topic is particularly appropriate for LWV evaluation as the LWVNM Administration of Justice position including Juvenile Justice was most recently revised 2017 and the June 2020 LWVUS Convention included the Caucus "Making Democracy Work in Criminal Justice Reform."

LWVNM believes that the system should provide:

1. trained and qualified judges, police, probation personnel, lawyers, providers, appointed advocates and others in the juvenile justice system;
2. local forensic diagnostic and/or evaluation services;
3. treatment programs to meet identified needs;
4. due process and legal representation at all stages of the child's contact with the law;
5. provision of legal and safe detention accommodations for all juveniles in custody;
6. monitoring of substitute care through Citizens Review Boards and Court Appointed Special Advocates;
7. education for all youth in the juvenile justice system.

Continued on next page.....

JUVENILE JUSTICE OBSERVER REPORT, continued from previous page....

50% of Albuquerque homicides are domestic violence cases and the September 2020 Civilian Police Oversight Agency statistics indicate that more than twice as many APD Use of Force responses were recorded for family disputes than UOF for any other category of police call.

Children's Court focuses on a Quality Improvement strategy with a decrease in juvenile justice filings, instead providing referrals to services. This public health model emphasizes rehabilitation to reduce delinquency and many youth meeting with probation officers are referred to educational navigators. Probation officers file complaints less than 50% of occurrences. Youth offenders with three or fewer misdemeanor offenses are referred to diversion programs but upon a first felony are referred to the District Attorney – each is appointed council (some from Public Defender's office) and meet with a judge prior to 24 hrs of detention for these 3 concerns: risk to self, risk to community, or flight risk. Juveniles completing requirements within 6 months have charges dismissed. Those youth reaching 18 years of age have records sealed, offering a fresh start. Youth referred to CYFD may be committed for a 1-2 year term with CYFD managing subsequent probation - both judges and officers realize this route is not effective for rehabilitation and seek diversion. Studies have indicated that incarcerated youth have had more than 8 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE, typically abuse or neglect). Youth who have been involved in the juvenile justice system with successful subsequent life experience serve as the "credible messenger" for young offenders and provide the most effective models. There is a problem with youth "aging out" of system at 18 when placement outside of the home with a relative offered a monetary allotment may be necessary to avoid future homelessness. Fostering Connections has an agreement with CYFD to offer housing and educational services. Bernalillo County District Attorney Raul Torres recommends the UNM Adobe program which panelists also agreed has a greater success rate in reducing youth recidivism within the juvenile justice system by offering needed services. Early childhood education also reduces the probability of youth entering the juvenile justice system.

APD officers currently provide a "Resource Card" to homeless individuals with contact information for services to respond to their needs – these could be provided to families when disputes arise that result in requests for APD intervention and could provide a more successful outcome.

New Mexico Public Regulatory Commission meeting

November 4, 2020

By George Richmond, LWVCNM Observer

[Observer provided background information: One of the Albuquerque Commissioners (District 1), Cynthia Hall, was re elected November 3 for a four year term. However, since Constitutional Amendment 1 passed, she will serve only two years. In the next legislative session, the legislature will likely write enabling legislation, possibly adapting it from some of the states that now have appointed commissioners. An objective of such legislation will likely be to create the criteria for creating a list of qualified people to be appointed. As you can see from the balance of my report, as the nature of the utility industry is changing in a major way, different skills, in science and engineering, and in business, will be needed, as the energy industry, in the generation and transmission of electric power, will be done much differently than it has been done from the earliest days.]

Most meetings begin with approval of agenda, minutes, then routine items prepared by the staff of commission approval. Today's meeting included a brief presentation by Xcel Energy for information purposes.

[Xcel Energy Inc. is a utility holding company based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, serving more than 3.3 million electric customers and 1.8 million natural gas customers in Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota, Colorado, Texas and New Mexico in 2017.]

The company discussed their business in NM, which is in the southeast part of the state, from Clovis south. The company also operates in parts of TX and OK. When NM had its recent cold spell, the Xcel customers in TX lost service from ice storms. Also, the NM gas/oil business in southeast NM is still growing, but at a slower rate. Xcel pointed out the need for remote meter reading to save money in reading meters. This practice will come, in time, to New Mexico. A key point is how the upgrades are paid for: Front end charges to PNM customers??

This presentation was for information purposes an Xcel comes in every few months for updates. The company has some renewable generating facilities in NM and will add more as it ends its coal generating plants. *Continued.....*

PRC Observer report continued from previous page...


The next presentation, and the most important, was on the 10 year plan for modernizing the Grid System in New Mexico. The full plan is under development and will be completed by next April. A branch of the NM State Government, along with the University and National Labs, will work on the presentation. LWVNM may wish to follow this matter and comment. In the past, a few coal fired plants would generate electric power, then use transmission lines, or a Grid, to send the power to cities/towns for distribution to businesses/households for their electric needs. The future grid will connect many renewable, solar/wind, generating sites with the Grid which must be more robust, as some of the power generated will come from battery storage and some from renewable generators, and could be sold out of state. Certainly California is a potential client for power produced in New Mexico.



More from George on the November 18, 2020 PRC Meeting.....At today's meeting, four members of the Santa Fe Institute presented to the PRC on "Energy Transition in New Mexico." In summary, the change from fossil fuel to renewables plus an improved grid and sales to other states, notably CA and AZ, in the future, will require a much different and more efficient production and distribution of electric power. From other matters at the PRC, I sense that the Avangrid purchase of PRC will make the process flow better. The Santa Fe Institute was hired about one year ago to assist the PRC in its work. The PRC hopes to learn from the SFI ways to reduce the costs of operation for electric utilities, as the current practice does not favor or reward cost control. The PRC is also working with PNM to learn how large the customer-owned Solar Power system is now, and how large it might be in the future, since customer who generate their own power through solar sources is a "lost forever" customer for PNM.

EDITOR'S NOTE: I chose the associated picture of an electric transmission grid because I want all our members to be aware of what establishing electric power grids can mean to New Mexico's beautiful rural viewscape, something that we all treasure and which entices thousands of tourists to our State. Each citizen should follow closely the siting and development of the grid.....Mary Wilson

OBSERVER REPORTS CONTINUE ON PAGE 9.....



LWV is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy.

There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity.

**LWVCNM Observer Report Summary:
City of Albuquerque Mental Health Response Advisory Committee (MHRAC) Meeting
November 17, 2020 5-7 pm (submitted by Lani Desaulniers)**

EDITOR'S NOTE: In accordance with the proposed Settlement Agreement between the U.S. Department of Justice and the City of Albuquerque, the purpose of the Mental Health Response Advisory Committee is to provide guidance to the City of Albuquerque Police Department. The committee members come from all walks of life and are committed to improving the lives of those with mental illness and their interactions with law enforcement in Albuquerque. They include mental health providers, the Police, the court system, advocates for and family members of people with mental health issues, and consumers of mental health services. The Committee analyzes and recommends appropriate changes to policies, procedures, and training methods regarding police contact with persons who may be mentally ill or experiencing a mental health crisis.

Several issues were addressed during this session:

Public Comment (I joined this meeting at the conclusion of this segment.) Agenda and official minutes will be available for review on the [MHRAC website](#).

- There was discussion about adequacy of resources for crisis intervention training for cadets and officers mentioned the Independent Monitor Report.
- Albuquerque Community Safety Department update was presented by Mariela Ruiz-Angel, director. Planning continues. They are still seeking community and stakeholder input. Staff have not yet been hired. More information is available at <https://www.cabq.gov/acs>
- New Shelter Update presented by Quinn Donnay. She reported that the Coordinated Community-wide Framework on Homelessness Draft Plan
- has been posted by the Homeless Coordinating Council. They currently plan to create a number of smaller scale shelters that serve different populations (single men, women and children and young adults). The Council is taking public comments via Survey Monkey
- They meet on alternate Tuesdays. <http://www.cabq.gov/family/partner-resources/meeting-minutes-agendas/homeless-coordinating-council>
- Mobile Crisis Teams - provide intervention for nonviolent behavioral health emergencies– dispatched through 911. The city/county collaboration has provided services through contract with HopeWorks. This contract is expiring and the City of Albuquerque will now run this program. A plan is being drafted to address the continued need for services in the county.
- Brief updates from APD Crisis Intervention Team, Crisis Outreach and Support Team, and Albuquerque Fire and Rescue (AFR) were provided.
- AFR has finalized a protocol for providing transportation for children 12 and under who are experiencing a nonviolent behavioral health emergency – as an alternative to APD transport
- Discussion of Independent Monitor Report 12
- General discussion about role of MHRAC as an advisory body to APD. Recommendation that the group should seek to identify ways to provide more assistance to APD.
- Monthly meetings every 3rd Tuesday (open to the public). Next meeting: Dec 15th 5-7pm.

Happy Hanukkah!



**REMEMBER TO NAME LWVCNM
AS THE CHARITY TO BENEFIT
FROM YOUR PURCHASES ON
AMAZON.COM. GO TO SMILE
AMAZON.COM AND REGISTER.**

EQUAL RIGHTS IN NEW MEXICO

William E. Warren*

January 28, 2009

Editor's note: Co-president Karen Wentworth discovered this informative article and, knowing how much League members love history, we are printing it in installments over the next several months. Next month: The State's ratification of the Federal ERA.

New Mexico Equal Rights Amendment

It was clear following the failure of the Committee Substitute for House Bill 183 that any legislation dealing with equal rights was going to have a tough time in the New Mexico Senate. The conservative leadership provided by Senators Ike Smalley of Deming and Aubrey Dunn of Alamogordo had little interest in equal rights. There is an old adage in mathematical circles that says if you can't solve a specific problem, then generalize it. That is, consider the specific problem as a special case of a much larger class of problems and often the solution procedure becomes clear. Representative Max Coll of Roswell and I got together after the 1971 Legislative Session to discuss a strategy on equal rights. We decided that passage of specific legislation was doubtful but if we could get an Equal Rights Constitutional Amendment passed in New Mexico, then the legislature would have no choice but to adopt a number of statute changes to comply with the Amendment. The timing for such an amendment seemed excellent since the United States Congress at that very time was debating just such an amendment to the United States Constitution. A large number of women's groups in New Mexico were already getting involved to promote passage of the Federal Equal Rights Amendment and they more than welcomed the chance to support a New Mexico Equal Rights Amendment.



Starting in the Spring of 1971, a group of women supporting both State and Federal Equal Rights Amendments began meeting about once a month at the University of New Mexico Law School. Max Coll and I, along with Sen. Tibo Chavez of Belen who was also the Majority Floor Leader of the Senate, were the only legislators to attend these meetings and we attended all of them. In November of 1971, Virginia Ahern formed a coalition of groups supporting equal rights which became known as the Equal Rights Legislation Committee. This committee was the group officially organized to promote adoption of a New Mexico Equal Rights Amendment and ratification of a federal amendment if

passed by the United States Congress. It was decided by the coalition that for political reasons the Equal Rights Amendment should be introduced in the House during the 1972 Legislative Session. The liberal and progressive leadership of the House under Speaker Walter Martinez, Majority Leader David Salman, and the Mama Lucy Gang was much more sympathetic to the issue than the Senate. Rep. Max Coll agreed to have an appropriate Joint Resolution drawn up by the Legislative Council Service for introduction at the 1972 Legislative Session. The coalition began an intensive lobbying effort across the state to support passage of both the Federal Equal Rights Amendment and the New Mexico Equal Rights Amendment.

In the 1972 Legislative Session, Max Coll and I introduced House Joint Resolution 2, the New Mexico Equal Rights Amendment. This Joint Resolution was referred to the House Judiciary Committee. At the hearing, all groups in the coalition testified on its behalf and the Committee voted a DO PASS and referred it to the House Floor. As expected, the full House passed the Equal Rights Amendment on a vote of 59-2 and this Amendment moved on to the Senate. Senate Majority Leader Tibo Chavez carried House Joint Resolution 2 in the Senate. The Resolution was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee for hearing. Considerable support was expressed at the Committee hearing and Senator Chavez defused opposition by pointing out that this was a Constitutional Amendment requiring voter ratification at the next general election. He argued that the Legislature should let the citizens of the state decide this important issue.

Continued on next page.....

NEW MEXICO EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT, continued.....This convinced most Senators, the more conservative members being convinced that the citizens of the state would enthusiastically reject the amendment. Also, Max Coll has indicated that lobbying was carried out in some very conservative areas by groups of local constituents personally working their senators and representatives over lunches and in meetings. Even those usually opposed to such ideas gave commitments to vote for the amendment while thinking I can support this because a majority of my fellow legislators have always stopped this kind of legislation and will no doubt kill it. This grass roots support really helped passage of this amendment.

The Senate Judiciary Committee voted a DO PASS recommendation on House Joint Resolution 2 after amending it to provide an effective date of July 1, 1973. This amendment was to provide time for the 1973 Legislature to alter all existing laws requiring change if the Equal Rights Amendment was ratified by the voters at the general election in November 1972. The full Senate then passed House Joint Resolution 2 by a vote of 40-2. Joint Resolution 2 was signed by the Secretary of State, making it Constitutional Amendment Number 1 on the ballot in November. In anticipation of the possibility that the New Mexico Equal Rights Amendment would be ratified at the general election of November 1972 and thus require significant changes in the existing state laws, the Legislative Council appointed a Legislative Interim Committee on Equal Rights. This committee was charged with determining what changes in current law would be necessary to comply with the New Mexico Equal Rights Amendment should it be ratified. The Legislative Council also assigned a staff member from the Legislative Council Service to do the necessary research. The committee took no action on specific bills until after the November general election and the New Mexico Equal Rights amendment was ratified. This committee introduced 52 bills in the 1973 Legislative Session and 46 of these bills passed both House and Senate and were signed into law. The two most controversial of these committee bills were the Floor Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 8 known as the "Community Property Act of 1973", and Senate Bill 9 pertaining to the question of descent and distribution. Senate Bill 9 finally gave a married woman testamentary power over her half of the community property.

Campaign for Making Democracy Work® and People Powered Fair Maps® Issue Areas
Redistricting and Apportionment
From LWVUS

- o Promote model redistricting criteria: Advocate for fair map drawing criteria. This includes maps that comply with the 1965 Voting Rights Act, districts drawn based on the population living there (see Census position on apportionment), and protections for language and racial minorities.
- o Strengthen protections for communities of color: Protect communities of interest by determining or assessing core values, needs, or desires of the relevant communities for inclusion in map drawing process.
- o Promote strong transparency requirements: Require hearing dates and times be accessible to the public to view in advance, held in a public setting and have viewer accessibility across multiple platforms, including virtual and in-person options. Implement a reporting requirement on map drawing process.
- o Defend existing systems: Protect the independent redistricting processes currently in place. Defend recent reforms that passed with voter support in recent and past elections.
- o Protect state constitutions: Provisions within state constitutions that promote free and fair elections and redistricting should be protected to ensure an avenue to protect maps through state courts. Leagues with these provisions should monitor activity around these provisions and move to protect any challenges that would roll back this language.
- o Protect apportionment criteria: Ensure that districts are drawn based on total population. Oppose efforts that change apportionment based on citizens or voters.
- o Support extension of redistricting timelines with data delivery adjustments: With the changes in operational timelines, the release of Census data to states will also be delayed. Leagues should remain proactive about supporting reforms in their states that ensure ample time to draw maps based on adjusted delivery timelines. The result of this scenario will vary by state but can include calling for special sessions, changing candidate filing deadlines to allow time to draw maps as allowable under state election laws, state constitutional changes, and legislative changes for statutory deadlines.

OTHER LWVUS MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK® LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES....

Election Administration Reforms

- ◆ Embrace voter registration reforms: This list includes reforms that make it easier for voters to register and maintain their voter registration, including permanent and portable options.
- ◆ Strengthen online voter registration: Make online voter registration accessible to all. Allow voters to check their registration and update their information through a secure online portal.
- ◆ Expand online absentee ballot tracking: Allow voters to track the status of their absentee ballots online upon request as well as after ballots are mailed.
- ◆ Promote election day registration (same day registration): Allows voters to register or update their information on Election Day and cast a regular ballot.
- ◆ Implement automatic voter registration: Automatically register voters at state assistance agencies including the DMV unless they opt out. Reforms should also include safeguards that address the accidental registration of non-citizens (e.g. must be showing of intent) and ensure that protections are in place due to clerical errors.
- ◆ Protect early voting and absentee voting: Consider legislation or reforms that would expand early voting hours, especially weekend hours before Election Day, and provide voters with the opportunity to request an absentee ballot. Additionally, work to make absentee voting more accessible through removing notary requirements, witness signatures requirements, and mailing all active voters their ballot.
- ◆ Weaken voter ID laws: Voters should not be required to show photo ID when voting.
- ◆ Reject proof-of-citizenship requirements in voter registration.
- ◆ Reform voter list maintenance/voter purges: These processes should be done in accordance with the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA). List maintenance is necessary and important and must be done responsibly. Large scale voter purges without safeguards or an appropriate remedial mechanism often result in wrongful disenfranchisement and should be avoided. Enhance voting security and upgrade equipment: Advocate to replace outdated electronic voting equipment with new systems that are secure and accessible and can provide for an accurate, recountable, and transparent count.
- ◆ Support emergency preparedness for elections: Support legislative efforts that expand no excuse absentee voting, and election contingency plans if elections cannot be held in person or if doing so poses a serious safety risk for voters.



Voter Protection

Money in Politics

- ◆ Institute public financing systems: Advocate for public financing systems that put value on small donors, not big donors or secret money, in our electoral process.
- ◆ Require disclosure: Voters deserve to know who is trying to influence their vote. Leagues should be advocating for transparency with regards to funding of political campaigns, advertisements and expenditures.

Our January Unit meeting will feature Dick Mason, Advocacy Chair for LWVNM. Watch the January Voter for details. He will be discussing the State League's legislative priorities for the 2021 NM Legislative Session. You will see some of these same issues!



LWVCNM was proud to be a part of the nationwide effort by the League to educate voters during the 2020 election season. We joined the LWVUS VOTE411 online voter guide community for the first time this year. LWVUS has provided the following report on the success of VOTE411:

The 2020 election cycle saw record voter turnout and for the League of Women Voters Education Fund, our VOTE411.org election information website also broke records! This year more than 6 million users came to VOTE411.org, the League's one-stop-shop election website.

That's about 1.5 million more users than four years ago.

Users who came to VOTE411.org viewed more than 30 million pages of nonpartisan election information, including checking registration, finding polling places, confirming voting hours, and more.

Of the more than 6 million users, nearly 5.3 million of them viewed more than 37 million pages to see exactly what would be on their ballots. These users utilized our candidate guides to research what the candidates had to say in their own words about the issues and compare their positions in more than 22,000 races in all 50 states.

Ahead of this critical election, the League redesigned VOTE411 to be able to support more voters than ever before. We added new features including a 'check your registration map' which more than 300,000 used in just the last two months of the election cycle. Our registration tool saw more than 170,000 users, including 55,000 in October just before registration deadlines hit.

A long-term dream of ours since VOTE411 first launched more than a decade ago, was to make our nonpartisan election information accessible in Spanish. This year, that dream came true. With our partner organization NALEO, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, we translated the critical last-minute COVID related changes all voters faced as well as all the state-specific election information in targeted states during the primary season. The fully translated Spanish language content launched in September. With just two months before Election Day, more than 110,000 users accessed more than 350,000 pages with Spanish language election content.

So who was using VOTE411 in 2020?

57% of our more than 6 million website visitors identify as female according to Google. More than half of our users are between the ages of 18 -44. Our users found VOTE411 so engaging, they spent an average of 5 minutes on the site and averaged more than 5 pages per visit. We supported voters in all fifty states but saw the most website traffic from the following states: Texas, New York, Florida, Michigan, California, North Carolina, Georgia, Massachusetts, Ohio, and Illinois.

In addition to finding election information and researching candidates, more than 2,000 users also signed up to learn more about becoming a poll worker. Through our partnership with Power the Polls, we connected these interested individuals with their local election officials to play an important role in administering elections all over the country.

We thank our partners for helping spread the word and reaching millions of voters and look forward to continuing to build and grow this essential election service to serve more voters every election.

STATISTICS FOR VOTE411 IN NEW MEXICO: In New Mexico, 36067 voters accessed VOTE411 with 47,683 hits to the website. Of those, over 25,000 voters were in our LWVCNM 4-county area. The good news is that for the first time ever, the League had a Voter Guide that reached voters in small towns like Silver City, Tucumcari, Carrizozo, Fort Sumner and many more. There were even 353 voters who used VOTE411 in Hobbs!



2501 San Pedro Dr. NE, Suite 216
Albuquerque, NM 87110

The League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico, a tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) organization is a nonpartisan political organization, that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy by education and advocacy.

APPLICATION FOR LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____ PHONE: _____

Mail above information to LWVCNM, 2501 San Pedro Dr. NE, Suite 216, Albuquerque, NM 87110 along with annual dues as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| First member of household | \$65 |
| Each additional member of household | \$33 |
| Student member (proof required) | \$12 |