

September 2021

The VOTER

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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO
6739 Academy Rd. NE, Suite 124, Albuquerque, NM 87109

MONTHLY CO-PRESIDENTS' REPORT **by** **KAREN DOUGLAS AND DONNA SANDOVAL**

LWVCNM successfully moved to our new office location on Academy Rd. NE in late July. Rearranging furniture and files now provides us with a comfortable atmosphere in which to conduct League business. The larger conference rooms available have already been used for Voter Guide planning meetings. We hope to offer our September 9th luncheon unit meeting as a hybrid, with Board members present in the conference space and the speaker and attendees participating via Zoom. Initial discussion in July projected we could hold in-person meetings starting in October, but resurgence of the pandemic may prevent this. Catered meals, with members having the option of bringing their own lunches, is proposed once in-person meetings can resume.

We encourage members to volunteer in ways that best suit their interests and schedules. Current opportunities are listed on page 4 of this issue. The 501(c)3 activities that the League supports depend on member involvement for furtherance of voter access to non-partisan information and ample opportunity to case their votes, as well as educational information supporting League Positions for Advocacy.

We encourage members to consider issues of import not currently addressed by a LWV Position for future advocacy to local or state government officials. Such issues can be pursued by development of a study proposed during annual winter program planning and committee involvement. For more details, please contact either Karen Douglas, Co-President (ug90t16@unmalumni.com or 505-266-1413) or Jennifer Black, 3rd Vice-President/Program (jblack8162@gmail.com). Member proposals are essential to LWV evaluation of legislation and to advocacy.

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LWVCNM Leadership

Co-Presidents:
Karen Douglas
Donna Sandoval

**1st Vice President/
Vote411.org:**
Karen Wentworth

**2nd Vice President/
Membership:**
Cassandra Spacek

3rd Vice President/Program:
Jennifer Black

**4th Vice President/
Development Committee Chair:**
Vacant

Treasurer:
Denise Blood

Secretary:
Ashley Benning

Voter Services Chair:
Cyprian Devine-Perez

Voter Guide Distribution:
Lani Desaulniers

Sustainability/Climate Change:
Jeanne Logsdon

**Office Manager/Webmaster/
Zoom Host:**
Starlyn Brown

**Advocacy Team/Observer
Corps:**
Alan Ramos

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@lwvcnm.org. If you need help with Zoom, please reach out to our Zoom host, Starlyn Brown, at sbrown@unm.edu.

September 9 (Thursday)—Monthly meeting at noon: Voter Education, Part One

October 14 (Thursday)—Monthly meeting at noon: Voter Education, Part Two

November 10 (Wednesday)—Monthly meeting at noon: Consumer Fraud/Identity Theft

The deadline for the monthly Voter remains the 15th of each month. Please submit your articles to Anne Pierce-Jones, *VOTER* editor, at apiercejones@outlook.com.

To Zoom or Not to Zoom, That is the Question... Fall Update

While we had started the plan to move to a hybrid meeting model in September for our second Thursday monthly member educational meetings, the emergence and strength of the Delta variant has forced us to rethink this goal. With our recent move to the new office space, which has a conference room with a 50-person capacity, we had hoped to offer the option of attending the meetings in person, with the Zoom option remaining for those more comfortable viewing from home, by September. The LWVCNM Board discussed this issue at great length during the August Board meeting and decided to continue with Zoom-only meetings through the October 14th meeting, keeping the health and well-being of our members as our first priority.

We will keep a close eye on the situation as it progresses, while continuing to work on plans for in-person meetings with a lunch option at our new office.

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OFFICE HOURS

Closed until further notice due
to Covid concerns.

The VOTER Editor:
Anne Pierce-Jones
apiercejones@outlook.com

CO-PRESIDENTS' MONTHLY REPORT, continued from page 1...

Update from the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee:

The JEDI committee drafted a survey for students and/or younger adults regarding their interest in political organizations. We hope to have it available within the next month.

The committee met on August 21 with Hannah Burling and Dick Mason about the Action Committee. The Action Committee tracks legislation while the Legislature is in session and monitors potential legislation throughout the year. LWVNM may lobby in support of or in opposition to specific pieces of legislation provided that LWVNM has a [position](#) at the state-wide or national level that is relevant. The Action Committee coordinates the lobbying activities of several of the other LWVNM committees. To join the Action Committee, please contact Richard or Barbara. LWVNM needs individuals able to track bills via the [legislative website](#) (nmlegis.gov) and keep others updated on their progress, and those willing to "lobby from their living room". People who are able to attend committee meetings in Santa Fe at short notice are also needed.

To receive regular updates during the legislative session, please [join the Action mailing list](#).

The Tribal Law Study initial research is complete. Documentation of four focus areas is currently in review. The study group gained seven new members and met on August 8. The study group also decided to add interviews to its research.

To Zoom or Not to Zoom, That is the Question...Fall Update, continued...

While we have been able to host our monthly meetings via Zoom through this long and chaotic year, nothing replaces lunch and lively discussion with our League members. Meanwhile, until we can meet in person on the second Thursday of each month, there are many enriching options for volunteering in small groups. Please see page 4 of this issue for a detailed listing of our current Volunteer Opportunities. Also, we are working on plans for a variety of member gatherings as 2022 unfolds.

Please watch the *VOTER* and other League communications for updates on meeting plans. We look forward to being together again!

Submitted by Jennifer Black, 3rd Vice-President and Program Coordinator

Current LWVCNM Volunteer Opportunities

Voter Guide (Karen Wentworth, kwentworth17@comcast.net) – Identify races for 4 CNM Counties (Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, Valencia) appearing on Ballot; Select races for Hardcopy VG vs. Vote411.org resource online only. Prepare questions for candidates in these races, identify polling places, identify locations willing to provide space for VG distribution, recruit LWV members available to distribute hardcopy, coordinate hardcopy printing with publisher; find digital maps for the races; call candidates to remind them to answer the questions (late August, early September)

(Lani DeSaulniers, LMDesaul@aol.com) **Distribution** of printed Voter Guide

Voter Registrar (Cyprian Devine-Perez, devineperezcyprian@hotmail.com) – Contact LWVCNM Voter Services Chair to arrange for www.Bernco.gov Voter Registrar training. Staff events with probability of citizens seeking registration. Volunteer opportunities also include:

Participate in LWVCNM **Social Media** posts and monitoring sites (Publicity Chair TBD, contact Ashley Benning, apbenning@hotmail.com).

Know your Local Government project (TBD, contact Karen Douglas, 505-266-1413) – interview elected/appointed officials, Meet with 6th grade APS/Charter School Teachers (NM offers a Civics course in the 6th Grade), Edit reports submitted by committee, Interact with Publisher, Compose fundraising letter to support costs not covered by Volunteers

LWVCNM Office Volunteer (Starlyn Brown, sbrown@unm.edu) – staff LWV office M, W, or F ~9:30 am – 12:30 pm. Monitor calls to the office and direct appropriate LWV Officer to respond to questions (phones may be checked remotely, if desired), check CNM email.

LWVCNM Luncheon Unit Hostess (Jennifer Black, jblack8162@gmail.com) - meet with restaurant/catering service to identify 2 choices for monthly luncheon – same price). Check with Office Director for number of calls to office for Reservations). Check email for lunch@lwvcnm.org, Arrange to accept meal delivery for member pickup during monthly meeting at Academy Office (no cash, only credit cards).

Staff Candidate Forums (Mary Henrie Smith, maryhenrie@msn.com) -Timekeeper, Moderator, Question sorter

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RENEWABLE ENERGY STRATEGIES IN ALBUQUERQUE'S CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Last month's *Voter* article on Albuquerque's 2021 Climate Action Plan (CAP) focused on Sustainable Buildings. The topic this month is Renewable Energy, which replaces coal, oil, and natural gas with renewable sources, such as solar and wind energy. Background information is provided to put the CAP's three renewable energy strategies in context.

New Mexico is superbly suited for generating solar and wind energy, and the state has made significant progress in supporting renewable energy development. The state's Energy Transition Act, passed in 2019, set ambitious goals for investor-owned public utilities to shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources: 50% by 2030 and 100% by 2045. (Rural electric cooperatives are given five additional years to meet these goals.) For private property owners, utility and tax incentives are available to those who can afford the upfront costs to install renewable energy systems. And these incentives are working. Albuquerque received recognition in 2020 as a national leader in solar energy per capita (#3 as named by Environment America).

But what about other citizens who cannot take advantage of these incentives? They would like to pay less for electricity and may support renewable energy, but they rent rather than own, cannot afford the initial installation costs, or don't have rooftop space. Albuquerque's 2021 CAP task force decided to focus on "more widespread and equitable access to renewable energy," (p. 17) specifically targeting low-income and frontline communities. This is where the movement toward community solar programs enters the picture. These programs allow individuals to "buy in" to a solar installation in their neighborhood and receive credit on their electric bills for their participation.

The task force identified community solar as a valuable component to include in the CAP. It selected three renewable energy strategies and estimated them to be in place by 2026 (p. 39):

Support local and state-wide standards for community solar programs, micro-grid establishment and grid modernization prioritizing low income areas.

Form partnerships with neighborhoods, businesses, institutions, and utilities to increase solar development prioritizing frontline communities.

Create mechanisms for frontline communities to engage in decision-making regarding the ownership, generation, storage, distribution of, and transition to renewable energy.

Progress is already being made on the first strategy in conjunction with community solar legislation that was supported by the City and passed in the 2021 New Mexico legislative session. This legislation requires that at least 30% of community solar facilities serve low-income households and low-income service organizations. The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (PRC) recently announced that it is working on developing standards for installing community solar projects. It expects to finalize the standards by April 2022. Albuquerque has assigned a city attorney to track and participate in PRC deliberations.

As we asked last month with regard to the CAP Sustainable Building strategies, will it really take 4 years after the PRC sets community solar standards to have community micro-grids in place in low-income communities? Where is the urgency?

Submitted by Jeanne Logsdon, Chair, LWVCNM Environment & Natural Resources Committee

Current LWVCNM Volunteer Opportunities, continued...

LWVCNM Observer Corps volunteers (Alan Ramos, aramos@aerlaw.com) – Select government meeting open to the public of interest to LWVCNM members, observe and report results, coordinate assignment and results with LWVCNM Advocacy Committee, publish report in monthly LWVCNM Voter newsletter (due 15th of each month).

LWVCNM Natural Resources/Climate Action/Sustainability Committee member (Jeanne Logsdon, jlogsdon@unm.edu)

Design a new membership brochure – graphics skills needed. (Sandie Spacek, ccspacek@pacbell.net)

Work with LWVNM Grant development staff to propose/author a grant application for LWVCNM 501C3 activity (Karen Douglas, ug90t16@unmalumni.com) .

LWVCNM Observer Report: Summer, 2021 Community Policing Council Meetings

The six Community Policing Councils are comprised of resident volunteers in neighborhoods served by each of Albuquerque's six Police Commands. CPCs were reorganized from reporting to APD to management by Ed Harness, Executive Director of the Civilian Police Oversight Agency, a body of City Council appointees evaluating Internal Affairs investigations of excessive Police Use of Force and recommending disciplinary measures, where warranted, to the APD Chief.

July CPC meetings focused on mental health issues with CABQ.gov response resources. The panel addressing Albuquerque residents included:

- APD Lt. Matt Deitzel/APD Crisis Intervention Unit
- Bobby Ehrig/Executive Director, Veterans Integration Center
- Mariela Ruiz-Angel/Director, Albuquerque Community Services Department (ACS)

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LWVCNM Observer Report: Summer, 2021, Community Policing Council Meetings, continued...

The Albuquerque Crisis Intervention Unit is involved from initial 911 calls to services provided and frequently deals with substance use disorders. The Mobile Crisis Team retains a full-time Psychiatrist on staff for communication with hospitals and 4 full-time APD Officers. 203 APD officers have received enhanced CIT training supplementing the basic 40 hour course with two additional levels of training.

The NM Veterans Integration center provides homeless veteran services throughout NM to 3400 veterans. The 2020 success rate for services was 80% still housed after one year. Some veterans are not eligible for VA, only educational benefits. Homeless veterans all suffered trauma and 12% have serious mental illness. The Veterans Integration Center provides wrap-around programs sourcing some needed services.

The Albuquerque Community Safety Department (ACS) is a newly created city department which will help shift responses to 911 calls involving homelessness, addiction, and mental health to specially trained professionals. The goal is to permit APD officers to focus on core police work. Staff for this new department have been hired and are undergoing training in preparation for ACS to assume these responsibilities. This will support the city's effort to destigmatize and decriminalize mental health and behavioral health victims. Plans for triage of 911 calls are in development. Residents will be asked to call 311 to report homeless encampments or to request needle pick-ups. In July, 2022, the National 988 Suicide Prevention hotline will go into effect and will use ACS as a resource for calls from our region. The FY22 ACS budget will be \$7.73 million. Albuquerque is evaluating success from the Eugene, Oregon, CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets) program. ACS will be distributing housing vouchers, but needs more Albuquerque locations willing to accept vouchers.

Submitted by Karen M. Douglas

**Observer Report: Bernalillo County Commission's
August 17, 2021 Meeting—
University of New Mexico Hospital Gives Annual Report to County
Commission**

The University of New Mexico Hospital is the only Level 1 Trauma Unit in New Mexico, but understanding how it works is complicated.

UNM operates the hospital on behalf of Bernalillo County. Property owners in the county do the heavy lifting of keeping the hospital in business through a mill levy that produces more than \$95 million dollars a year. That pays for operating the buildings and equipment in the hospital. New construction usually gets some financing from the state legislature, but maintenance falls to the county.

UNMH is a community hospital and is responsible for indigent care. In theory it is a county hospital and must care for anyone in the county regardless of ability to pay. In reality it is the hospital of last resort for anyone in the state.

Once a year the hospital must report to the county regarding its use of the mil levy money. Usually, the hospital administrators also include details in a formal report that gives information about hospital internal goals and allows people to compare basic measurements of patient services to other hospitals.

Page 11 of this link will give you detailed information about UNMH.

<http://bernalillocountynm.igam2.com/Citizens/FileOpen.aspx?Type=1&ID=2510&Inline=True>

Please see page 29 of the current Member Handbook for the relevant League position on this issue.

Submitted by Karen Wentworth

Join Us! Thursday, September 9 at Noon via Zoom This Month's Topic: VOTER EDUCATION, Part One

With a host of local positions up for election on November 2, 2021, we will be hosting a two-part Voter Education series for our September and October meetings. In September, we welcome back Jaime Diaz and Nathan Jaramillo from the Bernalillo County Clerk's Office to help us navigate the upcoming election. They will cover the following topics, with plenty of time for a Q & A after their presentation:

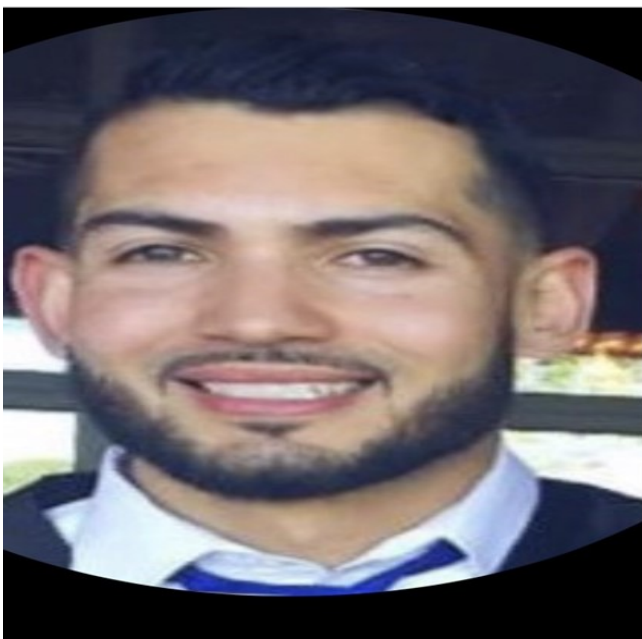
- Overview of their roles at the County Clerk's office
- Recent/planned changes in voting processes
- How the County is dealing with the concerns/allegations of voter fraud & misinformation in other states
- How the League can be helpful in supporting upcoming elections.

Watch for your LWVCNM TOPICS email reminders with the September 9 meeting Zoom link.

Deputy County Clerk Jaime Diaz began his election career in McKinley County in 1985, moved to Bernalillo County in 1998, and retired in 2010. In both counties, he served as Election Bureau Administrator. He has administered elections through four voting systems, with the current system being the Dominion Voting System. He has administered election through three Voter Registration systems, with the current system being SERVIS. He came out of retirement in 2017 to assist Bernalillo County Clerk Linda Stover. His current focus is Voter Registration and Election Administration.



Nathan Jaramillo: Joined the Bernalillo County Clerk's office in 2017 as the Bureau of Elections Administrator. Prior to that, he was in the private sector for 7 years utilizing his skill set in refining operational processes. He graduated from the University of New Mexico in 2009 where he majored in Political Science Pre-law and Business Administration.





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Albuquerque, NM 87109

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, 6739 Academy Rd. NE, Suite 124, Albuquerque, NM 87109, along with annual dues as follows:

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