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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**

Early Fall, 2021, plans for the League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico (LWVCNM) included resumption of in-person monthly meetings in January, 2022, but our members are again isolating themselves from the rages of the Covid pandemic. However, recent declines in hospitalizations in states first affected by the Omicron variant offer the hope of being able to socialize again soon.

The March, 2022, elections will introduce Vote411 coverage for these communities in Sandoval and Valencia counties: Bernalillo, Corrales, Cuba, Jemez Springs, Rio Rancho, San Ysidro, and Bosque Farms. Janet Blair is designing a flyer to publicize this extension of LWVCNM service to the electorate. The upcoming Voters Guide, which will cover the four-county region for both primary and mid-term (November, 2022) elections, will also involve many LWVCNM volunteers.

The January 13th General Meeting focused on the New Mexico redistricting efforts following the 2020 Census. Fair Districts New Mexico's LWVNM Chair Dick Mason and Kathleen Burke discussed the New Mexico redistricting process, Thornburg Grant funding, and resultant maps. A discussion of the proposed Constitutional Amendment was included.

The February 10, 2022, General Meeting will feature Carol Pierce, Director of Family and Community Services for the City of Albuquerque. She will address "Mayor Keller's Homelessness Initiatives". You may remember Carol Pierce, as she served as President of LWVABC from 1991-1993 and was recognized on the 1999 LWVABC Roll of Honor.

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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:**

Karen Wentworth

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

February 10 (Thursday), noon—LWVCNM is excited to announce that Carol Pierce, Director of Family and Community Services for the City of Albuquerque, will present “Mayor Keller’s Homelessness Initiatives”. Many of you will remember Carol Pierce, as she served as President of LWVABC from 1991-1993 and was recognized on the 1999 LWVABC Roll of Honor.

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.

Volunteer Opportunity: The LWVCNM is looking for additional office volunteers. Right now, the work is remote and mainly involves pulling and responding to phone messages. If you have even a couple of hours a month available and would like to support the League in this way, please reach out to Starlyn Brown at sbrown@unm.edu

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...

LWVCNM members attending the annual Program Planning session on Saturday, January 22, 2022, had an opportunity to discuss the January 15, 2022, LWVNM concurrence with the California League of Women Voters' Criminal Justice Reform position, including a detailed Policing Practices section absent from the current LWVNM Administration of Justice position. Each of the four New Mexico local Leagues presented an educational program to their members for consideration of this concurrence. The November 19, 2021, Central New Mexico Criminal Justice Reform Panel discussion included the Albuquerque Police Department (APD) Deputy Superintendent of Police Reform, the new Albuquerque Community Safety Department Director (non-uniformed social workers and psychologists responding to 911 calls involving substance abuse, mental illness, and homelessness), the Disability Rights New Mexico Executive Director and attorney, and a professor offering criminal justice courses at New Mexico Highlands University. LWVNM also considered the requests for concurrence with the League of Women Voters of New York's Position on Health Care and the League of Women Voters of California's stance on immigration. Delegates to the 2023 convention of the League of Women Voters of New Mexico will have an opportunity to provide final approval of LWVNM Board decisions regarding state Positions.

UPDATE FROM JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION (JEDI)

The members met on Sunday, January 16, 2022. JEDI will be contributing information to LWVNM for a grant application to further JEDI efforts. Ideas for the uses of the grant funds would be scholarships for New Mexico college students, to encourage membership in the League of Women Voters, and to bring diversity to the League. New Mexico League of Women Voters President Hannah Burling will follow up with JEDI if any additional information is needed to receive this grant.

JEDI registered voters at the University of New Mexico School of Law in September, 2021. JEDI will be expanding to the UNM Main Campus sometime during the next few months. We are trying to partner with another event on the Main Campus. The event date is not certain at this time.

WASTE AND RECYCLING IN ALBUQUERQUE'S CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

You might be surprised to learn that reducing waste and promoting recycling is a topic in Albuquerque's 2021 Climate Action Plan (CAP). Only four per cent of the city's 2017 greenhouse gases ("GHGs") came from this category, and it seems to me that Albuquerque has done a good job of promoting recycling. For example, residential curbside recycling bins have been provided to every household since about 2013. At that time, the City partnered with Friedman Recycling to collect and process recyclable materials. I have found the glass recycling sites around town busy and the bins full. (This includes quite a large quantity of wine bottles, by the way.) The annual tree-cycling effort that takes place after the holidays is promoted widely. So why highlight the importance of waste and recycling in the Climate Action Plan?

The CAP task force identified several types of waste in this category. Solid waste is divided into trash going into the landfill and recyclable materials that are diverted from the trash and sold or reprocessed for other uses. Also included is green waster that is collected from residences twice a year in the spring and fall. A surprise to me is the inclusion of wastewater. I never thought of wastewater as "waste", but of course "waste" is in its name. Methane gas from wastewater treatment plants and the Cerro Colorado landfill is a major source of GHGs, so efforts to control methane emissions from these sources will reduce GHGs. The task force also discussed big-picture issues of how to reduce waste throughout a product's life cycle ("from cradle to grave") and how to encourage reuse rather than disposability, noting that these are system-wide problems.

Building upon what has been achieved and upon what seems to be achievable by 2030, the CAP task force identified four recommendations to pursue:

- 1) Fund physical infrastructure and coordination for neighborhood and school composting, including educational programs about how to compost and benefits for greenhouse gas reduction, soil health, regenerative agriculture, native crops, local foods, and plant-based diets.
- 2) Promote methods of recycling, reuse, and composting in frontline communities—highlighting their health and environmental benefits with the support of community-based educators (i.e., "promotoras", who have specialized training to educate their local communities on health and other social issues).
- 3) Use public policy to reduce plastic waste in the public sector.
- 4) Increase accountability for corporate producers and polluters—including, but not limited to the reduction of construction and other waste and increased electronic and textile recycling.

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Waste and Recycling in Albuquerque's Climate Action Plan, continued from Page 4....

One innovative way that the City has utilized waste to control GHGs is by composting green waste at the Cerro Colorado landfill. The green waste is converted into mulch and applied over the collected trash each day. The mulch captures methane gas, which is then diverted to the Metropolitan Detention Center, two miles away. The gas is used as fuel for the boiler that heats water for use at the detention center so that fossil fuel energy is not purchased and used. A win-win-win solution!

Another notable achievement in reducing plastic waste is the City's Clean and Green Retail Ordinance, which banned the use of plastic bags by retailers (with exceptions) on January 1, 2020, to reduce the number of thin plastic bags that are not recyclable and that are typically tossed into the trash. Enforcement of the ban was temporarily suspended because of the pandemic. When the ban was reinstated in August, 2021, some environmental groups discovered that thicker plastic bags were not explicitly covered by the ordinance, and these continued to be used. Our League joined 25 other organizations in signing a petition to the Mayor. The petition requested that the City eliminate the use of plastic carry-out bags less than 4 mils thick. The City accepted this proposal and added it to the Clean and Green Retail Ordinance, effective on December 1, 2021. This is one small step to reduce plastic waste and the fossil fuels used to produce plastic.

Submitted by Jeanne Logsdon, Chair

LWVCNM Environment and Natural Resources Committee

ACKNOWLEDGING THE LOSS OF GEORGE RICHMOND

(Image courtesy of the Santa Fe New Mexican)

From Karen Wentworth: The League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico has lost an important member. George Richmond died in mid-January after suffering a series of health problems. George was the kind of member who drives League presidents crazy. He was al-

ways pushing hard to make this organization better, more active, more inclusive, more aggressive in educating voters. He always has ten good ideas for things we should be doing, and I always felt guilty when we did not move quickly enough to suit him. He was always in what Congressman John Lewis would have called “good trouble”, and we will miss him.



From Alan Ramos: I met George Richmond three weeks after I arrived in Albuquerque. We met at an Impact and Coffee meeting (a networking group for non-profits). George regularly spoke passionately about the League. He encouraged me to join and participate, which I did. What impressed me most about George, in addition to his passion for the League, was his commitment to community involvement, his sense of humor, and the depth and breadth of his intellect. Losing

George saddens me. While I am richer for having known George, I feel poorer for his passing.

From Trish Lopez: I was saddened to hear about George Richmond’s passing this weekend, and wanted to share this with you: When I was a board member, I thought it was very important that we conduct “exit interviews” with any board member who served and then resigned. I don’t believe there was a consensus on this, as no one conducted one with me when I left. I considered George a friend. He agreed with the idea, then indulged me by allowing me to interview him as a “first” for my exit interviews. Nothing huge here, but it’s

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Acknowledging the Loss of George Richmond, continued...

Worth mentioning that he later told me that we need to feel comfortable, as board members, with being honest and forthcoming with each other, and that he kept it “diplomatic” in his responses to avoid “uncomfortable conversations”. I told him that I like uncomfortable conversations because it’s how we grow. He smiled and patted me on the back. We didn’t discuss it further.

From Meg Wente: George’s reports about the PRC have brought the work of that committee alive for me. I have been very pleased that George made the effort to find out what the group’s meetings focused on and interpreted that effort for those like me who had little knowledge about the topics. I will miss his enlightenment, and I admire his many other efforts in support of the League.

Bernalillo County Commission Receives Report on Sheriff's Office, and It Is Not a Pretty Picture

In September, 2020, the Bernalillo County Commission was concerned enough about the secrecy within the Bernalillo County Sheriff’s Office to create the “Sheriff’s Office Advisory and Review Board” to increase the public accountability of the Bernalillo County Sheriff’s Office.

In January, the Commission released its first report. The report outlines a sheriff’s office that is secretive, unclear about where it is concentrating its efforts, and unwilling to even release basic crime statistics. There is no public information available on the number of murders in Bernalillo County, either for last year or for the year before.

Although the sheriff’s office has apparently created mental health crisis teams, nowhere is there an account of what they are actually doing, how many calls

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Homelessness Initiatives in Albuquerque— A Comparison with Other Communities



Homelessness has become a major problem in municipalities across our nation, and the emergence of the 2020 pandemic has worsened this concerning situation. Additionally, both those housed without substantial resources to maintain this level of stability and those with suffering from chronic homelessness are threatened with this loss of basic security impacting their health and wellbeing. Recent Albuquerque initiatives related to homelessness include the establishment in 2021 of the Albuquerque Community Safety Department (ACS), which responds to 911 calls involving homelessness, mental illness, and substance abuse. This may serve to alleviate some concerns of many residents. The Gateway Center, currently under development, is also promoted as a partial solution to this issue of human health and wellbeing for the Albuquerque metropolitan area.

LWVCNM members will have an opportunity to discuss these and related homelessness concerns during our general meeting on February 10th with Carol Pierce, Director of Family and Community Services for the City of Albuquerque. Many LWVCNM members may remember Ms. Pierce's contributions as L WVABC President from 1991 to 1993, as well as her 1999 L WVABC recognition on the Roll of Honor.

Carol Pierce has more than 30 years of experience working in the health field, in both the public and private sectors, in New Mexico. Most recently she was the manager for the School-Based Health Center Program at the University of New Mexico's Department of Pediatrics. Prior to her UNM position, Ms. Pierce provided public health consultation services to a wide range of

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Homelessness Initiatives in Albuquerque—A Comparison with Other Communities, continued...

Government, private and non-profit organizations, hospitals, and schools. She also served as the New Mexico Department of Health District One Public Health Director.

Ms. Pierce also spent more than a decade as a health care provider and administrator, including nine years at Presbyterian Healthcare Services. She earned her RN diploma from the Presbyterian School of Nursing. Ms. Pierce completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Denver and earned her Master's degree from the University of New Mexico. She currently serves on the ARCA Board of Directors and is an elder at Covenant Presbyterian Church.

Bernalillo County Commission Receives Report on Sheriff's Office, and It Is Not a Pretty Picture, continued...

they are answering, when they are called out, or for what circumstances the sheriff's office uses these teams.

If you look at the Bernalillo County Sheriff's website, it is virtually vacant. The office does communicate via its Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram channels, but not everyone has access to these social media sources. The full report can be found in the [Agenda Packet of the Bernalillo County Commission](#) , but considerable scrolling is required to find it. I cannot find it anywhere else on the County website.

The difficult part about this is that the Bernalillo County Commission has no authority to require the Sheriff's Office to do anything, since the Sheriff is an independent, elected official.

Submitted by Karen Wentworth



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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) | No Charge |