

November 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**

This November, the expanded ballot featuring many races not previously held concurrently necessitated a more complex ballot for New Mexico residents. This further increased the value of the Voter Guides (hardcopy for Bernalillo County only for 2021) and Vote411.org (for Sandoval, Torrance, Valencia, and Bernalillo counties). The Central New Mexico Voter Guide effort—ably chaired again by Karen Wentworth—was distributed by a host of LWVCNM volunteers coordinated by Lani DeSaulniers. Target delivery date was October 14. Both the September and October LWVCNM unit meetings gave our members and guests a broader perspective on election issues.

The League of Women Voters of New Mexico is considering concurrence with the California League of Women Voters' Criminal Justice Reform Position (see pages 4-6 of this VOTER). The California position contains more extensive provisions than the current New Mexico Administration of Justice position, and members from four New Mexico League of Women Voters local leagues will all have an educational opportunity, allowing for a better-informed decision. LWV of Central New Mexico is hosting a panel discussion on Tuesday evening, November 9, 2021, which will feature attorneys, uniformed and civilian law enforcement officials, and underrepresented communities—each providing a unique perspective on public safety.

November is also the month of Thanksgiving. We are reminded that the outlook surrounding most of our circumstances related to the current Covid pandemic has improved since Thanksgiving, 2020. Proven vaccines are now widely available. Businesses are operating again, although some are functioning at reduced capacity. Vaccines are being approved for children, offering safety during the return to in-classroom education. Employment opportunities are improving. However, the more serious Delta Variant and unknown aspects of the emerging Mu Variant necessitated the current New Mexico mask mandate and serve to remind us that restrictions may continue for many months. Regardless of when a return to a more normal, unrestricted lifestyle occurs, the impact of the pandemic and the many lives lost will never be forgotten.

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THE VOTER is published monthly by The League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico
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LWVCNM Leadership**Co-Presidents:**

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Donna Sandoval

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Vote411.org:

Karen Wentworth

2nd Vice President/

Membership:

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Jennifer Black

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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.

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

December 10 (Thursday)—Monthly meeting at noon: Priority Legislative Issues/Highlights of First Senate Term. Speaker: The Honorable Ben Ray Lujan, United States Senator

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.

PLEASE PARTICIPATE

The Central New Mexico League of Women Voters (LWVCNM) communicates with members in two ways. We send the **VOTER** to you through Constant Contact.

We send meeting notices and other information to you through our listserv, LWVCNMTopics, which any members can use to communicate with other members. Lately we have gotten a number of requests to withdraw from the listserv.

It's easy to understand that you don't want to hear from us every few days, but this is also a primary way we ask for volunteers, tell you if there is something important going on in the League, and share information about issues that concern us.

Please stay in touch. The League has a lot to offer, and we need you as an active member in order to make it all work.

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...

JEDI: The LWVCNM has been busy registering people to vote. Donna Sandoval and Brittney Dutton Leyda, both members of JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion), hosted a joint voter registration event with the American Civil Liberties Union on September 30. The event took place at the University of New Mexico Law School. We assisted nine people in registering to vote and helped another five update their voter information. The JEDI group is a program through the League of Women Voters of New Mexico and is dedicated to ensuring that the New Mexico League always welcomes and actively supports full participating membership from all parts of New Mexican society, especially those not traditionally affiliated with the New Mexico League of Women Voters. JEDI fosters activist membership in the LWVNM that opens doors to dynamic, nonpartisan participation in civic life. This leads to improvements in justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in all dimensions of policy and law in New Mexico.

Tribal Law Study Group: Several members of JEDI, members of LWVNM and the other leagues in New Mexico, also participate in the Tribal Law Study. The study group held an informational meeting its findings on Saturday, October 16, 2021. The meeting provided the background on objectives of the study, along with a brief overview of each of the four focus areas. If you were unable to attend, the meeting was recorded and will be available on the League of Women Voters of New Mexico website. Additionally, the Tribal Law Study Group will post a guide to the objectives and focus of the study on the LWVNM website.

VOTER GUIDE DISTRIBUTION REPORT

Huge thanks to the many volunteers who assisted with the Print Voter Guide distribution effort!

Our great team of callers (Anne Callaghan, Rita Getty, Laura McGowan, Patsy Nelson, Liz Shields, Sandie Spacek, and Meg Wente) did the advance work to identify and confirm delivery details for sites in the community who stock our guides.

Guides were delivered to the County Clerk's Office for use at the early voting centers, to library branches, and to community and senior centers within Bernalillo County. Our able and enthusiastic delivery crew (Jean Anderson, Judy Binder, Starlyn Brown, Anne Callaghan, Karen Douglas, Lois Kennedy, Jeanne Logsdon, Laura McGowan, David and Jane McGuire, Don and Michelle Meaders, Liz Shields, and Meg Wente) picked up 8,000 additional guides and delivered them to more than 67 locations in the community.

A special recognition and thanks go to Sandie Spacek, who graciously hosted the guide distribution event from her garage. It was wonderful to meet and greet members in person again!!!

Submitted by Lani Desaulniers

LWVCA Position on Criminal Justice

Criminal Justice Reform

State or National:

State

Position in Brief:

The LWV California supports:

- a criminal justice system that is just, effective, equitable, transparent, and that fosters public trust at all stages, including policing practices, pre-trial procedures, sentencing, incarceration, and re-entry;
- the elimination of systemic bias, including the disproportionate policing and incarceration of marginalized communities;
- policing practices that promote safety for both law enforcement officers and the communities they serve;
- collaboration between government and community throughout every stage of the criminal justice system;
- a focus on humane treatment and rehabilitation with the goal of promoting the successful reentry into communities of those who have been incarcerated; and
- reliance on evidence-based research in decision-making about law-enforcement programs and policies (including scheduled, periodic audits of program and policy effectiveness)

Details:

Policing Practices - constitutional policies and procedures established by law enforcement with input from the communities they serve

- Ensure that crime prevention and promotion of public safety are the primary roles of state and local law enforcement agencies.
 - Build public trust and positive community relationships through police engagement with community members.
 - Encourage community participation in the development of policing policy.
 - Provide police accountability via independent citizen oversight of law enforcement and publicly available data on officer conduct.
 - Disseminate information to the public about policing policies, recruitment, procedures for complaint/commendation, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens and officers in interactions with each other.
 - Provide sufficient psychological services and counseling to meet stress-related needs of police personnel.
 - Staff police departments to reflect the diversity of the communities they serve, and establish recruitment efforts that reflect this principle.
 - Train police to identify individuals with mental health conditions, disabilities, or substance abuse/addiction, so that officers will request support from appropriate medical and mental health professionals, with the goal of diverting those individuals into treatment instead of jail.
 - Require all officers to render first aid to people who have been injured as a result of police action.
 - Conduct comprehensive background checks, to include such history as PTSD, domestic violence, sex offenses and affiliations with domestic terrorist groups, for all applicants to law enforcement positions.
- - Establish de-escalation (the use of time, distance, communications and available resources whenever it is safe to do so) and anti-bias training, and ensure that all staff are provided with this training.
 - Authorize minimal use of force during police encounters with the public, and consider deadly force only when necessary to prevent imminent death or serious bodily injury.

LWVCA Position on Criminal Justice, continued...

Pre-trial Procedures - actions taken after an individual has been arrested, which embody the constitutional presumption of innocence

- Ensure no person suffers discrimination before the law due to their economic status nor should they be subject to risk assessment tools which can produce biased outcomes.
- Provide adequate numbers of public defenders to defend indigent accused.
- Provide prosecutors, defense attorneys, court counselors and judges with regular training on alternatives to incarceration, including pre-trial diversion and restorative justice practices.
- Recognize that mental health conditions and substance abuse/addictions are public health issues, not crimes.
- Implement the use of specialty courts, e.g. drug treatment courts and restorative justice programs.
- Consider community-based treatment programs and other alternatives to incarceration when appropriate.

Sentencing - judgment made after an individual has been declared to be guilty

- Consider the individual circumstances of the person charged and nature of the crime, rather than mandatory minimum sentences.
- Consider split sentencing and/or alternatives to incarceration when appropriate.

Incarceration - policies and procedures that apply to employees of and incarcerated individuals in local jails and state prisons

- Ensure that all correctional systems provide humane, dignified, non-discriminatory treatment of incarcerated people and personnel, including appropriate healthcare and access to community-based rehabilitation programs.
 - Eliminate the practice of solitary confinement.
 - Ensure that incarcerated people and corrections officers have clear, safe and accessible ways to report abuse.
 - Address recidivism by instituting programs that focus on rehabilitation, education, mental health treatment, substance abuse recovery, and transitional programs.
 - Adapt case management services to match education, behavior, job training, work, and mental health programs with the needs of incarcerated individuals.
 - Provide sufficient psychological services, including training and evaluation, to meet the needs of corrections officers.
 - Encourage family and community visitations and ways to maintain contact.
 - Eliminate private prisons. Until space in public prisons is available, ensure that private prisons comply with all of the standards for state-run jails and prisons.

LWVCA Position on Criminal Justice, continued...

Re-entry - programs in place during and after incarceration to help individuals become successful members of their communities

- Collaborate with community-based organizations to facilitate reintegration of people released from prison.
- Provide pre- and post-release programs, inclusive of probation services, to prepare as well as assess and address the needs of people re-entering the community.
- Remove technical violations of parole as a reason to return an individual to prison.

General - statements which apply to some or all of the above categories

- Standardize data and setting up systems so that information can be easily shared among criminal justice agencies.
- Rely on evidence-based research in decision making about criminal justice programs and policies.

ZOOM LWVCNM CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM PANEL DISCUSSION TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2021, AT 6:00 P.M. MST

During Summer, 2021, the League of Women Voters of California (LWVCA) requested that the League of Women Voters of New Mexico (LWVNM) concur with the California Criminal Justice Reform Position (see pages 4-6 of this VOTER). This could involve supplementing the current LWVNM Administration of Justice position (p. 8 of the LWVCNM 2021-22 Member Handbook) with sections of the California position, or individual Local League adoption of the California position in its entirety, specific sections only, or non of the California position. LWV delegates will also have an opportunity during the 2023 LWVNM Convention [ConcurrencePolicy.doc\(live.com\)](#) for state position consideration, or LWVCNM members may vote during the May, 2022, annual meeting on the Board recommendations for a local league position (LWVCNM By-laws, p. 44 of the 2021-22 LWVCNM Member Handbook).

During the September, 2021, LWVNM Board meeting, local league representatives requested to defer consideration of the California position until the four local leagues have had an opportunity to better educate members. LWVCNM Board members requested a panel discussion for member education, with panel representation providing diverse perspectives regarding policing and other aspects of criminal justice.

During the November 9, 2021, panel discussion, each panel member will be asked to discuss the relevance of the California Criminal Justice Reform Position under consideration by LWV with application to resolution of the current Department of Justice/City of Albuquerque Consent Decree (aka CASA, Court Approved Settlement Agreement).

Opening questions regarding the California position will be posed to all panel members, followed by LWVCNM member questions posted to the Zoom Chat. Guests may attend; however, the November 9th panel objective is LWVCNM member preparation for consideration of concurrence. Therefore, no guest questions will be addressed.

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Zoom LWVCNM Criminal Justice Reform Panel Discussion, continued...

The four Criminal Justice Reform Panel members represent diverse perspectives:

1. APD Deputy Chief,
2. Albuquerque Community Safety Department (ACS, alternative 911 response to police officers when mental health, homelessness, or substance abuse is involved),
3. Disability Rights New Mexico Attorney (APD Forward Coalition member), and
4. New Mexico Highlands University Assistant Professor who is also a LWVNM Director.

APD Deputy Chief Garcia—(Chief Medina is celebrating his wedding anniversary on November 9th.) Deputy Chief Eric Garcia has been with the Albuquerque Police Department since June, 1990. He was a patrol officer from 1990-1993, and then moved to the Domestic Abuse Response Team. From 1995-1998, Garcia was with the Gang Unit, and was then promoted to Sergeant.

In 2004, Garcia was promoted to Lieutenant, working with the Field Services Bureau in what are now the Northwest and Southwest Area Commands. Deputy Chief Garcia worked in Operations Review for some time, then was promoted to Commander in 2007 over Property Crimes, Metro Traffic Division, and the Special Investigations Division. In 2013, he was promoted to Deputy Chief of the Investigative Bureau, now known as the Professional Standards and Accountability Bureau.

On June 30, 2021, Chief Harold Medina announced that Deputy Chief Eric Garcia will now use his experience to oversee different units within the department.

APD Deputy Chief Eric Garcia will retain the title of 2nd Deputy Chief and will also take on responsibilities of the Deputy Superintendent of Reform. He will oversee the Internal Affairs Division, both Professional Standards and the Force Division. Also, he will continue to oversee crisis intervention, peer support, and behavioral sciences.

“Deputy Chief Garcia has been involved in the reform process at APD since the DOJ first came to Albuquerque,” said Chief Harold Medina. “With his knowledge and expertise, overseeing both Internal Affairs Divisions will prove fruitful for the Department.”

Mariela Ruiz-Angel, Director, Albuquerque Community Safety Department (ACS), established 2021—The ACS mission is to provide a civilian, non-uniformed response to 911 calls involving only mental health, homelessness, and substance abuse. A uniformed APD backup may be available if the situation develops into a more violent scenario. On April 26, 2021, Mayor Tim Keller announced the inaugural top leadership team for the innovative new Albuquerque Community Safety (ACS) department. Mariela Ruiz-Angel will serve as its director, along with deputy directors Jasmine Desiderio and D’Albert Hall. Desiderio will step into the position of Deputy Director of Policy and Administration. Hall will take on the role of the Deputy Director of Field Response.

Ruiz-Angel is the first-ever director of the department, following its creation last year as Albuquerque carved its own path to reimagine public safety. She previously served as the City Coordinator for the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs.

ACS includes trained professionals such as social workers, housing and homelessness specialists, violence prevention and diversion program experts. The department gives 911 dispatch an option when a community safety response is more appropriate than a paramedic, firefighter, or armed police officer. These efforts will bolster expanded investments in violence intervention, diversion programs, and treatment initiatives.

As the City shaped the first-of-its-kind department, it conducted a six-month public engagement process, taking input from thousands of Albuquerque residents, community leaders, advocates, and experts in related fields.

Mariela Ruiz-Angel is a proud Chicana, born and raised in the border city of El Paso, Texas. She understands the needs of diverse communities and works to empower, educate, and advocate for all Burquenos. Prior to her appointment as Director of ACS, Ruiz-Angel developed and ran Albuquerque’s Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA). In her new role leading the third branch of public safety, Ruiz-Angel is working to ensure that the department follows through with its mission of advocating and

Continued on page 8...

Zoom LWVCNM Criminal Justice Reform Panel Discussion, continued...

Promoting a holistic, empathic, and informed public safety response to behavioral and mental-health-related calls for crisis. She brings to the City of Albuquerque and extensive background in the fields of education, business development, and corporate customer relations. Ruiz-Angel holds a Master of Business Administration in Human Resources and a Master of Social Work in Leadership and Administration, both from the New Mexico Highlands University.

Gary Housepian or Maxwell Kauffman, both attorneys for Disability Rights NM, a coalition partner in the APD Forward organization, coordinated their presentation. One of them will represent DRNM's perspective on criminal justice reform.

Gary Housepian has been an attorney for over 43 years. He has devoted those years to providing quality legal services to the underserved—low income persons and persons with disabilities. That experience has included various roles—as legal advisor, litigator, and manager—the combination of which has developed attributes of leadership and the ability to be an effective negotiator and coalition builder. He has been the CEO of Disability Rights of New Mexico since April, 2018. Prior to coming to New Mexico, he was the Executive Director of the Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the Cumberland, the largest public interest law firm in Tennessee, for 10 years. He has held positions as General Counsel for the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Intellectual Disabilities, General Counsel for the Tennessee Department of Human Services, Assistant Attorney General for the State of Tennessee, Managing Attorney of Disability Rights of Tennessee, and Staff Attorney with the Tennessee Justice Center. As a lawyer, he has served as lead counsel in a class action settlement for persons with intellectual disabilities on a waiting list for Medicaid Waiver services and participated in numerous health care class action cases in federal courts.

As an attorney with Disability Rights of New Mexico, Max Kauffman seeks to assert legal protections and to advocate on behalf of those with physical and mental disabilities. He has a background as a Mental Health Attorney, Law Offices of the Public Defenders, in Albuquerque. He currently sits on the board of Albuquerque's Mental Health Response Advisory Committee. He is also a director of NAMI-NM. Additionally, he stays active in local collaborative stakeholder groups, such as the Bernalillo County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, Diversion, and Re-Entry Subcommittee, and the Coalition for a Safer Albuquerque. He believes strongly in the community's capacity to shape its future in the field of behavioral health through partnership with local governments, stakeholders, and those with lived experience.

Assistant Professor Rebecca Alvarez, Ph.D., is the League of Women Voters of New Mexico's JEDI Director and chairs the current one-year LWVNM Tribal Law Study. Dr. Alvarez is Assistant Professor of Sociology and Criminal Justice at New Mexico Highlands University, where she teaches Homicide and Policing and Race, Ethnicity, and Policing. Her research focuses on crimes against women and issues of intersectionality in law enforcement and the media. Her book *Vigilante Gender Violence: Social Class, the Gender Bargain, and Mob Attacks on Women Worldwide* came out in September, 2020, from Routledge. Dr. Alvarez is currently working on a book about the role of the media and policing in solving serial killings involving women of color.

OBSERVER REPORT: BERNALILLO COUNTY FORGES AHEAD WITH LIMITED PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR REDISTRICTING

The first redistricting maps viewed by the Bernalillo County Commission show minimal change. Research & Polling, the company hired by the county to redraw the County Commission District Maps, stays as close to the current district boundaries as possible. District 4, which covers the northernmost part of the county, will have to shrink because it has seen the most population growth over the past ten years. Other districts, such as District 5, may get some of the neighborhoods currently in District 4.

Three proposed maps are currently on the Bernalillo County website. The County is asking the public to comment on the proposed changes by leaving written comments at a link on the website or by calling 505-448-3365 and leaving a voice message. No public hearings on the proposed changes have been scheduled.

County Commissioners say they hope to make final decisions about redistricting at their December meeting.

Submitted by Karen Wentworth

Join Us! Wednesday, November 10, at Noon via Zoom
CORONA VIRUS SCAMS AND FRAUDS
TARGETING THE SENIOR COMMUNITY

In an article for AARP entitled “Top 10 Frauds Hitting Adults 60 and Older in 2020” (updated on September 27, 2021), author Marie Rohde reports that “Older adults lost \$600 million to fraud in 2020, when the pandemic fueled spikes in almost all top categories of fraud, officials say.

The figures are from the Federal Trade Commission, which noted that losses in many top categories of fraud spiked in 2020 compared to a year earlier. According to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), online shopping scams rose 129 per cent; business imposter frauds, 88 per cent; investment frauds, 84 per cent, romance scams, 66 per cent; tech-support scams, 55 per cent; sweepstakes and related frauds, 35 per cent, and family and friend imposters, 20 per cent.

Losses in two categories—timeshare sales and timeshare resales—inches upward by three per cent year over year, and in one top category—government imposter frauds—losses declined by five per cent.

There is no mistaking the pandemic’s impact on frauds affecting adults aged 60-plus, with losses of \$104 million arising from some 26,518 complaints. The problems included undelivered protective gear, false claims about COVID-19 treatments and cures, and scams involving government relief programs, among others.

The findings were presented last week during a hearing held by the United States Senate Special Committee on Aging. Senator Bob Casey (D-Pennsylvania), committee chairman, and Senator Tim Scott (R-South Carolina) said in a joint statement that the coronavirus pandemic exacerbated risks for older people and made them ‘even more vulnerable to scammers and schemes’.”

The League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico’s presentation will focus on information that will support our elderly community on ways to keep safe from scams and frauds commonly targeting seniors. Our speaker will be Katherine Trujillo, who is the special projects coordinator and educational consultant at the New Mexico Office of the Attorney General. Her background is in education, and she holds both a teaching license and an administrative license in New Mexico.



Please join us on Wednesday, November 10th, at noon on Zoom, for this timely program. Please note: This program, which is usually held on the second Thursday of the month, will take place this month on the second Wednesday.



6739 Academy Rd. NE, Suite 124
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 |