

August 2021

The VOTER

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

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

As members read this, you should note that LWVCNM relocated to the new office at 6739 Academy Road NE, Suites 124 and 126, in late July, 2021. This move was prompted by the need for a conference room suitable for both Voter Guide activities and LWVCNM Board meetings. The new office has a large conference room with a seating capacity of 50 which may serve as the monthly unit meeting site when in-person meetings resume in September, 2021. Starlyn Brown, who serves as our Office Director, Webmaster, and Zoom Host, will evaluate the audiovisual capabilities of the new facility during August with respect to ability to potentially host hybrid meetings. These hybrid meetings would permit those with other commitments more flexibility to attend than would strictly in-person meetings. Also, hybrid meetings would allow LWVCNM the continued ability to have speaker presentations by persons not residing in New Mexico. This was a noted benefit of our Zoom meetings over the past year. Should our new facility prove acceptable for hosting these meetings, meal catering with more than one menu option may eliminate member dissatisfaction experienced at prior hotel meeting venues.

Voter Guide preparation for the upcoming Fall, 2021, elections began on July 10, with preparation for both the hardcopy printed guide (more limited coverage area) and the more extensive Vote411 online option. The online Vote411 option covers the four-county area served by LWVCNM, i.e., Bernalillo, Sandoval, Valencia, and Torrance counties.

LWVCNM was very fortunate to have Dr. James Ginger, Independent Monitor for the Consent Decree between the U.S. Department of Justice and the City of Albuquerque regarding excessive use of force by the Albuquerque Police Department, address our July membership meeting. Although Dr. Ginger was restricted from discussing details of the Albuquerque consent decree, his previous service in other consent

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Starlyn Brown

**Advocacy Team/Observer
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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.

August 12—Monthly meeting at noon: Think New Mexico (Speaker: Fred Nathan, Executive Director)

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

[The deadline for submitting articles to the monthly Voter is the 15th of each month.](#) Articles and pictures are always welcome. Please reach out to our *Voter* editor, Anne Pierce-Jones (apiercejones@outlook.com) with any concerns.

From the League of Women Voters of New Mexico....***A Tribal Law Study Opportunity***

The LWVNM is conducting a study on tribal law codification at the state level and invites members to join us in researching, drafting, and editing a study guide to educate all League members about these important issues.

Recent years have seen efforts to more rigorously enforce federal Indian law and tribal sovereignty in New Mexico and elsewhere in states with large indigenous populations. There have

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OFFICE HOURS

Closed until further notice due
to Covid concerns.

The VOTER Editor:
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decrees affecting other municipalities, together with his prior law enforcement experience, offered an extensive perspective on the national situation to LWVCNM members and guests. LWVCNM members interested in this issue may also be interested in the LWVCA Criminal Justice Position with a section addressing Policing Practices. The League of Women Voters of New Mexico (LWVNM) is currently considering concurrence with sections of this position during its September 11, 2021, Board meeting. Members are always welcome to attend both local and state board meetings. Those interested in this proposed position concurrence should contact Karen Douglas, LWVCNM Co-President.

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

The JEDI Committee met on June 26, 2021. After more than a year of assessing LWVNM JEDI efforts, and after outreach meetings with all four local units, the JEDI Committee has decided to focus its current energies on the following four areas:

- 1) Policy advocacy via the Action Committee, rooted in JEDI principles
- 2) Registration of voters at JEDI-aligned events
- 3) Advocacy for JEDI principles via the Tribal Law Study
- 4) Creation and administration of a recruitment/research questionnaire at the Albuquerque campus of the University of New Mexico for potential university student members

The JEDI Committee was to meet again to discuss the above issues and take next steps on July 24, 2021.

The JEDI Committee also has a sub-committee on Policy and Advocacy.

The Tribal Law Study Committee has so far met four times, and is progressing on pace toward its goal of assembling a study guide for dissemination to League units in advance of scheduling consensus meetings. The committee has four focus areas, as follows:

- 1) Tribal Criminal Justice
- 2) Tribal Economic Development
- 3) Tribal Education
- 4) Tribal Healthcare Delivery

The League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico encourages others to get involved with JEDI and with LWVCNM. We invite you to join us at our monthly meetings. If you would like more information, please reach out to Karen Douglas (email: ug90t16@unmalumni.com) and/or Donna Sandoval (email: donnamsandoval@aol.com), our Co-Presidents. As Albuquerque reopens for in-person events, we also welcome ideas for meeting locations that would make it more convenient for working members to attend.

SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS IN ALBUQUERQUE'S CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

It takes a lot of energy to power buildings in Albuquerque. This is the largest source of greenhouse gases for our city—55 per cent, according to the latest Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory. The next highest category, 40 per cent, comes from transportation, which will be the subject of future articles. Strategies to address both stationary and mobile GHG sources are essential if we are to meet the 2030 and 2040 climate goals.

According to the GHG Inventory, stationary energy sources include all emissions from the burning of natural gas and electricity generation in building within the city. The inventory found that 46 per cent of stationary energy GHGs came from residential buildings and 48 per cent, from commercial and institutional buildings. Manufacturing and construction accounted for the remaining six per cent.

The Albuquerque Climate Action Plan Task Force selected two broad categories for attention in reducing GHGs from buildings: Energy Efficiency for Frontline Communities and Green Buildings and Development. Six strategies were recommended—three in each category.

Energy Efficiency for Frontline Communities: These three strategies are intended to begin by 2022 and to be ongoing. As explained in last month's *Voter* article, the rationale for an emphasis on frontline communities is that they will be impacted "first and worst" by climate change and have fewer resources to deal with it. The three strategies are:

- Promote access to programs that give incentives for window replacement, insulation, lighting, appliance upgrades, and other energy efficiency improvements for people with low incomes.
- Explore opportunities to expand usage of drought tolerant plants, especially in frontline communities, utilizing existing plant guidance from the Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Authority and the City of Albuquerque.
- Support new legislation that requires energy disclosure during sale or lease of buildings, homes or rental properties.

Green Buildings and Development: These three recommendations have a medium (by 2026) and longer term (by 2031) initial implementation period.

- Prioritize electrification of new City facilities and major renovations to existing City facilities, and support code requirements for electrification of private commercial

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Sustainable Buildings in Albuquerque's Climate Action Plan, continued from page 4...

and residential buildings (by 2026 and ongoing).

- Support consistent and timely adoption of local and state legislation that requires developers and home builders to continue to meet current energy standards for newly constructed or renovated buildings and homes (by 2026). Standards are based on the 2018 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), adopted by the City in 2020. An updated IECC was released in April, 2021.
- Support local and state legislation that prioritizes urban infill, brownfield redevelopment and renovations, rather than new developments and construction (by 2031).

Why will it take four to eight years to implement the recommendations in the latter category? I asked Kelsey Rader, the city's Sustainability Officer, to explain. She said that the time period estimates were based on the perceived hurdles and reality of time associated with implementing significant changes. In her words, "You can usually expect advocates or staff to work to bring the issue to the attention of policymakers (6 months). Those policymakers might establish a working group to assess the issue (1 year). Then the issue can be deliberated on and enacted (6 months). Then there's usually a grace period and education conducted before the new policy goes into effect (1 year)." Ms. Rader noted that the task force was demonstrating a realistic understanding of how change processes occur in a bureaucratic setting.

In my view, the task force's approach to setting timeframes for implementation makes sense in terms of its credibility. But, if LWVCNM believes that climate change is a real emergency, how can we help to speed up these timetables? Should we urge the policymakers to expedite the creation of working groups and enactment of policies now?

Future *Voter* articles will continue to describe the other 44 strategies in Albuquerque's Climate Action Plan. Please contact Jeanne Logsdon (jlogsdon@unm.edu or 505-710-3886) if you want to become involved in the LWVCNM's Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

VOTER GUIDE COMMITTEE MEETS TO BEGIN WORK ON NOVEMBER 2 ELECTION

This year, New Mexico will hold its first consolidated municipal elections, and voters will be seeing more races on their ballots than ever before. In 2019, Senator Daniel Ivey-Soto sponsored a bill in the New Mexico Legislature to bring all the small elections for school boards, municipal officials, boards of community colleges, soil and water conservation districts, and flood control districts into one major election to be held in odd-numbered years. November 2, 2021, is the first time we will see the results of that law on our ballots.

There were a number of volunteers for the first committee meeting for the Voter Guide on July 10th. For the next few weeks, teams will be working hard to decide what questions should be asked of the candidates for the various offices. Here are the teams:

- ⇒ **BERNALILLO COUNTY:** Vivian Skadron, Cyprian Devine-Perez, Michelle Meadors, MaryEllen Smith, Rita Getty
- ⇒ **SANDOVAL COUNTY:** Donna Rigano, Janet Blair
- ⇒ **TORRANCE COUNTY:** Mary Wilson, Mary Henrie Smith
- ⇒ **VALENCIA COUNTY:** Jeanne Logsdon, Alan Ramos
- ⇒ **VOTE411:** Cheryl Haaker, Ashley Benning

We intend to provide information on VOTE411 for all four counties in our coverage area. We will also put together a printed guide for Bernalillo County.

We still need some volunteers to help collect information for the voter information section of the printed guide and to do research on specific problems, such as appropriate maps. We also need volunteers to help with distribution of the printed guides in early October. Please reach out to Karen Wentworth at 505-263-9066 to volunteer.

The Voter Guide is at the very heart of what the League does. We provide information to voters about candidates and issues that they can use to prepare to cast their vote. Our information is non-partisan and factual. We do not try to influence voters about who they should choose to represent them, but we do try to give them as much information as we can about how the candidates think.

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Voter Guide Committee Meets to Begin Work on November 2 Election, continued from Page 6...

A Few Words About VOTE411.org

This is software developed by the United States League of Women Voters. We send each candidate a letter asking them to answer a few questions. The candidate receives a code that allows them to enter their answers directly into the software. No one edits their answers.

The candidates are asked to keep it clean and to refrain from personal slurs against others, but they have total control over their answers and can even go back and alter them if they wish. The candidates send in their own photos. We want the candidates to present themselves to the voters in their own words and images.

A Tribal Law Study Opportunity, continued from Page 2....

also been more assertive efforts at both the state and federal levels to increase the resources available to tribal populations in the areas of criminal justice, education, economic development, and healthcare access and delivery. These issues are especially critical to fulfilling the commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

We expect the study to result in a state position that can be used for advocacy at the legislature and that may be adopted by other state Leagues and by LWVUS.

To get involved, please contact Rebecca Alvarez at triballawstudy@lwvnm.org

The League of Women Voters Has Moved!!



The League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico has moved!! Our new office is located at 6730 Academy Rd. NE, Suites 124 and 126. We completed the move on July 26th. Once again we owe a debt of gratitude to Two Men and a Truck, who moved us as an in-kind contribution. Jeanne Logsdon and Karen Wentworth are cataloging our archives, and much of our history will be moved to the Center for Southwest Research at the University of New Mexico Libraries. At some point, our finding guide will be posted on the Rocky Mountain Online Archive, and anyone will be able to go back and research work the League has done since we began in 1947. We have operated continuously as a good government group since our formation.

As part of the move, we reassessed our need for filing cabinets. As a result, the old olive drab filing cabinets we've had for decades have moved on. They have gone to the movies as part of the stock of a local prop house, "Back2One Entertainment Productions". We are not sure when they might be used in a local movie or television show, but keep your eyes peeled. Our thanks to Robert Elliot-Barry (pictured above) for giving them a good home, and for even picking them up from the office!

Submitted by Karen Wentworth

PROGRAM FOR AUGUST 12 MONTHLY MEETING (VIA ZOOM)



Fred Nathan, Jr., will be our speaker at the LWVCNM monthly meeting on Thursday, August 12, 2021.

Mr. Nathan founded Think New Mexico in 1999 and is its Executive Director. He previously served as Special Counsel to New Mexico Attorney General Tom Udall. In that capacity, he was the architect of several successful legislative initiatives and was in charge of New Mexico's lawsuit against the tobacco industry, which resulted in a \$1.25 billion settlement for the state.

Think New Mexico is a results-oriented think tank whose stated mission is to improve the lives of all New Mexicans, especially those who lack a strong voice in the political process. They strive to fulfill this mission by educating the public, the media, and policymakers about some of the most serious challenges facing New Mexico, as well as by developing and advocating for enduring, effective, and evidence-based solutions.

Think New Mexico's approach is to perform and publish sound, non-partisan, independent research. Unlike many think tanks, Think New Mexico does not subscribe to any particular ideology. Its board consists of Democrats, Independents, and Republicans. Because New Mexico tends to rank at or near the bottom of various national rankings, its focus is to promote workable solutions designed to lift up all New Mexicans. It is a 501 (c)3 tax-exempt organization and, to maintain its independence, does not accept state government funding.

Among Think New Mexico's stated accomplishments are the following:

- Making full-day kindergarten accessible to every child in New Mexico
- Repealing the state's regressive tax on food and successfully defeating efforts to reimpose it
- Creating a Strategic Water Reserve to protect and restore New Mexico's rivers
- Establishing New Mexico's first state-supported Individual Development Accounts to alleviate the state's persistent poverty
- Redirecting money from the state lottery into college scholarships
- Reforming title insurance to lower closing costs for homebuyers and homeowners refinancing their mortgages

Additional information about Think New Mexico may be found on its website, which is <https://www.thinknewmexico.org/>



6730 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, 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 |