



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO

6739 Academy Rd. NE Suite 124, Albuquerque, NM 87109 lwvcnm.org (505) 884-8441

**President's Report
by Starlyn Brown**

Crossing the Finish Line — and Looking Ahead

As we cross the finish line for another election, it's time to celebrate the tremendous work by LWVCNM members to provide information and educate voters. Planning for the 2025 Local and Municipal Elections began back in August, and since then our volunteers have dedicated countless hours to gathering information, preparing materials, and educating voters. Thank you for your commitment, your energy, and your belief in the power of informed participation.

We also extend our gratitude to our donors. Your generosity enables us to reach voters across central New Mexico and provide them with the trusted, nonpartisan information they need to make informed choices. Without you, our mission simply wouldn't be possible.

This fall, we also covered a little-known election for the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District. Voter turnout was disappointingly low, prompting our Co-Vice President, Karen Wentworth, to write a thoughtful op-ed reflecting on civic engagement. You can find her piece on page 5.

Our Voter Guides for Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, and Valencia Counties are now available as downloadable PDFs on our website, along with links to other valuable election resources.

Throughout this season, we expanded our outreach and educational efforts — connecting with new communities, presenting and distributing information, and strengthening relationships that will serve as the foundation for the 2026 elections.

We also played a key role in candidate forums: moderating events for the Albuquerque Mayoral and Los Ranchos Trustee races and serving as timekeepers for two additional Albuquerque mayoral forums hosted by KOAT and the Albuquerque Journal.

As we head into the holiday season, I find myself reflecting on the words of the late **Jane Goodall**, whose message resonates deeply with our mission:

“Every single one of you has a role to play... You have it in your power to make a difference. Don't give up. Do everything in your power to make the world a better place for those who will follow.”

Thank you for playing your role — for strengthening democracy, one voter at a time.

Post Election Happy Hour!

Please join us for happy hour!

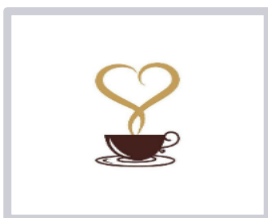
Thursday, November 6, from 3:30 to 6pm

Bosque Brewing

106 Girard Blvd. SE (southeast corner of Central and Girard).

It's time to relax a bit, recover from all the election activities and enjoy each other's company.

Saturday Morning



Drop-In Coffee!

GOT A QUESTION?

NEED AN ANSWER?

Come to our Saturday Drop-In Coffee on **November 15th from 10 am - Noon** at the **League Conference Room, 6739 Academy Rd, NE Albuquerque.**

Meet League members who are informing voters, monitoring local government actions and agencies, promoting civic education, and encouraging transparency in government. Tell us your concerns about issues that affect us all. Together we can explore ways for you to become involved in helping to resolve them.

See you on November 15th between 10 – 12 noon for coffee, tea or a beverage of your choice, and good information on ways to have an impact.

Looking forward to meeting new members!

For more details, call/text or email:

Pam Wilson	505-331-0936	wilsonpj51@hotmail.com
Dina Hennessy	505-453-9725	dinahennessy@gmail.com
Liz Shields	559-578-5670	elizs44@yahoo.com

LWVCNM Book Club Re-Rescheduled!

Due to a scheduling conflict with the November monthly meeting,
the Book Club will meet

Monday, November 17th

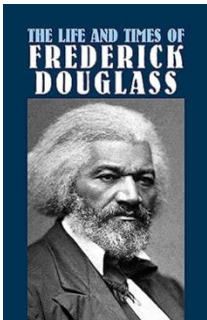
New members are always welcome!

If you are not able to complete a book before the session, no worries. . .
join a session and complete the book at your convenience!

Great conversation, light snacks, and a way to better get to know LWVCNM members.

The group selected the following title for the now November meeting:

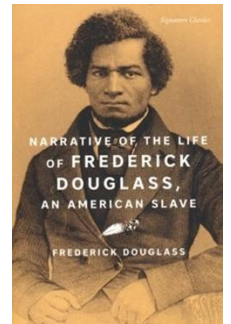
Date & Time: Monday, November 17th @ 5:30 pm
Location: LWVCNM Office Conference Room. - 6739 Academy Rd NE
Title: **The Autobiography of Frederick Douglass**



Frederick Douglass wrote three autobiographies from which to choose:

- *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave.* Written in 1845, seven years after his freedom.
- *My Bondage and My Freedom.* Written in 1855.
- *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass.* Written in 1881.

Compilations of all three are available.



Questions? Contact Janet at 505-401-2052

**Note:
date change!**

Join us for the

NOVEMBER EDUCATIONAL MEETING

Wednesday, November 19th, at 5pm



WHERE: LWVCNM Offices Conference Room, 6739 Academy Rd. NE, ample parking available;

In person (members and guests only); Zoom (members and general public)

TOPIC: The Commission on Mental Health and Competency (CMHC)

SPEAKER: Justice Briana Zamora

In 2022, the New Mexico Supreme Court established the Commission on Mental Health and Competency (CMHC) following recommendations from the Mental Health and Competency Steering Committee. The promotion, protection, and restoration of mental health is a vital concern of communities throughout New Mexico because mental health is fundamental to the collective and individual ability to think, emote, interact with others, earn a living, and enjoy meaningful lives.

CMHC's mission is to enhance access to justice and treatment services for individuals affected by mental health conditions. The Commission's objectives are to promote fair treatment of affected individuals, to improve public safety through appropriate and meaningful behavioral health interventions, and to provide proper education and training to judges, lawyers, court staff, and cross-system partners at the intersection of behavioral health and criminal justice.

The CMHC's greatest strength lies in its diverse perspectives. The Commission is composed of leaders from various disciplines, and it seeks to engage and collaborate with various entities and stakeholders throughout the state. Justice Zamora will provide updates of the Commission's strategic plan which was recently updated during their 2025 retreat.

The CMHC is on a mission to improve outcomes for individuals experiencing behavioral health and cognitive challenges and to document the following:

1. Measurable reduction in time in jail;
2. Measurable reduction of familiar faces (repeat individuals in the justice system);
3. Measurable reduction in wait time for evaluations;
4. Measurable increase in number of people diverted;
5. Measurable reduction in competency evaluations ordered;

The presentation will give details about the CMHC's team approach and the committees working on achieving these goals.



Justice Briana Zamora was born and raised in New Mexico, receiving her undergraduate degree in psychology and government from New Mexico State University and her law degree from the University of New Mexico School of Law.

She has served at all levels of the New Mexico Judiciary, beginning a decade long career as a trial court judge on the Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court and then serving on the Second Judicial District Court where she saw predominantly criminal cases and presided over several treatment courts. She was appointed to the state Court of Appeals in 2018 and later joined the state Supreme Court.

She currently serves as the Supreme Court's liaison to several judicial commissions, including the Commission on Mental Health and Competency, the Children's Court Improvement Commission, the Children's Court Judges Association and the Tribal-State Judicial Consortium.

Op-Ed by Karen Wentworth Co-Vice President

Can Indifference Kill Democracy?

It was the worst of setups for an election. Four candidates for four seats. Three uncontested incumbents and one uncontested newcomer. The Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District (MRGCD) held an election for its board of directors last week and almost no one noticed.

The MRGCD manages the flow of the Rio Grande through Sandoval, Bernalillo, Valencia and Socorro counties. It decides when irrigators along the river get water, maintains acequias and plays an important role in flood control in the valley. It's a vital government agency in the Rio Grande Valley.

When the votes were counted, only 253 ballots had been cast out of 64,259 eligible voters. The at-large seat was won with just 72 votes, one tenth of one percent of those eligible to vote.

This wasn't supposed to happen. In 2018, the New Mexico legislature consolidated the smaller elections such as school boards, flood control districts, and soil and water conservation district elections into a unified ballot. Lawmakers wanted to make it easier for voters to participate and avoid low turnout, stand-alone elections.

During the 2025 New Mexico legislative session, the MRGCD argued and won an exemption from participating in the municipal elections to be held on November 4. Notice of the election was published in the legal section of local newspapers, but the conservancy district never contacted the property owners in the district to tell them there was an election.

The League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico attempted to compile a voter guide, but only one candidate participated. The League sent out news releases and distributed flyers throughout the district telling people about the election. The response? Crickets.

Democracy isn't always an exciting contest between passionate candidates. Sometimes it is a quiet ritual that keeps our civic life alive, until we stop showing up. If an uncontested candidate can win with a single vote – perhaps their own – what does that say about our commitment to self-governance?

We express outrage over threats to democracy at the national level, but the more dangerous threat may be at home. When we stop paying attention to the institutions that shape our daily lives, we surrender our power of oversight without even thinking about it.

Maybe the question we should ask isn't, "who won the election," but rather, "who cares?" Because if the answer is "no one," democracy doesn't need an enemy to destroy it. Indifference will do the job just fine.

Membership Corner REMINDER!

October 1st **WAS** the renewal date for dues for most of our members. Our thanks to **the 99 members** who have already renewed their membership using the LWVUS portal. Few had difficulties as the process is similar to online shopping or banking.

For those of you who need guidance,

Please go to lwvcnm.org, click on For Members, then on Meeting Recordings for 9/11/2025. The short video on the fifth slide gives an overview of the join/renewal process for a League member in Louisiana. Continue to scroll through the set of slides which follow to see the steps for renewing online by LWVCNM members.

If you have not received a renewal email from LWVUS, please follow the remedies suggested in slide 2. If this does not work, please contact me (eliza44@yahoo.com 559.578.5670) and we can solve the problem.

For members who do not wish to use the LWVUS portal, please continue to Part 2 of the slide show. Send your renewal check made out to **LWVUS** for dues **ONLY** to the League Office at 6739 Academy Road, NE, Suite 124, Albuquerque, NM 87109-3352.

If you would like to make a donation, please write **a second check** to LWVCNM for your donation amount and enclose it with the LWVUS check. Volunteers will process your renewal online and forward your dues payment to LWVUS.

If you forget to renew at this time, you will receive a reminder from LWVUS within 60 days of your renewal date, and you will receive a reminder from me also. After that time you will be made inactive on the LWVUS web site.

Again, thank you all for your support of LWVCNM and its valuable work in supporting democracy!

Did You Know? The League Partners in Action

The League of Women Voters doesn't work alone — we're part of a strong network of national partners who share our commitment to civic engagement, education, and equality. Together, we expand our reach and strengthen democracy across communities.

Our partners include:

- American Association of University Women (AAUW)
- National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW)
- Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated (DST)
- Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Inc. (LTA)
- Girl Scouts USA
- American Library Association (ALA)
- The School Superintendents Association (AASA)

Through these partnerships, we collaborate on voter education, youth engagement, and advocacy for equity and access.



Save the Date!

*Celebrate the Season!
Holiday Open House
Sunday, December 14th, 2 - 4 PM*

*'Tis the season to be jolly (and exhausted) !
Take a timeout and enjoy an afternoon with
League friends and colleagues.*

*Join us for a holiday celebration at the home of
LWVCNM Board Member, Karen Douglas,
1729 Miracerros Pl. NE, Albuquerque*

*Parking may be limited so please plan to share a ride
with a League colleague.*

*There will be light refreshments, conversation, and an opportunity to
share our latest accomplishments, news,
and plans for the future!*

RSVP: Liz Shields 559-578-5670 or elizs44@yahoo.com

MAYORAL CANDIDATE FORUM

The League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico, in partnership with the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. - Omega Alpha Zeta, and the NM MLK Commission, moderated a **Meet The Candidates Mayoral Forum** at the New Hope Full Gospel Baptist Church in Albuquerque on the evening of Oct. 8, 2025.

Five of the mayoral candidates participated - Eddie Varela, Louis Sanchez, Tim Keller, Mayling Armijo, and Alex Uballez (seated in order at right and below).



Over 100 people attended the forum which was moderated by the League's own Mary H. Smith.

Questions for the candidates were both prepared in advance and gathered from the audience.



Tabling at events such as these is an important way the League shares vital information about elections and voting with the public.

Consider volunteering for future outreach and join active members like Linda Miller and Jill Crawley.

LWVCNM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President:
Starlyn Brown

1st Co-Vice Presidents/Voter Guide:
Karen Wentworth & Lani Desaulniers

2nd Vice President/Membership:
Elizabeth Shields

3rd Vice President/Program:
Karen Douglas

4th Vice President/Development:
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Director/Sustainability/Climate Change:
Jeanne Logsdon

Director/Office Manager:
Terry Quinn

Director/Historian & Special Projects:
Vacant

Director/Webmaster/Zoom Host: Linda Miller

Voter Guide Distribution: Ellen Kelly

Advocacy Team/Observer Corps:
Karen Wentworth

Volunteer Coordinator:
Linda Miller

If you need help with Zoom,
please reach out to Zoom host, Linda Miller,
lmiller@unm.edu

Please submit your articles for the monthly Voter by
the 15th of each month to Michal Mudd at:

VoterEditorMichal@gmail.com

LWVCNM CALENDAR

Nov 4th ELECTION DAY

Nov 5th (Wednesday) 5:30 pm
LWVCNM Board Meeting,
ZOOM until further notice.
All members welcome.

Nov 6th (Thursday) 3:30 to 6pm
Bosque Brewing
106 Girard Blvd. SE (southeast corner of Central
and Girard)

Nov 15th (Saturday) 10am to Noon
Drop In Coffee
Conference Room 6739 Academy Rd NE

NOTE DATE CHANGE

Nov 17th (Monday) 5:30 PM
LWVCNM Book Club
“The Autobiography of Frederick Douglass”
See info on p. 3 or the Book Club link
on the LWVCNM webpage
& Hot Topics notices

NOTE DATE CHANGE

Nov 19th (Wednesday) 5pm
LWVCNM Monthly Educational Meeting
In person and ZOOM
Topic: **The Commission on Mental Health and
Competency (CMHC)**
Speaker: **Justice Briana Zamora**

Dec 3rd (Wednesday) 5:30 pm
LWVCNM Board Meeting,
ZOOM until further notice.
All members welcome.

Dec 11th NO MONTHLY MEETING

Dec 14th (Sunday) 2 – 4 PM
Save the Date for the
LWVCNM Holiday Open House
See p. 7

OBSERVER REPORTS



Observer Corps Report – Albuquerque City Council meeting

September 15, 2025 & October 6, 2025

Mary Mulvany /Janet Kirkpatrick

Sept 15th –Eight councilors were present: Joaquin Baca – District 2, Klarissa Peña – District 3, Brook Bassan – District 4, Dan Lewis – District 5, Nichole Rogers – District 6, Tammy Fiebelkorn – District 7, Dan Champine – District 8, Renée Grout, District 9. Councilor Louie Sanchez – District 1, was excused.

Oct 6th – All nine councilors were present for the meeting, with the exception of Councilor Champine – District 8, who was excused for the second half.

Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) and Industrial Revenue Bonds (IRB) – Pacific Fusion LLC

At the Sept 15th meeting, the City Council voted unanimously to administer and disburse to Pacific Fusion LLC funds totaling up to \$10M, of which \$9M are from the State Economic Development Department and \$1M are City funds. The funds will support the acquisition, construction, and improvement of a facility for the commercialization of fusion energy production to be located at Mesa Del Sol. The mayor signed the legislation on 26 Sept. [O-25-96](#)

Also at this meeting, the City Council voted unanimously to approve issuance of \$776M in industrial revenue bonds to be repaid by Pacific Fusion LLC. The project will be exempt from property taxes on land, buildings, and equipment for up to 20 years. The mayor signed the legislation on 26 Sept. The City of Albuquerque was in competition with two other cities for this project. The company announced on September 26th that Albuquerque was chosen. [O-25-97](#)

Pacific Fusion representatives stated this research and development project will bring 200 permanent jobs to Albuquerque with a total payroll of \$155M. The facility will be on 17 acres at Mesa del Sol.

Long-Term Housing Stability

At the Sept 15th meeting, the council voted to establish the Preserving Albuquerque Through Critical Housing (PATCH) program to provide structural housing repairs to income-qualified homeowners. Under this program, homeowners with income at or below 80% of average median income could receive a forgivable loan up to \$75K. This program is contingent on the availability of local, state, and/or federal funds, none of which have been appropriated at this time. The measure passed by a vote of five in favor (Baca, Fiebelkorn, Grout, Peña, Rogers) and three opposed (Bassan, Champine, Lewis). Councilor Sanchez was excused. The mayor signed this legislation on Sept 26th . [O-25-91](#)

Opioid Settlement Funding

At the Oct 6th meeting, the council voted unanimously to appropriate Opioid Settlement funds for two purposes:

- \$1M to expand mobile crisis response services through Albuquerque Community Safety Department's Street Outreach.
- \$1.9M to provide housing support, stability, and eviction prevention through Albuquerque Community Safety Department's Street Outreach.

The resolution was signed by the mayor on October 16. [R-25-180](#)



Observer Corps Report – Bernalillo County Commission

October, 2025

Karen Wentworth

Bernalillo County Proposes to Take a Stand Against Federal Immigration Detention Efforts

Present: Frank Baca, District 1; Barbara Baca, District 2; Adriann Barboa, District 3; Walt Benson, District 4; Eric Olivas, District 5

Bernalillo County Commissioners are considering an administrative resolution and an ordinance to protect immigrant communities. It was introduced at the Oct. 14 meeting and will be voted on at a later date. In general, it says county money, equipment, personnel, and facilities shall not be used to facilitate immigration enforcement or prosecution.

It also establishes safe community places, including:

- Health care facilities
- Schools and places where children routinely gather
- Courthouses, government buildings, work zones and construction sites on county property
- Places of worship, community resource centers, direct service providers (homeless shelters, legal service providers, domestic violence advocates)
- Designated disaster and emergency response sites.

The ordinance was designed to track with a similar City of Albuquerque ordinance. The U.S. League of Women Voters position is: “The League supports due process for all persons, including the right to a fair hearing, right to counsel, right of appeal, and right to humane treatment.”

The Bernalillo County Commission is continuing a long-term effort to prepare the county to handle a possible future as a major logistics hub on the I-40 TradePort corridor with two new projects. The county plans to widen Atrisco Blvd. from two lanes to four lanes up to Double Eagle Road. A grant from the New Mexico Department of Transportation will provide preparation for developing speculation lots to support the I-40 TradePort Corridor. The county describes the I-40 TradePort Corridor this way.

“The I-40 TradePort Corridor is a transformational clean energy, logistics, and infrastructure system that is being developed by a multi-state group of public and private sector partners from California, Arizona, and New Mexico. The initial I-40 TradePorts are public-private investment systems that operate as a systemic extension of the global seaports complex in Los Angeles, with strategic and modest public investments supporting clean energy, logistics, transportation, and industrial investment infrastructure.”

Under the Biden administration, the span of I-40 from California to Albuquerque was envisioned as a highway to support electric tractor trailers carrying freight, with charging stations in Winslow, Arizona, and with Albuquerque as a major warehousing hub. Under the Trump administration, the electric truck part of the plan has been quietly dropped, but Bernalillo County continues to position itself as a possible warehousing hub.

Another current project underway is planning and preliminary design of site improvements, roadway storm drainage, water and wastewater infrastructure on 192 acres of county owned land at South Broadway and Desert Road SW.

The League has no relevant position on transportation of freight.



Sandoval County Commission regular meeting
August 27, 2025
Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)

Present: Michael Meek (Chair), Jordan Juarez (Vice Chair), Joshua Jones, Katherine Bruch, Jon Herr (video)

Description of Issues Relevant to the League

No topics for which the League has an advocacy position were taken up during this meeting.

Additional Comments

Economic Development

Sandoval County voted unanimously to issue industrial revenue bonds to Castelion Corporation to manufacture hypersonic weapons in Rio Rancho and Sandoval County. Castelion was founded by former SpaceX employees in 2022. Attracting Castelion has been a collaborative effort between the City of Rio Rancho, Sandoval County and State of New Mexico. Under the name Project Ranger, the project's economic impact to New Mexico over the next 10 years has been estimated to be over \$660,000,000 offering 300 jobs in engineering, administration, technology, and manufacturing at first, with an annual average salary of \$100,000 and the potential to add 300-500 additional jobs over 10 years. Despite safety concerns, those involved with the project note that hypersonic weapons development is highly regulated and that the fire departments are working with Castelion to develop contingency plans.

Sandoval County Commission Website

<https://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/commission/>



Sandoval County Commission regular meeting
September 10, 2025
Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)

Present: Michael Meek (Chair), Jordan Juarez (Vice Chair), Joshua Jones, Katherine Bruch, Jon Herr

Description of Issues Relevant to the League

No topics for which the League has an advocacy position were taken up during this meeting.

Additional Comments

Public Comment

Seven speakers addressed the Commission regarding their new "jural assembly" in Sandoval County and made claims similar to those embraced by the Sovereign Citizens Movement, including a subversion of the US government having taken place in the 1800s. An article from the Southern Poverty Law Center found [here](#) details more about the beliefs of this movement.

Sandoval County Commission Website

<https://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/commission/>



Sandoval County Commission regular meeting

September 24, 2025

Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)

Present: Michael Meek (Chair), Jordan Juarez (Vice Chair), Joshua Jones, Katherine Bruch, Jon Herr (video)

Description of Issues Relevant to the League

No topics for which the League has an advocacy position were taken up during this meeting.

Additional Comments

Sandoval County Commission Website

<https://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/commission/>



Sandoval County Commission regular meeting

October 8, 2025

Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)

Present: Michael Meek (Chair), Jordan Juarez (Vice Chair) (video), Joshua Jones, Katherine Bruch, Jon Herr

Description of Issues Relevant to the League

Additional Comments

Early voting is underway at the Sandoval County Building. Other early voting locations in Sandoval County will open October 18.

Sandoval County Commission Website

<https://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/commission/>

Volunteer Opportunities

Because Democracy is not a Spectator Sport....

We need your skills, your enthusiasm, and your commitment to the myriad of projects always underway. From simple clerical tasks to grass roots advocacy, ongoing or project-by project, we can fit your interests to a volunteer job. Expanding our volunteer base is a top priority of LWVCNM.



How to Find Out More About Volunteering? It's easy! Contact us at :

(505) 884-8441 or lwvcnmoffice@gmail.com Leave a message with your name/phone number and expressing your interest in finding out more about volunteering. We'll contact you to match your interests/skills with a volunteer position, explain tasks involved, review time commitment for various positions, and offer training where needed.



**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.