



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

As LWVCNM members, you already understand how critical municipal and local elections are. But many of our friends, families, and neighbors may not. Young voters in particular tend to ignore these elections. A simple conversation can make a big difference—ask them if they're registered, if they know when the election is, or why they might not be planning to vote. These discussions often open the door to meaningful engagement. **Note** Rio Rancho has opted out of the combined elections. Their election will take place separately in March.

Our 30+ volunteers are hard at work to ensure voters across the 4 LWVCNM counties, 4 adopted counties, and the Soil and Water Conservation races in New Mexico have accurate and complete information in VOTE411. LWVCNM is managing a total of 188 races, 373 candidates, and numerous ballot issues.

- The process begins when the Secretary of State issues the proclamation and publishes the qualified candidates.
- That information is entered into VOTE411 and office descriptions are carefully reviewed for accuracy.
- Candidate questions are developed with local issues in mind.
- Volunteers reach out to clerks, school districts, and other officials to gather and enter ballot issues.
- Candidates are contacted multiple times by phone and email to encourage participation.

Before early voting begins on **October 7**, VOTE411.org goes live. For the LWVCNM four counties, we also produce a PDF voter guide, available on lwvcnm.org.

Regrettably, turnout in the 2023 local elections was alarmingly low. These percentages reflect the number of ballots cast compared to eligible voters:

- Bernalillo County: 21.57%
- Sandoval County: 15.86%
- Torrance County: 18.39%
- Valencia County: 19.40%

These small percentages mean only a fraction of voters made decisions that affect everyone in their communities, towns, cities, and villages.

Please help us increase Voter turnout and increase the percentages by raising awareness of the election.

- Share election information with your networks.
- Direct voters to **VOTE411.org** and **lwvcnm.org**.
- Help us spread the word about the importance of local elections.
- Contact the office if you'd like to help publicize the election.

Your efforts, combined with the extraordinary work of our volunteers, can boost turnout and strengthen democracy at the local level. Let's get out the vote!

Constitution and Citizenship Day Op-ED

Defending the Constitution Is Our Duty

By Starlyn Brown, President LWV of Central New Mexico

September 17 is Constitution and Citizenship Day — a moment to reflect not just on history, but on the responsibilities that come with being an American citizen.

The story of this day goes back to 1940, when Congress first created “I Am an American Day.” Later, in 1952, it was renamed “Constitution Day” and moved to September 17, the date the Constitution was signed in 1787. In 2004, Congress recognized that the holiday should honor both the Constitution and citizenship, giving us today's civic holiday.

At the heart of this celebration is the Constitution itself — a framework that both empowers and limits government, while protecting the rights of the people. The Founders understood that unchecked power could threaten liberty. That's why they divided authority among three branches of government, embedding checks and balances into the Constitution from the very beginning.

In 1791, the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution, guaranteeing freedoms we now often take for granted: freedom of speech, religion, and the press; protections against unreasonable searches and seizures; and fairness in legal proceedings. These rights are not abstract. They are the daily guardrails of our democracy.

But today, those rights are under attack. From efforts to restrict speech and assembly, to attacks on the freedom of the press, to attempts to weaken due process, the liberties we've relied on, cannot be assumed permanent. They exist only as long as we, the people, demand their protection.

Constitution and Citizenship Day should not be a quiet observance tucked into the calendar. It should be a call to action. The Constitution is not a relic — it is protection. Our rights are not gifts from government; they are ours by design, and they endure only if we defend them.

It is time to speak up! We need to contact our elected representatives at the national, state and local levels to express our concerns about the threats to our democracy - call, text, write, email. LWVCNM publishes a Political Directory for Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties with contact information for our elected representatives. The directory can be found on the LWVCNM website lwvcnm.org.

Local Election Flyers Available

To increase awareness and reach new populations of voters we now have local election information flyers in four languages – English, Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese. You can find all of these on our website [here](#). Please help us distribute the flyers and raise awareness and encourage people to VOTE! Local Elections Matter! Help Spread the Word!

Join us for the Brown Bag Lunch and Learn Series

OCTOBER EDUCATIONAL MEETING

Thursday Oct. 9th, Noon – 1 pm



WHERE: LWVCNM Offices Conference Room, 6739 Academy Rd. NE, ample parking available;
In person (members and guests only); Zoom (members and general public)

TOPIC: Engaging the Youth Vote: Increasing Youth Voter Engagement in Local and Municipal Elections

PANELISTS: Blanca Ortiz, Dovy Friedman, Lisa Bryant

Voter turnout is historically much lower for local and municipal elections than for general elections. This is especially true for young voters. In Bernalillo County there are almost 50,000 registered voters aged 18-25 years old. In 2023, less than 2,000 showed up to vote in the municipal and local election. In 2024, less than 2,000 voted in the Primary Election. But in November 2024, over 26,000 voted in the General Election.

***We do a good job of registering young voters but fail to engage them in non-presidential elections.
What can be done to increase their participation?***

What are the barriers to youth voting in local elections? What are the incentives to vote? What are we missing? What communication strategies might be most effective?

Our panelists will share their perspectives on this issue and discuss possible ways to engage younger voters in these elections so that their interests may be better represented in the decisions made by local government. (cont.)



Blanca Ortiz
UNM Graduate Student
Public Policy

Blanca was born and raised in Santa Fe, NM, and earned her Bachelor’s of Arts in Political Science from Earlham College. She’s no stranger to the hardships that many individuals and families navigate in their day-to-day lives. These challenges have emboldened her to be present and active in her community. She currently works as a Site Coordinator for Communities in Schools New Mexico, where she helps to provide resources that support the betterment and quality of life of underserved communities. Blanca is passionate about education and immigration, and she hopes to explore policies intended to bridge the socioeconomic gap. She is especially interested in changes in immigration law and theory coincident with prevailing social issues.



Dovya Friedman
Owner/CEO, Utility Agency
& DLF Branding

Dovya Friedman has spent the past thirty years engaging with audiences on behalf of a diverse client base - corporate, civic, for profit, non profit - through branding, communication, marketing and advertising. Through Utility Agency, a small, woman-owned business, operating from Albuquerque's South Valley, every opportunity to support the success of a client is an opportunity to finesse our expertise and level up our services, all customized to each organization, all matched to their mission and culture. Dovya proudly serves on the Board of Directors for Keshet Dance and Center for the Arts, and TEDxABQ.



Lisa Bryant, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair, Political
Science
California State University,
Fresno

Lisa Bryant Ph.D. is currently Chair of Department of Political Science at California State University, Fresno, Dr. Bryant's research focuses primarily on election administration, public opinion and political behavior, campaigns and elections, and gender and representation. In addition to academic teaching and research, she has experience in the field of public opinion survey research and data analysis in both the public and private sectors and has worked with several non-partisan organizations, such as Pew Charitable Trusts and the Democracy Fund, to better understand voter behavior and increase voter registration and turnout. In 2024 she received an Andrew Carnegie Fellowship and during her two-year fellowship she will explore how partisan polarization has impacted election administration. She has been instrumental in establishing and maintaining the student chapter of the League of Women Voters at California State University, Fresno.



Speaking of Engaging the Youth Vote and increasing youth voter engagement, the LWVCNM was well represented at the beginning of the semester at UNM's Welcome Back Days around the Duck Pond! Students, new and returning, and others stopped by our table to learn more about voter registration and the work of the League. (Linda Miller, left, Betsy Carlson, right)

Membership Corner Reminder!

October 1st is the renewal date for dues for most of our members!

Our thanks to the 58 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 some guidance, please go to lwvcnm.org, click on **"For Members"** and then on **"Meeting Recordings."** 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 (elizs44@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 also 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!

Voter Services: A Busy September and an Exciting October Ahead

By Jill Crawley, Chair of Voter Services

September was a whirlwind month for Voter Services! Our team was active across the community, meeting people where they are and helping them get ready for the upcoming election.

We kicked things off with a strong presence at CNM Welcome Days (September 2) and Suncat Days (September 16–17). Throughout the month, we tabled at a variety of events, including the Women's Safety Summit (September 5), Rio Grande High School Career Fair (September 17), West Fest (September 20), Cuidando Los Niños (September 23), the Valencia UNM Career Fair (September 24), and the District 8 Neighborhood Meet and Greet at Holiday Park Community Center (September 25).

On National Voter Registration Day (September 16), we partnered with Bernalillo County to support voter registration at early polling locations throughout the county—a huge effort that brought in many new registrants.

Looking ahead, we are gearing up for a very active October. With the help of Mary H. Smith we are setting up several candidate forums to give voters the opportunity to hear directly from those seeking office. We continue to receive requests for both forums and tabling events, reflecting the growing demand for nonpartisan voter education.

A quick reminder: **voter registration closes on October 7, 2025**. After that date, we'll still be active in voter education, but we can no longer register new voters. Although Bernalillo County will not be present at the October Naturalization Ceremony, LWVCNM will host a table on October 10 to welcome and educate new citizens about voting.

October Calendar of Events

- **Wed, Oct 1:** UNM Law School
- **Fri, Oct 3:** 2025 APINH Community Listening Event
- **Sat, Oct 4:** Zine Fest
- **Wed, Oct 8:** Meet the Candidate Forum – Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. (Omega Alpha Zeta Chapter)
- **Thu, Oct 9:** Los Ranchos Candidate Forum
- **Fri, Oct 10:** U.S. Naturalization Ceremony – Albuquerque
- **Wed, Oct 15:** KOAT Mayoral Debate
- **Thu, Oct 16:** Public Programming Open House – Albuquerque Museum
- **Oct 22–24:** New Mexico Library Association Conference

Thank you to all our dedicated volunteers who make this work possible. Your energy and commitment are helping ensure that voters across Central New Mexico are informed, empowered, and ready for Election Day!

Help LWVCNM Engage NM Voters 2025/2026!

By Lori Feibelman

Hello Fellow Leaguers,

It's that time again—our annual online fundraising campaign! This year, once again, we're using Zeffy.com, a platform that makes it simple to donate and, best of all, ensures that 100% of every contribution goes directly to LWVCNM.

We've launched our 2025/2026 campaign, "Help LWVCNM Engage NM Voters!" As you know, every election year brings new expenses. While nearly 40 volunteers are working hard this fall on the Municipal and Local Election, we must also begin preparing now for the 2026 primaries and mid-term elections.

One of the great advantages of Zeffy is that it allows us to reach far beyond our membership. But for that to happen, we need your help. Our campaign's success depends not only on your own donation, but also on your willingness to share the link with your family, friends, and networks. By broadening the circle, we can raise the resources needed to keep voter education and registration strong across Bernalillo, Valencia, Sandoval, and Torrance counties.

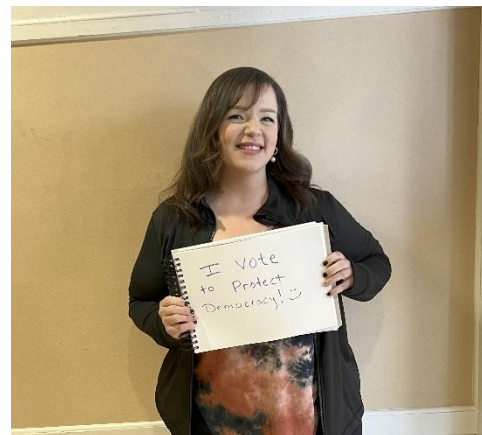
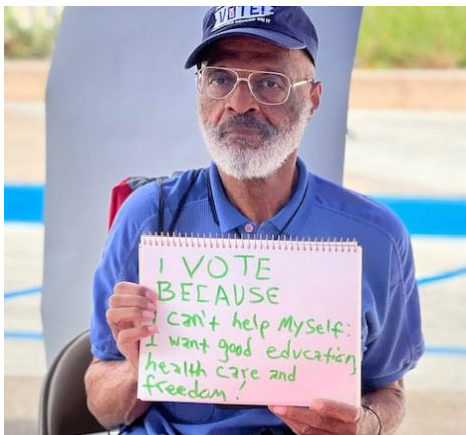
Another benefit of Zeffy's model: while donors may be asked to contribute a little extra to cover credit card fees and overhead, our nonprofit receives 100% of the intended donation. That means every dollar you give—or help raise—goes straight to empowering voters in Central New Mexico.

Thank you, as always, for your commitment and support. Together, we're making sure that every election is an opportunity for informed, empowered voters.

Yours in engaging the voters of New Mexico,

Lori Feibelman

505-514-7776



BOOK CLUB
What's Up Next?
Save-the-Date!

Rescheduled until Wednesday, Nov. 19th

The LWVCNM Book Club meets the 4th Wednesday of each odd-numbered month, except November, when it's held on the 3rd Wednesday
Join us for the session.

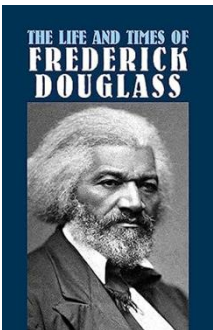
New members are always welcome!

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:

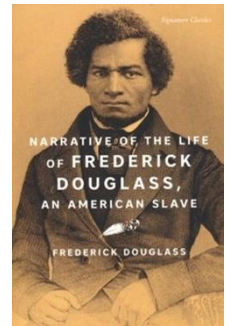
Date & Time: Wednesday, November 19 @ 5:30 pm
Location: LWVCNM Office Conference Room. - 6739 Academy Rd NE
Title: **The Autobiography of Frederick Douglass**



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.



Contact Janet at 505-401-2052 for questions

LWVNM Board Concurs with Colorado Position on the Separation of Church and State.

The League of Women Voters of New Mexico stands for the separation of church and state and religious freedom founded upon individual conscience, free of social or political influence by any state or religious body; these fundamental civil rights are threatened by religious nationalism.

The First Amendment of the US Constitution reads, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The League of Women Voters of New Mexico believes that the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment are cornerstones of our democracy.

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:
Betsy Carlson

Treasurer: Janet Kirkpatrick

Co-Secretaries:
Jane Moore & Lenann McGookey Gardner

Director/Voter Services Chair:
Jill Crawley

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:

LWVCNM CALENDAR

Oct 1st (Wednesday) 5:30 pm
LWVCNM Board Meeting,
ZOOM until further notice.
All members welcome.

**Oct 1st – Opening of the SPECIAL
SESSION – NM LEGISLATURE**

Oct 9th (Thursday) 12 Noon
LWVCNM Monthly Educational Meeting
In person and ZOOM
Topic: Engaging the Youth Vote: Increasing
Youth Voter Engagement in Local and
Municipal Elections

October Voter Services Events
SEE Page 6 for the list of currently
scheduled Events

NOVEMBER 4TH - ELECTION DAY

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

Moved to Nov 24th (Wednesday) 5:30 pm
LWVCNM Book Club
“The Autobiography of Frederick Douglass”
See info on p.4 or the Book Club link
on the LWVCNM webpage
& Hot Topics notices

OBSERVER REPORTS

Observer Corps Report – Bernalillo County Commission

September 9, 2025

Karen Wentworth



Bernalillo County Commission Sets Capital Improvement Requests for 2026 Legislative Session

All members of the County Commission attended the Sept. 9, 2025 commission meeting. Frank Baca – District 1, Barbara Baca – District 2, Adriann Barboa – District 3, Walt Benson – District 4, Eric Olivas – District 5.

The Bernalillo County Commission has approved the Capital Improvement Requests for the 2026 session of the New Mexico Legislature. The countywide priorities are:

- Mesa del Sol Outdoor Sports Improvements – request of \$5 million to design and construct natural turf tournament fields with field lighting. This is phase 4 of 8 phases.
- El Centro and Seybold Village Housing - \$1 million to address sidewalk and curb ramp issues for housing units for low-income senior citizens and disabled individuals and their families.
- Rehabilitation of county-maintained roads in the South Valley.
- Rehabilitation of county-maintained roads in the North Valley.

The commission also discussed festering problems on Pajarito Mesa. Over the years, land has been bought and sold on the mesa, which is southwest of the south valley. The original owners of the property did not go through a normal development process of laying out roads, applying for utilities and providing for access to each parcel. There is an ongoing problem for emergency services who have difficulty responding to calls with no address, no roads, no water or sewer services and no lighting. There is also a problem for people who live on the mesa but have no legal access to their property. County commissioners are discussing the problem but so far have not sought to resolve it.

Neither state nor local League positions offer much guidance about zoning or how public bodies should approach the problem of how to plan for orderly development.

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.