



# The VOTER

APRIL 2026

VOL 91, NO.4

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO**

6739 Academy Rd. NE Suite 124, Albuquerque, NM 87109    [lwvcnm.org](http://lwvcnm.org)    (505) 884-8441

## **CALL TO THE LWVCNM ANNUAL MEETING**

***Saturday, May 9, 2026***

**The League of Women Voters® of Central New Mexico**

**Invites**

**ALL MEMBERS**

**To our 2026 Annual Meeting**

**Location: UNM Continuing Education Room 123  
1634 University Blvd. NE**

### **SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

**Registration: 9:30 a.m. to 10 a.m.**

**Business Meeting: 10 a.m. 11:30 a.m.**

**Brunch Buffet: 11:30 a.m.**

**Guest Speaker Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller: 12:00 p.m.**

**Albuquerque Sanctuary City Protections from ICE**

### **RESERVATIONS**

**Reservations through May 4, 2026: \$25**

**Reservations are limited to 50 members. Sign up early to reserve your spot.**

**~SEE PAGE 3 FOR COMPLETE RESERVATION INFORMATION~**

**League of Women Voters® of Central New Mexico**  
**2026 Annual Meeting Agenda**

**UNM Continuing Education Room 123**

**May 9, 2026 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

**Registration Begins at 9:30 a.m.**

**Business Meeting**

**10 – 11:30 a.m.**

Introduction

Registration Committee Report

Adoption of Agenda

Recognition of Board

Moment of Silence

Recognition of New Lifetime Members

Presentation of Budget

Election of Board

Bylaw and Policy Revisions

Program Proposals

Other Business

Directions to Board

Volunteer Recognition

**Brunch Buffet 11:30 a.m.**

**Guest Speaker Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller 12:00 p.m.**

Albuquerque Sanctuary City Protections from ICE

## **MAKE YOUR ANNUAL MEETING RESERVATION TODAY!**

Reservations through May 4th: \$25

Reservations are limited to 50 members. Sign up early to reserve your spot.

### ***TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATION***

**Reserve & Pay Online:** [www.lwvcnm.org/annual-meeting](http://www.lwvcnm.org/annual-meeting)

**Reserve & Pay by Check:**

**Email:** [lunch@lwvcnm.org](mailto:lunch@lwvcnm.org) with your reservation information

**Call the League Office:** (505) 884-8441 and leave a voicemail with your reservation information

**Send your check:** LWVCNM 6739 Academy Rd. NE, Suite 124  
Albuquerque NM 87109-3352

### ***Annual Meeting Rules***

1. No person may speak twice to the same motion until all who wish to speak have had the opportunity to do so.
2. Each speaker is limited to two minutes.
3. All motions must be made in writing and a copy given to the Secretary.
4. Only members in good standing will be allowed to speak on a motion.

**Please bring this copy of the Annual Meeting Voter Newsletter and your purple 2025-2026 Membership Handbook with you to the Annual Meeting.**

### ***Membership Corner***

If you have not yet renewed your annual dues, you will be ineligible to vote on issues at the upcoming Annual Meeting on May 9th.

Exception are Lifetime members who do not have to pay dues.

Dues may be paid online at [www.lwvcnm.org/join-renew](http://www.lwvcnm.org/join-renew) or by check made out to LWVUS, 6739 Academy Rd. NE, Suite 124, Albuquerque, NM 87109-3352

If you are unsure about your membership status, please call Liz Shields (559.578.5670) or email [elizs44@yahoo.com](mailto:elizs44@yahoo.com)

**Thank you for your continued support!**

## **Report of The Budget Committee**

The Budget Committee presents the following two-year budget (fiscal years 5/1/2026-4/30/2027 and 5/1/2027-4/30/2028) for approval by the LWVCNM general membership. In deriving the proposed two-year budget, the Budget Committee considered prior fiscal years' revenue and expense history as well as known information for two upcoming fiscal years. A significant change was additional expense related to printing a *Voter Guide* for the June 2026 primary. Expenses exceed revenue in both budget years because the committee made a conservative estimate of donations. LWVCNM has sufficient savings to cover the projected shortfall if donations do not cover the additional *Voter Guide* printing. The LWVCNM Board approved the budget below for presentation at the annual meeting.

<b>LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO</b>		
<b>PROPOSED TWO-YEAR BUDGET</b>		
	<b>FY 2027</b>	<b>FY 2028</b>
	<b>5.1.26 - 4.30.27</b>	<b>5.1.27- 4.30.28</b>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Membership Dues	\$2,450	\$2,586
Contributions	\$7,000	\$7,000
Contributions - Voter Guide	\$30,000	\$20,000
LWVNM Ed Fund (Vote 411)	\$5,000	\$0
Annual Meeting	\$1,500	\$1,500
LWVNM Rent	\$800	\$800
Handbook Ads	\$200	\$200
Grants-Specific Purpose	\$0	\$0
Income from CD/Savings	\$200	\$200
<b>Revenue Total</b>	<b>\$47,150</b>	<b>\$32,286</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
<b>Voter Guide</b>	\$35,800	\$18,600
<b>Voter Services</b>		
Voter Education	\$650	\$700
Voter Registration	\$1,250	\$1,100
Who's Who	\$4,000	\$4,000
<b>Member Services</b>		
Handbook	\$1,375	\$1,450
Annual Meeting	\$3,050	\$3,150
<b>Communication</b>	\$5,000	\$5,000
<b>Development Committee</b>	\$650	\$650
<b>LWVUS/LWVNM Conv Reg</b>	\$3,000	\$0
<b>Technology Services</b>	\$3,785	\$4,855

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO PROPOSED TWO-YEAR BUDGET		
	FY 2027	FY 2028
	5.1.26 - 4.30.27	5.1.27- 4.30.28
<b>Expenses (Continued)</b>		
<b>Operating Expenses</b>		
Office Rent	\$9,720	\$9,780
Insurance	\$2,500	\$2,700
Other (Postage, Office Supplies, Etc.)	\$1,952	\$1,957
<b>Special Events</b>	\$1,500	\$1,500
<b>Misc</b>	\$500	\$500
<b>Expense Total</b>	<b>\$74,732</b>	<b>\$55,942</b>
<b>Income/(Loss)</b>	<b>(\$27,582)</b>	<b>(\$23,656)</b>
<b>Transfer (to)/from savings</b>	<b>\$27,582</b>	<b>\$23,656</b>

ACCOUNT BALANCES FEB 28, 2026	
Checking	\$18,768
Savings	\$24,876
CD (Matures 3/11/26)	\$41,138
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$84,782</b>

Fiscal Year End 2025-2026 (4/30/2026) Income and Expense Report will be available at the annual meeting.

### ***Report of the Nominating Committee for the 2026 Board Elections***

According to the Bylaws, three Officers and three Director board positions are elected at the Annual Meeting in even-numbered years. Special thanks to the members of the Nominating Committee Dina Hennessy (Chair), Lori Feibelman, Janet Simon, and Betsy Carlson who worked diligently to find excellent candidates to fill the Board Positions. Having a vibrant and committed Board is the only way we can sustain the work of the League.

**The following members have been nominated to fill the open Board positions:**

#### **Officers**

2nd Vice President - Membership: Dina Hennessy

3rd Vice President - Program Planning: Karen Douglas

Treasurer: Janet Kirkpatrick

## **Elected Directors**

Special Projects: Jen Pecasting

Outreach: Kit Rosewater

Civic Education: Liz Shields

## **Biographical Statements of Nominated Officers and Directors**

**Dina Hennessy** is a native New Mexican born and raised in Santa Fe. She holds a Political Science bachelor's degree from NM Highlands University. And she earned a Six Sigma Black Belt Certificate early in her career. Dina has 20 years of experience in membership organizations. She was the Director of Member Services for the American Society of Radiologic Technologists for 13 years. She also served with the for-profit subsidiary of the New Mexico Hospital Association and concluded her career as Vice President of Membership Development and Retention at the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce. Dina serves as Chair on the Nominating Committee, is an active member of the Membership Committee and the Voter Registration Committee.

**Karen Douglas** served as LWVCNM 3rd VP/Program Planning and member of the CNM Leadership Team 2015-17 with Andrea Targhetta, Carol Tucker Trelease, and Peggy Howell. She then served as LWVNM Director and Chair of the LWVNM Spent Nuclear Storage Safety Committee since May 2017 with SNF Storage Safety Advocacy Statement approved by LWVUS December 2019 and 2021 Consensus meetings involving members of the four NM local leagues resulting in the SNF Storage Safety Position adopted by the LWVNM Convention delegates April 2021. Karen also served as LWVNM Nuclear Issues Director 2023-24, chairing a study seeking to revisit the current LWVUS Position opposing increased reliance on nuclear position, however, Consensus was not reached 2023. She served as LWVCNM Co-President with Karen Wentworth 2019-21 and with Donna Sandoval 2021-23. Karen continues to be involved with LWVCNM activities including her service as APD Forward representative since 2015, 2024 Program Planning, and both 2019-20 and 2024 suffrage observance including the LWV 100th Birthday Party February 2020 and continuing efforts to recognize NM women trailblazers. Karen is a Nuclear Engineer, Nuclear Safety Specialist, and ASME NQA-1 Lead Nuclear Quality Assurance Auditor who contributed to both Federal and private sector initiatives. Karen also served as Chair of ASQ Energy & Environment Division 2020-21 and currently serves as EDGe Chair (Energy & Environment Division, Design & Construction Division, and Government Division) offering education to 15,000 ASQ members internationally. Karen had previously been employed by General Electric Nuclear Energy Division, Raychem Corporation, Longenecker & Associates, US DOE/NNSA, and Motorola Corporation. Karen earned her undergraduate engineering degree from UNM in 1979 and completed her MS in Materials Science and Engineering at Stanford University in 1983.

**Janet Kirkpatrick** celebrated the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment by joining LWVCNM in 2020. She has a bachelor's degree in Business Administration/Accounting Emphasis from the University of Montana. Janet moved with her family to Albuquerque in 2002 where she worked as an auditor for both the Department of Defense and the Forest Service until retiring in 2022. She stepped into the interim Treasurer position in October of 2024.

**Jen Pecasting** is a former educator, literacy tutor, and speech & debate coach for Albuquerque Public Schools. She is currently a behavior redirector, and on the crisis response team & leadership team at a local APS elementary school. During her time coaching the largest speech & debate team in the state, she coached several state champions and national competitors; while earning awards such as the 2023 New Mexico Debate Coach of the Year and the Donus D. Roberts Coaching Excellence Award. She is an active member and building rep for the Albuquerque Federation of

Classified Professionals Union. She joined the league in the fall of 2024 and began helping with the voter guide in fall of 2025, under the guidance of Linda Miller. She is looking forward to continuing that work.

**Kit Rosewater** spent her entire childhood, as well as most of her adult life, at home awash in the pink watermelon sunsets of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Prior to becoming a traditionally published author, Kit taught theatre studies and English at Albuquerque Academy. Kit's undergraduate degree from Wellesley College is in psychology and theatre studies, and her master's degree from Hollins University is in Children's Literature. Kit's degrees first provided her with a foundation in teaching, and now support her work as a children's book writer and visiting author at schools, conferences, and book festivals statewide. Kit has two children, aged five and three, attending school in Albuquerque. She continues to strive to show them what an active and caring adult looks like in the community. Kit's daughter, five, already hopes to be a doctor, a teacher, a scientist, a writer, and a mom when she grows up. Because, as Kit shares, her daughter wholeheartedly believes a woman can embody all these qualities and contribute substantially to help better the world.

**Liz Shields** moved to Albuquerque in 2021 from Fresno, California to be closer to her daughter and her family. Liz was very active in the League in Fresno and its parting gift to her was a year's membership in LWVCNM. After a year as a regular member Liz was asked to be Membership Chair and has served in that office for the past four years. Liz has also been active in voter registration and voter education in local high schools. Born in Northern Ireland, Liz has lived and worked in Botswana and Turkey before moving to the United States in 1970 with her husband, a Peace Corps volunteer she met in Botswana. She became a US citizen in 1977. She retired from the Department of Finance and Business Law at Fresno State in 2009 after teaching finance for 30 years and assisting in development projects in Armenia.

## ***Proposed Modifications to Bylaws, Policies and Guidelines***

The Bylaws and Policy and Guidelines Committee propose the following amendments for approval at the Annual Meeting. Items underlined are being inserted. **Sections of the bylaws with no revisions have not been included.**

Underlined text – new or replacement text

### **LWVCNM Bylaws Committee Recommended Revisions 2026 r1 2-11-26**

2025 Bylaws – LWVCNM Member Handbook, pp. 39-45

#### **Article III Membership & Article VI Section 2 Dues**

**Recommendation:** revise to reflect the current dues payment structure and define both the proposed scholarship eligibility and award to promote student membership growth and retention.

#### **Proposal: Article VI. Financial Administration 2. C. Dues (addition)**

**LWVCNM shall create a scholarship fund supported by member donations which may be accessed by Treasurer or 2<sup>nd</sup> VP/Membership to authorize \$20 payment to LWVUS for current**

**or new student members via most expeditious process acceptable to LWVUS (Student Members as defined by Article III. Section 2.3).**

**CNM Bylaws Article III. Membership #3. (new copied from LWVUS 2026)**

**Discrimination or harassment of any kind will not be accepted within the League, including but not limited to race, socio-economic status, age, ability status, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender identity, or marital status. The League is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and belonging for all people. The League is an organization that respects and values the richness of our community and our members. The collective sum of our individual differences and life experiences represents not only our culture, but our reputation and the organization's mission and achievements as well.**

**2025 LWVCNM Bylaws - Article IV. Section 7 Executive Committee p.40**

**Sec. 7.** An Executive Committee, as named by the LWVCNM Board of Directors, consisting of the President or Co-Presidents and three other elected officers or elected directors of the Board of Directors appointed **annually** by the Board of Directors, shall act for the Board of Directors between regular meetings provided that any action taken shall be presented to the Board of Directors for ratification at its next meeting. Three members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for transacting business.

## ***Program***

**Please refer to the 3rd VICE-PRESIDENT ANNUAL REPORT – CALENDAR AND PROGRAM PLANNING for detailed Program information starting on page 13.**

## Guest Speaker

# Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller to address Albuquerque Sanctuary City Protections from ICE



LWVCNM welcomes third term Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller for an address to members during our Annual Meeting in Albuquerque Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Keller will discuss the CABQ stance as a Sanctuary City and protections offered to residents which are not uniformly observed by communities nationwide.

On July 21, 2025 Mayor Tim Keller issued an Executive Order reaffirming Albuquerque's longstanding commitment as an immigrant-friendly city and outlined specific actions to safeguard the rights and safety of immigrant and refugee communities. The order comes in response to recent federal legislation and enforcement practices that threaten due process, destabilize families, and undermine trust in local government. [View the Executive Order](#) or [visit the Defend ABQ webpage](#). These CABQ provisions include Protection of Immigration Due Process, Implementation and Oversight, Transparency in City Services,

Transparency in Federal Immigration Enforcement, Protection of Children, Including Migrant Youth, and Support for Working Families.

These CABQ immigrant protection programs contrast sharply with many states and communities nationwide who have promoted the incentives offered to law enforcement by ICE since enactment of Executive Order (EO) 14159, *Protecting the American People Against Invasion* issued by President Trump January 20, 2025'. This EO requires ICE to authorize State and local law enforcement officials, as the Secretary of Homeland Security determines are qualified and appropriate, under section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act to the maximum extent permitted by law. [Delegation of Immigration Authority Section 287\(g\) Immigration and Nationality Act | ICE](#) Several states, including but not limited to Georgia and Florida, have passed, or are considering, State legislation mandating law enforcement agencies (LEAs) seek out or enter into memorandums of agreement (MOA) with ICE pursuant to a partnership under the 287(g) Program. DHS promotion of this cooperation requests law enforcement agency or office participation in the [Department of Justice's State Criminal Alien Assistance Program](#).

As a result of our Sanctuary City status will CABQ be subject to punitive cuts to necessary programs? These may include:

- More than \$200 million in federal grants including early childhood development programs, funding for officers to keep streets safe, and sexual assault testing kits.
- Cuts to public safety for police, fire, and emergency response.
- Housing and homeless support and essential housing programs including \$25 million for 400 units at Uptown.
- Infrastructure Grants for City projects are in jeopardy including housing, bike trails, pedestrian safety, and road safety and development.

## **2025-2026 ANNUAL REPORTS**

**The Officers, Directors, and Committee Chairs are pleased to provide the following reports of their activities for the 2025-2026 year.**

### **ANNUAL REPORT PRESIDENT**

**by Starlyn Brown**

#### **A Year of Growth, Engagement, and Impact**

First, I must acknowledge the other LWVCNM Board members. Without their commitment and tireless efforts LWVCNM would not have accomplished even half of what we did in the last year. They are truly an amazing group of individuals.

The League of Women Voters continues to thrive thanks to our incredible members and volunteers. We are welcoming many new and enthusiastic members who are joining our long-time members. People are joining the League because they want to be part of protecting democracy, and their energy and commitment combined with our experienced members are making a difference.

Since last May, the League has been busy with a wide range of events and activities. One highlight was our partnership with the Guild Theater to present *Ratified*, made possible through the generosity of member Jennifer Black. More recently, in partnership with the Three Muses Collaborative, we hosted an evening performance with Susan B. Anthony reminding us why *Failure Is Impossible*.

The League also produced an electronic *Voter Guide* for the November local and municipal elections ensuring voters had access to reliable election information. Our Voter Guide Committee managed candidate races and ballot issues in VOTE411 for our four-county area as well as our adopted counties of Catron, Cibola, McKinley, and Socorro. Additionally Cheryl Haaker coordinated all Soil and Water Conservation District races statewide in VOTE411.

Voter outreach and education remained a major focus of our work. League members spoke in schools, at CNM and UNM, and with community organizations about why local and municipal elections matter and why voters truly do care. For the first time, our election flyer was available in Vietnamese and Chinese, helping us reach more members of our community.

The League also moderated candidate forums in Albuquerque and Los Ranchos. Because the League is widely trusted as a nonpartisan organization, we were also asked to serve as timekeepers for mayoral candidate forums hosted by KOAT and the *Albuquerque Journal*.

We continued to look for opportunities to register voters, educate the public, and connect with community organizations. League volunteers participated in events including the New Mexico Library Association Conference, the New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women Women's Safety Summit, the New Mexico Asian Family Center Community Listening Event, Pride Day, the Goodwill NextSteps Program, Naturalization Ceremonies, and at the Albuquerque Museum, among many others.

In November, the League joined the Freedom to Read New Mexico Coalition. Although the coalition was not successful in asking the Governor to send a message requesting that the 2026 Legislature hear our three bills, we appreciate everyone who contacted the Governor in support of this effort. Planning is already underway for the 2027 legislative session. To learn more about this work, visit [www.freedomtoreadnewmexico.org](http://www.freedomtoreadnewmexico.org). If you are interested in getting involved, please contact me.

Work is already underway to prepare for the June 2026 Primary Election. One of the most significant changes in New Mexico election law is the introduction of Semi-Open Primaries. Approximately 400,000 registered Decline-to-State (DTS) voters will now be able to participate in primary elections without changing their registration to a major political party. Independent voters are also DTS since Independent is not a political party in New Mexico.

To help ensure voters understand this change, we produced educational flyers in both English and Spanish. Historically, many voters have overlooked the importance of the Primary, even though it is estimated that nearly 80% of elections are effectively decided in the Primary.

I will close with this quote:

**“The power of the people is always greater than the people in power.”**

—Weal Ghomin

## **ANNUAL REPORT 1st CO-VICE PRESIDENTS** **by Lani Desaulniers & Karen Wentworth**

The LWVCNM Voter Guide Committee prepared an online *Voter Guide* for the November 2025 local and municipal elections in Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, and Valencia Counties. The LWVUS VOTE411 platform was used to invite candidates to provide responses to questions. Users could access the information about their races on the VOTE411.org website and a pdf *Voter Guide* for each county was created and posted on our website. The CNM guides contained 89 races and 200 candidates. Flyers with information about these resources were provided to libraries, schools, community partners, and county clerks in the region.

The 2026 *Who's Who A Political Directory* guide for Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties was updated by Ashley Benning following certification of the election results. The first edition was printed, and a pdf version was posted on our website. The updated edition will be printed following the certification of the Rio Rancho mayoral run-off election in April. In response to a recommendation at our 2025 Annual Meeting, Ashley created a separate *Who's Who* guide for Torrance and Valencia counties this spring. We will be seeking feedback from the libraries and the clerks this summer and fall for guidance on how best to promote this resource in the communities.

We are currently working on a *Voter Guide* for the June 2<sup>nd</sup> Primary Election using VOTE411. Voter information will be accessible on VOTE 411, but we will also print a *Voter Guide* for Bernalillo and Sandoval and a separate guide for Torrance and Valencia Counties. The LWVCNM website will have pdf versions of these guides. The decision to print a guide for the primary this year was made for two reasons: This is the first year that approximately 400,000 independent (decline-to-state) voters will be allowed to vote in the NM primary elections, and in New Mexico many races are decided in the primary.

We also plan to print a *Voter Guide* for the November 3<sup>rd</sup> General Election. The Voter Guide committee will resume work this summer on this project. There will be additional races, candidates,

and ballot measures, as well as several proposed amendments to the NM constitution for the November election. We will have continued need for volunteers for this work, as well as for publicity and fundraising.

Please contact Lani Desaulniers [LMDesaul@aol.com](mailto:LMDesaul@aol.com) if you have questions or would like to join the effort.

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2nd VICE-PRESIDENT - MEMBERSHIP** **by Liz Shields**

Since the Annual Membership Report in March 2025, fifty-two new members have joined LWVCNM. Many of these new members have become actively involved in voter education and in production of the *Voter Guide*. Currently, we have 196 members. I am happy to report on two new Lifetime members, Sonia Lersten and Phyllis Frederiksen. Welcome Sonia and Phyllis, to that exclusive circle.

Sadly, we have lost two long-time members, Julie Seligman who died two years ago, and Nora Nan Clayton who passed away in late 2025.

At our September Monthly Meeting we made a PowerPoint presentation instructing members on how to navigate the new online dues payment system. We also included help for members who did not want to use the online system. The presentation was made available to all members on the LWVCNM web site.

In October, most of our members, who previously renewed their membership dues by check, transitioned to paying online without much difficulty. Members also have the option to auto-renew, allowing their renewals to be processed automatically. One problem has arisen with auto-renew. If members renew manually upon receiving a reminder from LWVUS, the auto-renew function still processes a membership payment resulting in extending their membership for two years instead of one.

Again, we urge members to separate their donations from their renewal payments and use the "donation" button on our web site or send a check directly to LWVCNM.

We started a bimonthly Drop-In Coffee last May thanks to the suggestions from Pam Wilson and Dina Hennessy, our membership committee members. This is well attended and has given new members the opportunity to become informed about League procedures, positions and activities.

Our Holiday Open House in December was held at the home of Karen Douglas. Forty-five members attended and enjoyed good company, good conversation and good food. Thank you, Karen, for hosting this annual event. More recently we celebrated Women's History Month thanks to Dina Hennessy who organized a performance of "Failure is Impossible: A Talk with Susan B Anthony" starring Rose Stephenson at the Q-Staff Theatre on March 14<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you for your support during 2025-2026 and we look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup>.

## **ANNUAL REPORT 3rd VICE-PRESIDENT – CALENDAR AND PROGRAM PLANNING** **by Karen Douglas**

### **LWVCNM Program Planning Results 2-21-2026**

12 LWVCNM members participated in February 2026 Program Planning with resultant 3-4-26 LWVCNM Board acceptance of two Studies for further consideration. Meeting deliberations included: Program Planning for Advocacy Background presentation, LWVWA Welcoming Immigrants Concurrence discussion, and Initiation of three study proposals:

**LWVUS Energy Study Proposal (WI/NM/PA)** Karen Douglas LWVNM Energy study proposal revision considered by LWVWI Board 3-5-26 with decision to direct to 5-29-26 LWVWI Annual Meeting membership. LWVNM Board decided 3-7-26 to await May WI decision, therefore, this study proposal was not submitted to LWVUS for consideration by June 2026 LWVUS Convention delegates.

**LWVUS Artificial Intelligence** - Janet Simon (Lead), Janie McGuigan, and Sharon O'Connor. The LWVCNM 2-21-2026 Program Planning attendee comments included:

- AI influencing voter choice, false algorithms,
- PACs disseminating propaganda with unknown sources obscuring transparency (e.g., Elon Musk RBG PAC dark money with source identification following election)
- Internet sources should be identified as required for print media,
- Misrepresenting abortion issue,
- Use of software applications to manipulate voters,
- Skewing what people see online,
- Youth suicides following AI influence,
- "AI is a quickly evolving tool holding promise but study should recommend where it should be promoted vs. reigned in. "

**LWVCNM Data Centers/Microgrids** - Karen Wentworth/Janie McGuigan March 2026 see draft below for **LWVCNM Annual meeting membership discussion and vote.**

The 2026 LWVUS Program Planning Survey was compiled by Starlyn Brown and Karen Douglas, summarizing LWVCNM activities implementing LWVUS "Making Democracy Work" efforts and supporting LWVUS Legislative Priorities. The Survey included submission of "The Impacts of Artificial Intelligence on Our Democracy" study proposal discussed by members during 2-21-2026 LWVCNM Program Planning, drafted by Janet Simon, and approved by LWVCNM Board 3-4-2026.

#### **FOR MEMBER INFORMATION ONLY:**

- 3-7-2026 LWVNM recommended that LWVWA Welcoming Immigrants be added to June 2026 LWVUS Agenda for Concurrence (full Position in February 2026 LWVCNM Voter).
- LWVNY had requested concurrence with the Privatization Position for June 2026 LWVUS Convention, however, LWVNM voted 3-7-2026 not to concur because neither adequate time for consideration nor sufficient background information were available for a concurrence decision.
- 3-4-2026 LWVCNM Board approved "The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Democracy" with submission via 3-5-2026 LWVCNM response to LWVUS Program Planning survey as a recommended 2026-2028 LWVUS Study Proposal (full study proposal below).
- LWVUS Energy Study Proposal (WI/NM/PA) Considered by LWVWI Board 3-5-2026 with decision for further consideration by 5-29-2026 LWVWI Annual Meeting membership. LWVNM Board decided 3-7-2026 to await May WI decision, therefore, this study proposal was not

submitted to LWVUS for consideration by June 2026 LWVUS Convention delegates (Karen Douglas, full Study Proposal below).

## **1. Proposed LWVUS Study Proposal: The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Our Democracy**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a rapidly evolving technology that is reshaping the information environment in which democracy operates. Its influence intersects with many of the League's long-standing positions, making it essential for the League to study AI carefully and proactively. This includes identifying where AI should be encouraged and supported, as well as determining the safeguards, regulations, and accountability measures needed to prevent misuse. The League's positions on **Money in Politics**, the **Citizen's Right to Know**, and the **Decline of News and its impact on democracy** intersect significantly with emerging AI technologies. Key areas of impact include:

- Protecting the integrity of elections and democratic processes
- Verifying the authenticity of candidate, campaign, and policy information, including detection of deepfakes and other synthetic media
- Strengthening government transparency, regulatory oversight, and accountability
- Ensuring an informed and engaged public
- Advancing equity and preventing harm across communities

This proposal aims to conduct a study reviewing the current AI practices and anticipated future applications and implications for democratic systems. It is expected that this study will involve multiple state leagues and require a minimum of one year.

### **PROGRAM FOR MEMBER DISCUSSION AND VOTE:**

## **2. LWVCNM Data Center/Microgrid Study Proposal (Karen Wentworth/Janie McGuigan)**

This is a proposal to study the environmental impacts of large-scale data centers in the Central New Mexico area (Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance and Valencia counties). Data centers require an enormous amount of electricity and water to operate.

Depending on the method used to generate the electricity used to power them, they can release a significant amount of air pollution.

In some parts of the United States, the data centers are connected to electrical grids which have been forced to make major system upgrades to handle the additional demand for electricity. That in turn has raised residential rates. Financial resistance to the electrical grid upgrades and the time it takes for utility regulators to allow utilities to invest in grid upgrades in the U.S. has pushed the data centers to begin generating their own electricity through microgrids. In New Mexico, those microgrids are completely unregulated.

**Objective:** This study proposes to develop a framework and clear guidelines that are needed to address the potential impacts of data centers including but not limited to: resident energy generation cost burden; water availability and groundwater impacts; clean energy efficiency standards; safeguarding public health; and possible pollution impacts on wildlife, water and land.

**Background:** Interest in this issue was triggered by Project Jupiter in Dona Ana County. Project Jupiter is a 5-year \$50 billion dollar investment in a campus near Santa Teresa for Oracle. The project backers say it will create at least 750 new full-time positions and 50 part time roles within

three years of operation. The average annual wages would be around \$100,000, plus benefits. The Dona Ana County Commission agreed to a \$165 billion dollar Industrial Revenue Bond to help with financing. A detail left out of the initial discussion was how the facility would be powered. Project Jupiter proposes to generate the electrical power it needs with gas turbine engines. It is estimated the engines will emit nitrogen oxide air pollution equivalent to the combined total emissions of the Cities of Albuquerque and Las Cruces.

Another data center project in Valencia County is run by Meta. It has a microgrid powered completely by solar panels. That eliminated the emissions problem, but it uses substantial amounts of water. Meta is attempting to mitigate its impact on ground water by buying and retiring water rights in the Los Lunas area.

As with so many problems, the devil is in the details. This study is a good opportunity for the Central New Mexico league to create a position we can use to help solve a difficult problem in our state. It is also a way for members to learn how to use the league's study process to tackle issues.

**LWVCNM Calendar Planning 6-14-25** identified Monthly LWVCNM Educational Meeting topics through July 2026:

**7-10-25** (Karen M. Douglas) Former NM State Senator Dede Feldman addressed the impacts of Federal Funding Cuts to NM Healthcare and Education. Severe impacts to NM Healthcare are anticipated with extensive Medicaid cuts to states which expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. NM Senate Bill 88, providing \$2 billion, to the Medicaid Trust Fund, passed both houses and was signed into law by Governor Michele Lujan Grisham 4-8-2025.

**August 2025** no Educational Meeting; Saturday, August 2, 2025, LWVCNM member Jennifer Black and The Guild Theater sponsored a special FREE screening of the documentary film Ratified in honor of Women's Equality Day 2025

**September 11, 2025** (Liz Shields) – New LWV Membership system and Dues Payment \*also offered September 11, 2025; 6:00 pm/zoom only

**October 9, 2025** – (Lani DeSaulniers/Liz Shields) Panel discussion including Blanca Ortiz/LWVSFC and UNM Graduate Student, Lisa Bryant, Dovya Friedman/LWVCNM, "Engaging the Youth Vote" addressing those registered vs. those participating in elections.

**November 13, 2025** (Janet Simon) NM Commission on Mental Health and Competency – Justice Zamora & Dr. Cloud, "Competency and Public Safety."

**January 8, 2026** – (Karen Wentworth) Dick Mason "League Priorities for the 2026 30-Day Legislative Session."

**February 26, 2026** (Karen Douglas) Bob Perls, NM Open Elections Executive Director, presented Semi-Open Primaries addressing Decline-to State (DTS) or minor party voters: those with no major party designation may be unaware that the 2025 NM legislature passed SB16, "**NON-MAJOR PARTY VOTERS IN PRIMARY ELECTIONS**" which the Governor signed April 2025.

**March 12, 2026** (Mary Henrie Smith) Christine Barber, Executive Director, New Mexico Foundation for Open Government (NMFOG) "New Mexico's Legislature: Is It or Is It Not Committed to Transparency?" The League of Women Voters has long been committed to transparency.

**April 9, 2026** (Jeanne Logsdon) NM Senator Antoinette Sedillo-Lopez, “Data Centers and Microgrids in New Mexico: Issues to Address in New Mexico.” Meta established a large data center in Valencia County in 2019 and is expanding there. Three other data centers have recently been announced in southern New Mexico (Project Jupiter in Dona Ana County; Project Zenith in Roswell; and a Lea County data center operated by New Era Energy & Digital). Up to 12 additional sites are in discussion around the state.

## **ANNUAL REPORT 4th VICE-PRESIDENT – DEVELOPMENT**

### **by Betsy Carlson**

The Development Committee has fundraising initiatives as follows:

Zeffy crowd funding to raise \$50,000 to print voter guide for the primary election and the general election in 2026. We currently have an active Zeffy page open. Currently there is a little over \$4,000 in the fundraising campaign. Please visit the site to share with friends, family and business associates interested in voter education. Our fundraising letter will be on the web site and the Zeffy thermometer will be there also; so we can track our progress.

An application to the Albuquerque Community Foundation has been made for the 2026 Grant making cycle. We asked for \$10,000. Results will be announced on June 4th. We have received \$1,000 from The Community Foundation again this year.

We joined Grant Watch for a 3 month period as a test to see if we qualify for any of the grants on the web site.

We have developed a spreadsheet with the League’s activities. Once completed it will be available to review and revise.

We have joined Rewards Grant training to connect with local grants. Historically we do not qualify for any of these grants; but we will try again.

## **ANNUAL REPORT DIRECTOR - VOTER SERVICES**

### **By Jill Crawley**

In 2025, the Voter Services and Outreach Committee held 18 voter registration events, attended and registered new citizens at 5 Naturalization Ceremonies including three in conjunction with Bernalillo County and helped with candidate meet & greets, conducted two forums and were timekeepers for 3 candidate debates in Albuquerque.

We registered over 312 voters, handed out 176 registration forms to potential voters and handed out more than 326 flyers to voters at our events throughout the year. We interacted with many other voters this year including providing flyers in English, Spanish, Chinese and Vietnamese to over 100 participants and the APINH (Asian Pacific Islander and Native Hawaiian) Meet and Greet event for our Albuquerque Mayoral and City Council candidates. We also donated 500 composition Notebooks to students at Atrisco Heritage Academy.

We have made connections with various non-profits and governmental entities to offer voter education and services including Goodwill of New Mexico, CNM, UNM, local libraries, APS and Charter schools. We have pursued career fairs in Valencia County to reach out to this area and are continuing to focus on new events in Sandoval and Torrance Counties to broaden our Outreach.

We hope to increase our activities this coming year so we can reach as many voters as possible in Central New Mexico. This year has been very busy and successful, but it would not be possible without all our wonderful Volunteers. Voter Education and Outreach are essential to Saving our Democracy.

## **ANNUAL REPORT DIRECTOR – TECHNOLOGY**

**By Linda Miller**

### **Tech support for monthly meetings**

The technology in the conference room has been slightly more reliable. The devices in the conference room are used by various organizations in the building, so changes can happen without our knowledge. We have had a few glitches, but the majority of the meetings, which are hybrid to allow members and guests to join in person or on Zoom, went smoothly.

### **LWVCNM Website**

Our website continues to provide timely information for our members and for the community at large. It provided needed information about the 2025 Municipal Election: there were over 32,000 accesses to the Voter Guide pdf documents (one for each of our counties) on our website.

A subcommittee of the LWVCNM Communications Committee was formed to review our website and suggest changes. The members are Starlyn Brown, Dovya Friedman, Cris Hagaman, and me. Work has begun on the changes. Our goal is to make the website more attractive to the community at large and to make navigation easier.

### **Other**

Other tech support includes maintaining our two email lists – Topics and Constant Contact (for sending the Voter), maintaining our Google drive to facilitate sharing documents, creating and starting Zoom meetings, and recording various meetings and publishing the videos on our YouTube channel.

## ***PREVIOUS YEAR’S (2025) ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES***

### **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO**

**Saturday, May 10, 2025**

#### **Indian Pueblo Cultural Center**

President Starlyn Brown delivered the Welcoming remarks at 10:10 a.m. at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center Silver meeting room with 49 paid members present.

Starlyn mentioned some of the league’s accomplishments in the preceding year.

- Registration of more voters than in the past for the Primary and General Elections
- Continuous work on immigration, housing and climate issues
- Reports from the Observer Corps
- Civics education for APS and UNM students
- Installation of the Julia Brown Asplund trail marker on the UNM campus

Jennifer Black welcomed members to the new venue, the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, and thanked the staff for their excellent support. She invited everyone to a VIP tour of the Entrepreneurial Complex and other attractions after the meeting.

**Registration Committee Report:** Liz Shields reported that a quorum for the meeting had been reached with 49 paid members in attendance.

Starlyn called the 2025 Annual Meeting of the LWVCNM to order. She introduced secretary, Vivian Skadron, and Jane Moore, incoming secretary, who will be the reader of the minutes. She announced approval of the April 2024 Annual Meeting minutes.

**Adoption of Agenda:** Starlyn referred to the agenda as distributed and read the rules for the meeting. Hearing no objections, the agenda and rules were adopted.

**Recognition of Board:** Each board member was asked to stand. Starlyn thanked them all for their hard work and dedication to the league.

**Moment of Silence:** Three league members passed away in 2024. Starlyn asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of Ida Humphry, Jennice Fishburn, and Ken Lersten.

**New Membership System:** After a year of preparation, the new LWVUS membership system was activated in February. Starlyn briefly described the new procedures for payment of membership dues and offered assistance to anyone who needs help in renewing their membership. She asked that donor contributions be made directly by check to the LWVCNM.

**Treasurer's Report and Presentation of Budget:** Liz Shields referred to the handout for the 2024/2025 fiscal year. The bank account balance in checking and savings totaled \$84,146. The Board voted to purchase a \$40,000 CD for 3 months at a rate of 4.07%. She explained significant revenue and expenses in the May 2024 – April 2025 actuals. The proposed budget for May 2025 – April 2026 shows an income loss of \$13,066, but sufficient funds are in the league bank account to cover the loss. A motion to approve the budget was made by Karen Douglas and seconded by Donna Rigano. The motion passed.

**Election of Board:** Betsy Carlson reported on the Nominating Committee recommendations for the Board: President, Starlyn Brown; 1<sup>st</sup> Co-Vice Presidents, Lani Desaulniers and Karen Wentworth; 4<sup>th</sup> Vice President, Betsy Carlson; Co-Secretaries, Jane Moore and Lenann McGookey Gardner; Elected Directors, Jeanne Logsdon, Terry Quinn and Jill Crawley. She asked for nominations from the floor and hearing none the Board as presented was elected.

Betsy asked for volunteers to the Nominating Committee. Janet Simon, Lori Feibelman and Dina Hennessy volunteered.

**Bylaws and Policy Revisions:** Karen Douglas, Chair of the Bylaws Committee, presented the proposed changes to the Bylaws. Articles III through VII, after discussion, were adopted as presented.

Under Article VIII, Mary Henry Smith proposed rewording Sec. 1, Nominating Committee, as follows: The Nominating Committee shall include both off-Board members and two (2) members of the Board of Directors. The chair and two members shall not be members of the LWVCNM Board, and shall be elected at the LWVCNM Annual Meeting. Nominations for these positions shall be made by the current Nominating Committee. The other members shall be appointed by the Board of Directors immediately following the LWVCNM Annual Meeting. Any vacancy on the Nominating Committee shall be filled by the Board of Directors. Suggestions for nominations for officers and directors may be sent to this committee by any voting member.

A motion was made by Ashley Benning and seconded by Donna Rigano to approve Article VIII, Sec. 1 as amended. The motion passed.

Karen continued with Policies and Guidelines noting that the Conflict of Interest Policy and Loyalties is up-to-date for the league. The Local Advocacy Guidelines encountered much discussion centered on 3) All statements made in the name of the LWVCNM require approval by the Board of Directors. Dick Mason questioned changing the wording from “the President/Co-Presidents” to “Board of Directors.” He expressed the feeling that the change would hurt the league’s ability to respond quickly. Judith Minks said it was too burdensome. And Mary Henry Smith responded that we should have trust in the President’s judgement to respond judiciously. Starlyn asked that we table the changes to 3) under Local Advocacy Guidelines and refer it to committee to present next year. With that exception, Betsy Carlson moved and Jeanne Logsdon seconded approval of the Policy and Guidelines. Motion passed.

**Program:** Karen Douglas reported on the Federal Judiciary Study and the approval of the State Affordable Housing position.

**LWVUS:** Starlyn informed league members of the National League’s actions as follows:

- On April 17<sup>th</sup>, LWV declared our country is in a Constitutional Crisis.
- On May 1<sup>st</sup>, the LWV began a campaign to defend democracy called, Unite and Rise 8.5.
- In April, the House of Representatives passed the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act (SAVE) requiring citizenship documentation to register to vote.
- Lawsuits filed by the LWV include (1) against the President’s Executive Order of March 25 “Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American Elections.” (2) A brief opposing Executive Order attacking birthright citizenship, and (3) lawsuits by leagues in Arkansas, California, Florida, New York, and North Carolina to protect voters in their states.

**Other Business:** Lani Desaulniers rose to thank all volunteers who worked in voter service this past year. She invited others to participate in the fall elections in which there are more than 100 races. The Voter Guide will not be printed but will be a PDF for the 2025 elections.

Jeanne Logsdon reported that her committee will engage in tracking actions of legislative interim committees on the environment starting this summer. Volunteers are needed.

**Directions to the Board:** Brenda McKenna asked that the Who’s Who expand to include all four counties. A question was asked when membership dues are due. Liz Shields responded by saying that the LWVUS will notify members three months in advance of their anniversary date followed by one month prior.

**Volunteer Recognition:** Starlyn asked all volunteers to the league to stand for recognition. Applause followed.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: Vivian Skadron, Secretary



**6739 Academy Rd. NE, Suite 124**

**Albuquerque, NM 87109-3352**

**The League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico, a tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) organization is a nonpartisan 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.**