



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**

An Informed Voter is a Powerful Voter!

Ready to Get Out the Vote?

LWVCNM volunteers have spent months gathering information and preparing for the November General Election. Now, all that hard work has come to fruition, the ***Voter Guide* is complete!**

Printed guides will be distributed throughout the four LWVCNM counties during the first week of October. The *Voter Guide* PDFs are available on our website, and VOTE411.org will be available to voters on October 5th.

Once you see the *Voter Guide*, you will appreciate the enormous effort that went into producing it.

I am often asked why voters should use the LWVCNM *Voter Guide* when there are so many sources of election information. My answer—feel free to use it—is simple: **The LWVCNM *Voter Guide* is the only nonpartisan guide that brings together comprehensive election information for all four of our counties.** It includes federal, state, and county races as well as state, county and local bond and other ballot issues, making it easier for voters to find the information they need in one place.

We also encourage voters to check their voter registration and mailing address and obtain a sample ballot before voting. A sample ballot shows exactly what will appear on your ballot and can help you focus your research and make informed decisions. Visit **NMVote.gov** to check your registration and produce your sample ballot.

Finally, please help us spread the word. Encourage every eligible voter you know to vote—and tell them about the LWVCNM *Voter Guide*. Democracy works best when informed voters participate.

Time to start talking about the LWVCNM Data Center Microgrid Study

At the May Annual Meeting, LWVCNM members approved a **Data Center Microgrid Study**. Since then, the study committee has been hard at work. The committee established the scope of the study, formed three subcommittees, and began the ambitious task of researching this complex issue. They have risen to the challenge.

The current phase is completing the study documents, which will present the committee's research, and begin educating LWVCNM members about this very complicated and important subject. That education begins with this newsletter and will continue over the next couple of months.

The culmination of this work will be **consensus meetings for LWVCNM members**. Members will discuss and answer consensus questions. The collective responses will then be used to decide whether to develop a new Position on data centers and microgrids and, if so, what language should be included.

Positions are the foundation of the Leagues advocacy. If there is not a Position, then we cannot advocate on an issue. Members' involvement and engagement in the education and consensus study process are crucial. Please plan to engage and participate.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns, president@lwvcnm.org

Happy Hour in Corrales

Calling all West Side Members

We are having a Happy Hour

Corrales on October 21, from 7-830 pm at Ex Novo, 4895 Corrales Rd.

We encourage our Rio Rancho/Westside League members to attend and get to know other members. All League members are welcome! Please RSVP to Marlyn Wells @ 919-270-0679.

OCTOBER EDUCATIONAL MEETING

Thursday, OCTOBER 8TH at Noon



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

TOPIC: REEVALUATING THE NM PRISON SYSTEM

SPEAKERS: Stacy Burleson, Women In Leadership NM, Inc. and
Keri Thiel, NM Sentencing Commission

[This will be a hybrid meeting at 12 PM with in-person attendance in the LWVCNM conference room](#)

Please join LWVCNM members for this special 90-min hybrid Educational Meeting coordinated by Trish Lopez and offering diverse perspectives of the NM Prison system.

Panel members will include both Stacy Burleson, Executive Director, Women In Leadership NM Inc, formerly incarcerated and now serving as a community leader, and Keri Thiel, Deputy Director at the NM Sentencing Commission:

Stacy Burleson
Executive Director, Women In Leadership NM Inc.

Stacy is the Executive Director and Co-Founder of Women in Leadership New Mexico Inc, a nonprofit for women and men impacted by the criminal justice system directly or indirectly. Stacy is the former secretary of The NM Black Mental Health Coalition and the former co-chair of the NM Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Commission. She is a mental health first aid instructor, opioid outreach specialist, community health worker, and certified peer support worker. One of Stacy's passions is working with the formerly incarcerated, homeless population, and individuals struggling with substance misuse. She understands from her own experience how hard it is to recover. She is a leader in the community and a returning citizen giving back to an underserved population and dedicating her life to working with returning citizens.

Keri Thiel
Deputy Director, NM Sentencing Commission

Since joining the Sentencing Commission, Keri has been working with the Criminal Code Update Committee and its working groups on their proposed criminal code updates. She is also part of the Sentencing Commission's Crime Reduction Grants team, assisting in the coordination of Crime Reduction Grants. Keri has been an ex officio member of the NM Supreme Court's Commission on Equity and Justice since November 2021, where she serves on the policy subcommittee. Keri received a B.A. in Sociology from the University of Maryland and J.D. from the University of New Mexico.

Then in November: Data Centers

Two proposed hyperscale data centers in New Mexico, a huge proposed microgrid system on the Pajarito Mesa of Bernalillo County, and more likely to come. The AI revolution and the data centers that power them are moving into New Mexico whether we are ready or not.

The Data Center and Microgrid Study Committee will give a presentation on their ongoing work to decide whether to create a Central New Mexico League Position on the issue of data centers. The committee has divided its work into three sections: Environmental Impact, Economic Development Impact, and Energy Impact.

Committee members will give brief presentations about the impact data centers have in each area and some suggestions for ways communities might handle these impacts.

An article with background and their interim findings is located below on pg. 5 of this Voter.

Join us with your questions and suggestions for an exploration of this new frontier in our state.

Voter Guide Committee Report

The LWVCNM Voter Guide for the November 3rd General Election has been completed. We are truly grateful for the many volunteers who began work on this project well before the primary. This guide includes detailed information and candidate responses to questions in races for federal, state and county officials, including judges. It also contains information on state Constitutional Amendments, bond issues, and other local questions.

Voters can access Voter Guide information from the guide in three ways beginning the first week of October:

- Use Vote411.org
On the LWVUS website – Voters enter their address and can view their sample ballot. They can review the candidate's responses to our questions and see the other measures and questions that will appear on their own ballot.
- Visit our lwvcnm.org website's Voters and Elections page.
Online versions of the print Voter Guides are posted there, along with a great deal of other information about voting resources.
- Obtain a copy of our printed Voter Guides.

What's New in the printed Voter Guide since 2024?

The front page has a new look – with more color. Versions for Bernalillo and Sandoval County and for Tarrant and Valencia County will be distinguished by map icons. The candidate photos are in color, as was done in the primary. [Our printer offered this at no additional cost.]

We dropped the lists of polling locations and hours for Bernalillo and Sandoval counties since the lists are very long and early voting hours are not consistent across sites. We refer to the county elections websites for those lists. They both contain a locator tool which allows voters to find their nearest polling place.

Our office staff will have polling place info and can also assist callers with obtaining that information.

How you can help?

The print version of the Voter Guide should be ready for distribution during the first week of October. We will need help from our members to deliver these guides since we have a large number of sites in the four counties. Cheryl Haaker (NE Heights) and Dina Hennessy (Westside) have offered their homes as distribution sites for the first few days. Ellen Kelly is coordinating the distribution plan. Keep an eye out for LWVCNM Topics and Hot Topics messages that will have the details on specific dates and times as that information becomes available.

We really encourage members to pick up guides to distribute to family, friends, co-workers, businesses, churches, and organizations in the community. These are a unique and valued nonpartisan resource for many people. After the first several days, the extra guides will be stored in the office, but be sure to call ahead, (505) 884-8441, to make arrangements to pick them up. Several of the team will also have bundles in our vehicles to make it easier to transfer them to you.

Information about donations to support the guide

We fund the print voter guide with donations and grants. We were grateful that the LWVNM Education Fund provided some grant funds to support both the primary and general election Voter Guides this year. We have also received donations from members and others in the community.

If anyone asks, information about how to donate can be found in the back pages of the Voter Guide and on the donation page of our website, lwvcnm.org.

Lani Desaulniers & Karen Wentworth
and the Voter Guide Committee



On Tuesday, November 3, there will be an election for Federal, State and County officials, including Judges. The ballot will also contain questions on State Constitutional Amendments, Bonds, and other local issues. El martes, 3 de noviembre, habrá una elección para los oficiales federales, estatales y judiciales. También se incluirán enmiendas a la Constitución estatal, asuntos de bonos y otros temas locales.

October 6	Early voting starts at County Clerk offices. Last day to register online or by paper voter registration form. Same day voter registration available at County Clerk locations. Clerks begin sending absentee/mail-in ballots.	La votación anticipada comienza en las oficinas del secretario del condado. El último día para registrarse en línea o por el formulario impreso de registro de votante. El registro de votante en el mismo día está disponible en las oficinas del secretario del condado. Los secretarías comienzan a enviar por correo las boletas de voto en sujeción.
October 17 - 31 (closed October 12 holiday)	Early voting at designated polling places. Same day registration at these polling places.	Votación anticipada en los lugares designados de votación. Registro para votar el mismo día en esos lugares de votación.
October 20	Last day to request an absentee ballot.	El último día para solicitar una boleta de voto por correo.
November 3	Election Day - Your chance to vote in person! Absentee ballots are due in the clerk's office, an official drop box, or at an Election Day voting site before 7:00 pm. Same day registration at polling places.	Día de las elecciones: La última oportunidad para votar en persona! Las boletas de voto por sujeción deben entregarse en la oficina del secretario del condado o en un lugar de votación el día de las elecciones a más tardar a las 7:00 pm. Registro para votar el mismo día en los lugares de votación.
How to use this Voter Guide - Find out what's on your ballot by obtaining a sample ballot from lwvcnm.org. You can also contact your County Clerk or request one at a polling site. - Locate your races and ballot questions via the table of contents on Page 3. Check Your Registration and view your sample ballot at lwvcnm.org		
Cómo utilizar esta Guía para votantes - Averigüe qué aparece en su boleta por obteniendo una boleta de muestra en lwvcnm.org. También puede comunicarse con el secretario del condado o solicitar una en un lugar de votación. - Localice sus carreras y asuntos de boleta en el índice de contenidos en la página 3. Consulte lwvcnm.org para una guía interactiva y personalizada para su paqetito. También encontrará información adicional de los candidatos.		

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Voter Registration with UNM Associated Students

DATA CENTER AND MICROGRID STUDY UPDATE

When we asked LWVCNM members to approve a study of data centers and microgrids at the annual meeting last spring, we thought we were embarking on a straightforward study of a fairly simple problem. In addition to the environmental impacts, and economic development and energy impacts, we are learning that data centers are the front door to enormous change coming to New Mexico because they need to connect to an electric grid.

Our study began by organizing the research into these three subcommittees:

Environmental Impacts – led by Jeanne Logsdon

Announcements about hyperscale data centers and related microgrids raised immediate concerns about how much water these facilities would need during construction and for continuous 24/7 operations. New Mexico is an arid state that is experiencing drought, with a predicted 25% reduction in water availability over the next 50 years. We have challenges meeting current water needs. How can significant new water demand for data centers be met?

Air pollution also poses significant concerns for data center development. Some federal and state regulations apply to emissions from large industrial operations, like data centers. For example, we have standards for carbon monoxide, ozone (volatile organic compounds), and particulates. But the most serious air pollution problem is the result of so-called “greenhouse gases,” accumulating in the atmosphere primarily from the use of fossil fuels. Increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases contribute to higher air and ocean temperatures, more volatile weather events, drought, sea level rise, and other climate-related changes. No standards are in place to control greenhouse gases. Data centers that rely on fossil fuels (e.g., natural gas) will contribute to climate change.

Excessive noise and heat from data centers can negatively affect those living and working nearby. Research has found that loud and constant sound not only reduces the quality of life but may cause chronic health problems ranging from sleep disturbances to stress/anxiety, heart disease, and cognitive deficits. Can excessive noise pollution be mitigated with new rules and guidelines? Waste heat that is generated from data center cooling processes raises temperatures several degrees. Should placement of data centers in already high-temperature locations be reconsidered?

Economic Impacts – led by Janie McGuigan

Companies that want to build hyperscale data centers look for the most financially attractive locations for their investments. They expect economic development incentives to be offered by state and local government in order to locate their facilities. A number of state and local economic development mechanisms can be used to attract data centers. For example, property tax abatements, sales tax exemptions, industrial revenue bonds. These incentives are justified by the promise of good-paying jobs and community benefits. Debates can arise as to whether the return on investment by state and local governments will yield long-term benefits to the community.

The Economic Development subcommittee is researching current policy and programs as well as the actual costs and benefits to state and local governments that choose to enter into agreements with data centers. The bottom-line question is: “do these subsidies and enticements actually produce long term economic growth for all members of our local communities or could the loss of tax revenues (given ‘away’ to data center developers) cripple the ability of governments to provide the services and benefits their communities count on?” For example, road construction and repairs, infrastructure upgrades, public safety and fire protection, and adequately funded and supported schools. Government officials as our elected representatives need to take these important issues into consideration when negotiations are conducted with data center developers.

Energy Impacts – led by Karen Wentworth

New Mexico's electric grid was built in the 1930s just after the Rural Electrification Program was passed by Congress. Communities all across the state began building small electric plants serving a limited number of customers, expanding slowly and predictably. It's not so different today. Investment in new technology moves slowly – slowed by the Public Regulatory Commission's reluctance to allow utilities to invest in more than the minimum needed by ratepayers. The actual number of electricity providers is astonishing, but even the largest utilities are not ready to handle the power demands of data centers, especially the hyperscale data centers.

Public Service Company of New Mexico is the biggest investor-owned electric utility serving about half a million customers in Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Santa Fe, Las Vegas, Silver City, Alamogordo and Deming. Its current parent company is TXNM, which also covers a part of southwest Texas. TXNM is capable of generating 2.7 gigawatts of power in both states. Project Jupiter, a hyperscale data center now being built in Southern New Mexico, plans to build a microgrid to generate 2.5 gigawatts of power. Its microgrid is essentially its own electric utility, because no utility existing now in New Mexico can come close to handling the load it needs to operate.

Two other investor-owned utilities operate in New Mexico: El Paso Electric, serving Las Cruces and Hatch, and Xcel Energy, generally known as Southwestern Public Service, serving southeastern New Mexico. Google has announced that it is exploring building a data center in Lea County, which is served by Southwestern Public Service. Initial indications are that it may be a hyperscale data center.

There are also 16 rural electric co-ops, owned and operated by ratepayers themselves, and four electric utilities in Farmington, Aztec, Raton, Springer and Truth or Consequences that are run by city or town councils.

This mix of electric utilities will complicate things since data centers need to connect to the electric grid for either primary or backup power. Project Jupiter would like to connect to the grid, but its power need is so great, it would destabilize any electric grid in the region if it did connect.

New Mexico's electric grid today looks a little like a two-lane dirt road now being hit with a six-lane interstate worth of demand.

Electric Comparisons

- One kilowatt measures a 1,000-watt appliance running for one hour.¹
- The average 2,000 sq. ft. single family home consumes 10,500 kilowatts per year.²
- One megawatt equals 1,000 kilowatts. One megawatt of electricity can power 400 to 1,000 average homes at any one time.³
- One gigawatt can power 700,000 to 800,000 average homes at any one time.⁴
- The microgrid proposed by Project Jupiter is 2.5 gigawatts. It could power at least 1.8 million average homes at any one time.

Sources:

1. Electric Choice website
2. U.S. Energy Information Administration
3. HBOWA New Energy website
4. Quora website



The LWVCNM Book Club

New members are always welcome!

The LWVCNM Book Club meets the 4th Wednesday of each odd-numbered month at 5:30pm. (Except November, which meets Sunday the 22nd)

New members are always welcome! If you are not able to complete a book before the session, come anyway and join the conversation. Enjoy light snacks and the opportunity to get to know other LWVCNM members.

Next Gathering: NOTE DIFFERENT DATE, TIME, & LOCATION!!

Date: Sunday, November 22nd

Time: 3:00 pm

Location: Park Plaza, 1331 Park Ave SW.

Title: The Wage Standard: What's Wrong in the Labor Market and How to Fix It by Arindrajit Dube

Author Arindrajit Dube is Provost Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts - Amherst where his research focuses on labor economics. Janet Yellen, former Secretary of Treasury and former Chair of the Federal Reserve, describes The Wage Standard as a “deeply insightful analysis of how America’s labor market went off course – why rising productivity has not translated into rising wages for most Americans.”

Upcoming titles: For **January**, The Changemakers: How New Mexico Became the Land of Women’s Equality, by Tasia Young.

Any questions? Contact Janet at 505-401-2052

LWVCNM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Starlyn Brown

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Karen Wentworth & Lani Desaulniers

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Karen Wentworth

Voter Guide Distribution:
Ellen Kelly

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

Oct. 7th (Wednesday) 5:30 pm
LWVCNM Board Meeting,
ZOOM until further notice.
All members welcome.

October 8th (Thursday)
12 Noon

90 min presentation
LWVCNM Monthly Educational Meeting
In person and ZOOM
Topic: Re-evaluating the NM Prison System
Speakers: Stacy Burleson, Women In
Leadership NM, Inc., and Keri Thiel, NM
Sentencing Commission

October 21st (Wednesday) 7-8:30pm

Corrales Happy Hour
Ex Novo, 4895 Corrales Rd.

Nov. 4th (Wednesday) 5:30 pm
LWVCNM Board Meeting,
ZOOM until further notice.
All members welcome.

November 12th (Thursday) 12 Noon
LWVCNM Monthly Educational Meeting
In person and ZOOM
Topic: Data Centers
Speakers: Report from the LWVCNM Data
Center & Microgrid Study Committee

Nov. 22nd (Sunday) 3:00 pm
Different day, time and location!
LWVCNM Book Club
Book choice: The Wage Standard: What's
Wrong in the Labor Market and How to Fix It
See info p. 8

OBSERVER REPORTS



Observer Corps Report – Bernalillo County Commission **September 9, 2026** **Karen Wentworth**

Commission Hears Concerns from County Assessor

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

County commissioners heard concerns from the Bernalillo County Assessor at their September 9th meeting about a change initiated by the NM Taxation and Revenue Department. Normally, the state calculates the yield of the various mill levies the county collects as property taxes. The change shifts the responsibility of calculating the yield from the state to the local county assessors. Bernalillo County Assessor argues that this is too much power to place in the hands of one elected official, since it basically gives the power to calculate property taxes and collect them in one office, without a check and balance. He asked the commission to consider supporting legislation to force the Taxation and Revenue Department to continue to make the calculations for the counties.

LWVUS Position: Citizen's Right to Know/Public Participation. Protest the citizen's right to know and facilitate informed understanding and public participation in government decision making.

The commission took an unusual action at its August 11 meeting, with all commissioners in attendance. The Bernalillo County staff introduced a series of bond proposals last June that totaled \$45 million dollars to be voted on in the November election.

At the August meeting the commission approved a series of motions that removed \$10 million dollars from county reserves and placed it into road construction and community center projects. The bond proposals voters will see on November 3rd will total \$55 million dollars. Bernalillo County has traditionally been conservative with its reserve money, but the August action took the reserves down to the absolute minimum required by the state, in spite of staff warnings that the county reserves were approaching the red line point at which the state takes over a county's finances. The vote was 4 to 1, with commissioner Walt Benson voting in the minority.

LWVNM Position: Open Meetings ...To the extent that is practical, have all written materials that will be used in a public meeting available a week in advance, preferably online, or let the public know where and how such materials can be obtained.



Sandoval County Commission Special meeting

August 26, 2026

Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)

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

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

Commissioner Discussion

Each commissioner recognized and expressed gratitude to Deputy County Clerk Joey Dominguez and County Clerk Anne Brady Romero for their work with elections that have brought them state and national recognition.

Sandoval County Commission Website

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



Sandoval County Commission Special meeting

September 9, 2026

Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)

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

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

All eight commenters spoke in favor of the resolution opposing the transfer of land into the Cochiti Pueblo Trust because doing so would close two public roads used by the speakers.

Resolution opposing transfer of land into the Cochiti Pueblo Trust

The Bureau of Indian Affairs published notice that Cochiti Pueblo had applied to transfer fee land acquired from the State in 2019 into trust by the Federal Government. The Commission unanimously adopted a resolution opposing this land transfer as a reply to the Department of Interior's 30-day invitation to submit written comments.

The resolution states that the 2019 transfer of land to Cochiti Pueblo was subject to a right-of-way agreement from 2011 in which the State Land Commissioner granted Sandoval County Right-of-Way for the public roads mentioned in public comments. However, the Pueblo filed a Cancellation of Easement and blocked the roads in 2019. The matter continues to be heard in tribal court, and the County has been working with the New Mexico Federal members of Congress to find a resolution.

Resolution authorizing publication of notice of proposed Automated License Plate Reader Systems.

The Commission unanimously passed a resolution of intent to introduce an ordinance regulating Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) Systems in Sandoval County at their next meeting. Key excerpts from the proposed ordinance include:

"No person shall install, maintain, or operate any Automated License Plate Reader system in, on, over, or under any public right-of-way or on any property owned or controlled by Sandoval County, except as may be expressly authorized by a written permit issued by the County."

"No person shall access, download, copy, or transmit any information, record, photograph, or data from an Automated License Plate Reader that is installed in violation of this section."

"Any ALPR system installed or operating in violation of this Article on its effective date shall be removed within sixty days."

The proposed ordinance would not impact these systems within municipalities.

Sandoval County Commission Website
<https://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/commission/>



**6739 Academy Rd. NE, Suite 124
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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.