



THE VOTER

JANUARY 2008

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JANUARY 2008 UNIT MEETINGS — LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND LOCAL ADVOCACY

Thursday, January 10, 11:45 a.m., Luncheon Unit

Wyndham Hotel, 2910 Yale SE (Reservations required*)

Speaker: Matt Brix, Policy Director, Center for Civic Policy

Topic: Legislation Emerging from the NM Ethics Task Force

Matt Brix's professional experience includes policy research, nonprofit management, advocacy, communications strategies, lobbying, fundraising and leading service-learning trips for young people. He served on Governor Richardson's Ethics and Campaign Reform Task Force. Mr. Brix was the chair of the Albuquerque Clean Elections Committee, which led the 2005 referendum campaign to bring clean elections public financing to Albuquerque. He also serves as vice chair of the Common Cause New Mexico State Governing Council.

Tuesday, January 15, 6:00 p.m., Evening Unit

Cherry Hills Library, Community Room, 6901 Barstow NE

**Speakers: City Councilor Debbie O'Malley
City Councilor Brad Winter**

Topic: Public Financing of Campaigns—Two Points of View

The 2007 Albuquerque City Council election was the first in which candidates could obtain public financing for campaign expenses. Some candidates chose to use the funding; others did not. The speakers will discuss how those decisions are made. Some timely questions which might be addressed are: How well does the Charter Amendment work? What problems or issues arose? Extension of campaign financing at the state level has clear opposition; what are the issues of opposition and support?

Councilor Winter, who represents District 4, is beginning his third term of office and is serving for the fourth time as Council President. He did not choose to use public financing in his 2007 campaign. Councilor O'Malley, who represents District 2, is beginning her second term. She has served as President of the Council and is currently Vice-President. She did participate in public financing for the 2007 campaign.

*Cost of the luncheon is \$16, payable at the door. Reservations are required. Call the office at 884-8441 by 10:00 a.m. on Monday, January 7. If you prefer a fruit plate rather than the menu item, please let us know at the time you make your reservations

Wednesday, January 16, 12 Noon, Sandoval County Unit

Corrales Community Center, 4234 Corrales Road

Monday, January 21, 1:30 p.m. Midtown Unit

Manzano del Sol, Hobby Room, 5201 Roma NE

Speaker: Dick Mason, Co-Chair, LWVNM Action Committee

Topic: League Priorities at the Legislature

At both the Sandoval County Unit and the Midtown Unit, Mr. Mason will discuss the issues that the State LWV has prioritized for the 2008 session and how LWV members can become effective advocates on these issues.

We Need Your Voice - Attend League Day at the Legislature

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2008

8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

NEW MEXICO STATE LAND OFFICE

MORGAN HALL

310 OLD SANTA FE TRAIL, SANTA FE

The 2008 Legislative Session will be dealing with many bills that have been prioritized by the League of Women Voters. Although it is only a 30 day session, legislation to be considered will deal with areas such as: health care reform; natural resources; water; climate change; public education; campaign finance and ethics reform; election reform and drug courts.

Although reservations to attend League Day are not required, we would like to have an idea of the number of attendees. Please email Dick Mason at the following: polirich@aol.com; or call the LWV/ABC office at 884-8441.

The LWVNM Action Committee will be sending out email Action Alerts throughout the 2008 Legislative session. If you are not part of the LWVNM Topics List go to www.lwvnm.org and sign up.

For more on League Day call the LWV/ABC office or visit the State League website at www.lwvnm.org. Please see page 3 of this *Voter* for information on transportation, accommodations and arrangements for lunch.

**LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
ALBUQUERQUE/
BERNALILLO COUNTY**

Board Meeting

1st Thursday of each month
5:30 p.m.
Offices of
Sutin, Thayer & Browne
6565 Americas Parkway NE

Program Committees

Check with the following
League members about
community activities:

Advocacy

Delores Watkins
823-2308

Drug Policy

Delores Watkins
823-2308

Natural Resources

JoAnne Ramponi
298-2716
Includes transportation,
land use, air quality,
water and energy

All League members
are welcome at all
unit meetings, committee,
and board meetings.

The *VOTER* is published
each month by the
League of Women Voters
of Albuquerque/Bernalillo
County.

President's Corner

Happy New Year Everyone. We ended last year on a high note, but the month of December was a killer, with four major activities in a two-week period. I hope everyone got a well-earned rest afterwards.

Our annual Program Planning session went well. Thank you, Dick Mason, for once again leading us through the process in an organized and clear manner. Thank you to Clare Wilson and La Vida Llena for providing the space for this meeting and setting up the room for us.

The success of our reception for councilors and commissioners is described elsewhere in this issue of the *Voter*. Suffice it to say here that we were all proud of being part of the League that day.

Donna Hill has written a separate article about the lobbying workshop we also sponsored in December. Hats off to Donna and her committee for an outstanding job! And thanks to Susan Walton for arranging the use of Sandia Preparatory School for the occasion.

Next month you will read about the December general meeting with Dr. David Schmidly, President of UNM, and the immigration consensus report that went to LWVUS in December.

While these things were going on, Margaret Krahenbuhl and Mary Anne Giangola were once again producing our *Who's Who* directory of elected officials. The publication has a nice new look this year, one that we hope will be easier to read. Thanks Margaret and Mary Anne for all the work you put in on this project every year.

And last, but not least, we should show our appreciation to JoAnne Ramponi and Kathy Altobelli for putting the new Member Handbook together. Kathy, who does a tremendous job behind the scenes on our member database, stepped in at a critical time to edit the handbook. We can't thank you enough, Kathy.

Whew! That's a lot of thank yous for a lot of work. And there is more to come in 2008. Best wishes to you all for the year ahead.

Diane Goldfarb

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS—DECEMBER 6, 2007

LWV/ABC Board:

Accepted the resignation of 4th Vice President Dorothy Reynolds.

Approved appointment of Lisa Franzen to the Nominating Committee.

Amended and adopted the LWV/ABC Policy on Political Participation (November 1, 2007 Board Meeting)

Adopted the LWV/ABC Coalition Policy.

Updated and approved the Two-Year Plan for FY 2007-2008 & FY 2008-2009.

Membership is up from last year at this time.

There are 113 people on LWVABC Topics.

E-mail aliases have been set up using the lwvabc.org domain

Sales of Entertainment Books and sponsorships for the Member Handbook have gone well.

LWV/ABC Education Fund Board:

The *Who's Who* has been prepared and is at the printer. 10,000 copies will be printed for distribution by the first of the year.

There will be a fundraising campaign early in 2008, rather than a special event, and an event to "unveil" the *Voters' Guide* in early October.

VOTER REGISTRAR TRAINING

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2008
10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

CLUBHOUSE AT THE COURTYARDS ON CUTLER
2403 SAN MATEO NE

Please R.S.V.P. by Wednesday, January 30, 2008 to:

Dolores Waller, 296-7927, or
LWV/ABC Office, 884-8441

LEAGUE DAY AT THE LEGISLATURE
Tuesday, January 22, 2008, 8 a.m.—5 p.m.
NM State Land Office, Morgan Hall
310 Old Santa Fe Trail, Santa Fe
(Just down the street from the Capitol)

Transportation: LWV/ABC will be arranging for car-pooling from Albuquerque. Please contact the office at 884-8441 if you can drive or if you need a ride. Parking near the State House is hard to find during the session. The state does operate a shuttle from other parking lots. We will provide you with that information as soon as it is available.

Lunch: Bring or buy a lunch. For \$10, you may purchase a sack lunch that will include a veggie or meat sandwich, chips, cookie and drink. Reservations for lunch orders are required and must be made by 3:00 p.m., Thursday, January 17. Call in your order and choice of sandwich to the League in Santa Fe, 1-505-982-9766, or e-mail Jane Gaziano at jeg7@aol.com. Questions? Call Dick Mason at 994-0685.

Accommodations: Garrett's Desert Inn, which is located across the street from the Land Office at 311 Old Santa Fe Trail, offers a legislative rate of \$79 plus tax. That doesn't include breakfast, but they have an attached restaurant. Call 1-800-888-2145 to make a reservation. The Sage Inn at 725 Cerrillos Road is the former Budget Inn (150 rooms) which has been remodeled. Their rate is \$55 plus tax. Call 1-866-433-0335 and ask the reservations manager for the special legislative rate. They have on-site parking, free wireless internet access, and an expanded continental breakfast. Public transportation is available to the Capitol.

LOBBYING WORKSHOP—AN OUTSTANDING EVENT

Five speakers presented a wealth of information to League members and non-members at the December 8 Lobbying Workshop at Sandia Preparatory School. The presentation styles of State Senator Larry Larrañaga, State Representative Jerry Ortiz y Pino and two experienced lobbyists: Linda Siegle, President of Resources for Change, and LWVNM President Katherine Campbell were so inviting and open that we feel constituents will do the right thing when lobbying their legislators. Lupita Blea of the Secretary of State's office provided the rules. Thank you, too, to committee members Lisa Franzen, Josephine Porter and volunteers Dolores Waller, Cheryl Haaker, George Franzen, John Hill, and to moderator Diane Goldfarb who filled in when needed during the entire process.

Donna Hill, Community Education Series

DRUG POLICY STUDY COMMITTEE

There will not be a committee meeting in January. Committee members are preparing for the February units which will be devoted to discussion of the pros and cons of pain management issues.

Where can one learn about pain management issues? The American Pain Foundation distributes a monthly newsletter with such topics as one entitled: "Taken As Prescribed, Addiction Risk Is Low." This article clarifies the difference between abuse of prescription medication and addiction as reported in *The Mayo Clinic Women's Health Source*.

A sample of articles on other topics includes: "Ask Questions and Get More Involved In Your Health Care," "Want to Age Without Aching?" and "Treatments Can Improve Troublesome Aches." Such articles and resources will be included in the February unit discussion.

Dee Watkins, Chair

ADVOCACY CORNER

Advocacy Committee Meeting:

Wednesday, January 2, 1-3 p.m., LWV/ABC Office
Bring your Member Handbook

Agenda Items of Focus:

How to respond appropriately and quickly to League issues at the City Council; Implementing "Awareness campaign for League Day at the Legislature;" Updates on state and national issues.

Now is an "action" time; you are welcome to visit to listen and/or participate.

Dee Watkins, Chair

LWV/ABC PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING

The League of Women Voters of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County (LWV/ABC) met on December 1, 2007, to discuss and review our current local and national positions and to hear summaries from committee chairs of their work to date to see if any revisions were needed.

Committee Reports

Advocacy. The steering committee will continue to focus on education and lobbying. Critical local issues identified were health care, housing, land use, transportation, drug policy, and school governance. State and national critical issues identified were campaign finance reform and the election process.

School Governance. Committee work has included establishment of a preliminary work outline and an extensive bibliography. Research will begin to see if there is any connection between the way students perform in school and school governance. The committee is particularly looking at the principal level. The members recommendation was to support continuation of this study.

Drug Policy. The members recommended continuation of the study.

Fair Representation. This two-year state study group is just beginning to look at the growing body of information that will help to understand issues around reapportionment and redistricting in New Mexico and to advocate approaches which will be fairly representative. The group is seeking members, as are the above study groups and committees.

Local Positions

A generic recommendation was made that a committee be established to look at what changes might be needed to the following policy areas at the time of the name change from the LWV/ABC to the LWV of Central New Mexico as this change will include the addition of Sandoval, Torrance and Valencia Counties.

Drug Policy. No recommendations for change.

Education. No recommendations for change.

Health Care. A recommendation was made that 2 or 3 people review the local position to see if there is any conflict with the state or national positions.

Housing. No recommendations for change.

Initiative and Referendum. No recommendations for change.

Local Government. No recommendations for change.

Land Use. No recommendations for change.

Transportation. No recommendations for change.

Water. Recommendation was made to work with the state study group in the process of doing a two-year study, and to update the local position once the state group was completed with their work.

National Positions

A recommendation was made that a brief statement be sent to the League of Women Voters/United States (LWVUS) that the LWV/ABC supports focusing on representative governmental issues over the next two (2) years.

Reported by Michelle MacDonald

Snapshot of Three State Leagues Pursuing Redistricting Studies LWVNM Fair Representation Committee

Fair Representation and how our government is chosen takes many forms, and the history of partisan gerrymandering—carving out legislative districts with safe seats that protect incumbents and certain districts for each party—is well known. Even the Voting Rights Act has been used to concentrate minority voters into a small number of districts. The investigation of reapportioning legislative districts following the decennial census and who makes those decisions has been taken up by LWV members around the county. Leagues have investigated and lobbied to protect the right to vote. Let's take a look at Washington, Ohio, and Maryland.

Washington: Redistricting by independent commission

The state of Washington is unique because voters do not select a political party in order to register. At the time of primary elections, they use what is termed Open Private Choice where every registered voter may "choose" to cast either a Democratic or a Republican ballot. In 1983, a new law established the state's bipartisan Redistricting Commission. Majority and minority leaders in the Legislature select two Republicans and two Democrats to serve as voting members of the Commission. The four voting commissioners then select a non-voting chairman. Historical and political data from previous elections as well as information regarding precinct boundaries are provided by the Secretary of State. Laws and agency rules regarding redistricting must be followed. The next Commission will be selected in 2011; by law, they will have a staff and budget. The Commission follows the rules of the Public Meetings Act and citizens are able to make comments.

Information provided by Janet Anderson, LWVWA, Committee Chair for "Evaluation of Major Election Methods, 2000," [http://www.lwvwa.org/election_study/emstudy.pdf]

Maryland: Governor leads

In the spring of 2004, following extensive study, LWV Maryland prepared several consensus questions regarding criteria for legislative redistricting. Currently, the Maryland Constitution gives the Governor the authority for redistricting. "Following each decennial census of the United States and after public hearings, the Governor shall prepare a plan setting forth the boundaries of the legislative districts for electing of the members of the Senate and the House of Delegates." The Governor presents the plan to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Delegates. If the General Assembly has not adopted another redistricting plan by the 45th day of the session, the governor's plan as presented becomes law.

In addition to considerations of altering Maryland's Constitution, LWVMD considered whether the criteria should a) be changed or expanded, b) include who should have authority to draft redistricting plans, and c) given an independent commission, who should have the authority to appoint members to this commission.

Additional Information is found at: <http://www.lwvmd.org/ELib/LWVMD-redistricting.html>

Ohio: Legislature decides

Currently in Ohio, the five-member bipartisan Apportionment Board draws boundaries for Ohio house and senate seats. Its members are the Ohio Governor, Auditor, Secretary of State and a member representing each of the two major political parties. Therefore, the political affiliations of the Governor, Auditor and Secretary of State determine which party will be favored in the redistricting process for the Ohio legislature.

In contrast, the lines for U.S. house are drawn by the Ohio legislature. Therefore, the political composition of the Ohio house and senate determine which party will be favored in drawing district lines for U.S. congressional seats.

Last year, the LWV Ohio supported the general structure of the independent Apportionment Board. The League recommended some improvements, such as more public input and more transparency to the process. It also recommended more safeguards to make sure the Board didn't draw "safe seats" for each party. As the debate continues, the League is advocating for the Eight Points for Redistricting Reform, found at:

<http://www.lwvohio.org/2007/Advocacy/8%20point%20redistricting%20criteria%20203-10-07.pdf>

Judith Binder, Member, Fair Representation Study Committee

Salute to Albuquerque? Not this Year.

Members have been asking when the *Salute to Albuquerque* will be held this year. The *Salute*, a fundraising event begun in 1991, first held annually, and then biennially, will not be held in 2008. Following a meeting of former *Salute* volunteers, a recommendation was made to the Board of Directors that something different be done this year to raise money for our Education Fund. Special events are labor intensive, and the *Salute* had involved work from the same individuals for a number of years. The group said it was time for a change.

What will be done to raise the much-needed money for the Education Fund? We are going to try a three-fold approach. First let us remember that the *Voters' Guide*, the *Who's Who*, and our other educational projects are our gifts to the community. We plan to personally approach businesses and individuals from outside the League to help us with funding, and we have already begun laying the groundwork for this part of our appeal.

Secondly, keeping in mind that most philanthropic contributions are made by individuals who care deeply about a cause, we will approach you, our members. Members have always responded well to the solicitation letter that has appeared as part of the *Voter*. This year our letter will go directly to you, and we may speak to you about a potential gift. Our goal is to increase the level of giving by our membership.

And finally, we will have a special event that should be fun and less labor intensive than the *Salute*. In early October we will have a cocktail party to “unveil” the 2008 *Voters' Guide* and to which we will invite members, donors and those who distribute our publications. The party itself will not be intended to raise money, but there will be a raffle along with it. We are already working on collecting items for that raffle. This type of event should bring more attention to the *Voters' Guide* and to the League as well.

Our long-term goal is to put in place a fundraising campaign that can be built upon over the years. It is in the best interest of the League to do so. We hope it will be fun for our members, too.

Diane Goldfarb

Great Reception

If you missed the December 2 reception for City Councilors and County Commissioners, you missed something special. We had an absolutely beautiful Sunday afternoon, a lovely venue, a good crowd, good food and an excellent response from our local elected officials. The only thing we were missing was a camera to take photos of the event.

Sixty-three people came to the home of Christine and Andrew Kamm that day. Seven of the nine City Councilors were there—Ken Sanchez, Debbie O'Malley, Isaac Benton, Brad Winter, Michael Cadigan, Rey Garduño and Don Harris. They were joined by three of the five County Commissioners – Teresa Cordova, Deanna Archuleta and Michael Brasher. All spoke to us about their interests and goals for the city and county.

Thank you goes to steering committee members Helen Wright, Dee Watkins, JoAnne Ramponi, Kathy Altobelli and Sandra Browne. We also extend our appreciation to those who made phone calls and/or brought food: Pati Brummett, Sara Mathews, Julie Tierney, Jan Bandrofchak, Phyllis Frederiksen, Judith Binder, Jan Bray, Dee Trester, Sandra Richardson, Glenelle Butler and Mary Smith. And to Christine Kamm we extend our gratitude for opening her home and for being a most gracious hostess.

Giving our members and their local representatives an opportunity to meet and talk informally has proven to be a successful undertaking. Those of you who live in Sandoval County can look forward to having a similar event next spring following your elections. In November 2008, after the statewide election, we will host another “Meet Your Legislator” gathering. Don't miss it!

Diane Goldfarb

Fair Representation Study Group Update

Be sure to read this month's featured article by Judy Binder on how different states redistrict! (See page 5) The Fair Representation Study Group is researching its way towards the Spring unit meetings. These articles are meant to bring you along, keep you up to date, and help you make informed decisions.

If you're bewildered by last month's trivia question on voting systems that allow the voter to rank candidates in order of preference, read the article on “Counting Votes: Who Wins?” on the LWV/ABC web page at www.lwvabc.org/fair/

The Study Group meets on the 4th Tuesday each month. The next meeting is Jan. 15th (to avoid conflicting with League Day at the Legislature on the 22nd.) For more information, contact Cheryl Haaker, 505.298.7415, cheryl@haaker.org, or visit the webpage.

Cheryl Haaker, Chair

WELCOME NEW AND RETURNING MEMBERS

Welcome to new and returning members: Revathi A-Davidson, Deanna Archuleta, Hans Bredemeyer, Marlene Brown, Theresa J. Brown, Teresa Cordova, Liz Davenport, Tim and Sandra Eichenberg, Mary Herrera, Sonia Lersten, Don Meaders, Carrie F. Miller, Nancy S. Mitchell, Katherine M Oppenheimer, Doris Schacht, Clare C. Wilson. Their address information is included in the 2008 Handbook.

Welcome to new member Katherine "Katie" Gardner, 23 Placitas Trails Road, Placitas 87043,

h404-8032 w914-830-6664. Her email is available from the office.

Note that Nancy Jones will be moving at the end of January to her new address, which is in the handbook – until then she is at her old address.

Please note that our membership committee does not enter telephone numbers or email addresses (or changes) into the national database – but individual members may do so themselves.

Submitted by Kathleen Kimler Altobelli

ANNOUNCEMENTS/NOTICES

2008 MEMBER HANDBOOK

Copies of the 2008 MEMBER HANDBOOK, in their bright yellow covers, were mailed in December. If you have not received your copy, contact JoAnne Ramponi at 298-2716. Also, please notify JoAnne if there is a correction or change to your individual information in the Member Directory section of the Handbook.

DECEMBER VOTER MISPRINTS

Unfortunately, a number of copies of the December *Voter* were mailed with several blank pages. No one seems to know how this happened or how many of these copies were sent. We do apologize for this mishap; if you received one of the copies with the blank pages, and have not yet replaced it, call JoAnne Ramponi at 298-2716 and she will send you a corrected copy.

A BELATED BIRTHDAY PARTY

On February 14, 2008, the League of Women Voters will be 88 years old. For the past few years we have celebrated the League's birthday with a theater party that has also been a fundraiser for our operating fund. This year we will again celebrate at the Adobe Theater, only a little later. Please save Sunday afternoon, March 30, for a matinee performance of one of America's favorite plays - *Harvey*. Details next month.

LUNCHEON MEETING

The cost of having lunch at the Wyndham will be going up this month to \$16. We will continue to have the menu available in advance at the office. We will also continue to offer a fruit plate for those who would prefer that. On a good note—the Wyndham has agreed to give us a larger room for our unit and general meetings in 2008.

POLL OFFICIALS NEEDED

The Bernalillo County Clerk's Office is interested in recruiting poll officials to work future elections. This would be a great opportunity to become involved in the election process. For information about requirements and training visit our website at www.bernco.gov/clerk; email us at pollworker@bernco.gov or call 468-1225 or 1218.

Maggie Toulouse Oliver
Bernalillo County Clerk

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Lois Sullivan, League member from Los Lunas, who is the winner of the Best Mainstream Fiction award in the Southwest Writers Contest in 2006 for her novel "Midnight Blues." No stranger to this award, Ms. Sullivan also won in 1997 for her novel "New York Rodeo."

JOIN THE LEAGUE'S LISTSERVE!

Would you like a "heads up" on upcoming events, unit meetings, special workshops, Advocacy activities, and news on issues of concern to the League? Wouldn't it be nice if someone would remind you a few days in advance, when one of these is coming up? Then join the LWV/ABC Listserve! Email volume is low – rarely more than a couple per day. You won't be "spammed." There are no commercial solicitations or flame wars.

To join, send a message to webmaster@lwvabc.org. Include your name, so we can verify that you are a member of LWV/ABC. You will then receive an email invitation – reply to it, and you're on our list. At present, 113 lucky people receive email reminders of unit and committee meetings and special events. You could, too!

Cheryl Haaker, Technology Chair

UNIT	LOCATION	LEADER	MEMBERSHIP
Luncheon 2nd Thursday 11:45 a.m.	Wyndham Hotel 2910 Yale SE Reservations required \$16*	Marilyn Morgan 266-5131	Vivian Boyle 266-1417
Midtown 3rd Monday 1:30 p.m.	Manzano del Sol 5201 Roma NE Hobby Room (on first floor)	JoAnne Ramponi 298-2716	Lois Reed 235-9722
Evening 3rd Tuesday 6:00 p.m.	Cherry Hills Library 6901 Barstow NE Optional dinner after meeting	Jan Bray 292-7270	Delores Watkins 823-2308
Sandoval County 3rd Wednesday 12 noon	Corrales Community Center Meeting Room 4234 Corrales Road Brown Bag Lunch	Mary Mulvany 792-9287	Carolyn Lindberg 344-8990

* Luncheon Unit reservations: call the League office (884-8441) by 10:00 a.m. the preceding Monday. If you do not attend and have not cancelled by the deadline, you will be billed for the cost.

January Calendar

- 2 LWV/ABC Advocacy Committee
- 3 LWV/ABC Board
- 3 Voter Deadline
- 10 Luncheon Unit
- 15 Evening Unit
- 16 Sandoval County Unit
- 21 Midtown Unit
- 22 League Day at Legislature

Membership

You can join LWV anytime of the year. Contact JoAnne Ramponi at 298-2716.

Happy New Year!

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Albuquerque/Bernalillo County
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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.