



The *Voter*

January 2011

League of Women Voters
of Central New Mexico
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Lwvcnm home page: <http://www.lwvcnm.org>

January League meetings to cover a variety of topics

Topics for January League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico unit meetings will vary, ranging from the Petroglyph National Monument to river crossings in the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area to New Mexico's Centennial celebration.

The following are January's units, topics and speakers.

Luncheon Unit Meeting: Jan. 13, 11:45 a.m., MCM Elegante Hotel, 2020 Menaul NE.

Speaker & Topic: Diane Souder, chief of interpretation and outreach for the Petroglyph National Monument, will talk about the history of the monument.

The Petroglyph National Monument recently celebrated its 20th birthday. Our League was a key player in the effort to get the monument created.

LWVCNM Luncheon Unit relocates

Due to rising costs at the Sheraton Albuquerque Airport Hotel (formerly the Albuquerque Grand Airport Hotel), the LWVCNM Luncheon Unit is moving to a new location starting this month. The new location is the MCM Elegante Hotel, 2020 Menaul NE at the intersection of I-40 and I-25. The lunch will still start at 11:45 a.m. and the cost will be reduced to \$15 from \$17.

Reservations must be called into the office (884-8441) by the Monday before each luncheon. A message on the office phone can be left after business hours. Please call the office or Andrea Targhetta (280-8892) for directions to the hotel if needed.

Souder will provide an update on past and present challenges and successes experienced by the monument.

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State Representative Jane Powdrell-Culbert, left, talks to LWVCNM Co-president Jan Bray, right, at the Dec. 5 Meet Your Legislators reception attended by some 50 League members and friends. Other dignitaries on hand included State Senators Jerry Ortiz y Pino, Dede Feldman and Tim Keller, along with Representatives Gail Chasey and Bill Rehm. Newly-elected and soon-to-be representatives Jim Smith and Conrad James also came. The reception was held at the home of Carol Tucker Trelease. *(Photo by Cheryl Haaker)*

January Calendar

January 5	<i>Voter</i> deadline
January 6	Board meeting, 5:30 p.m.
January 11	Evening Unit, 6 p.m.
January 13	Luncheon Unit, 11:45 a.m.
January 17	Midtown Unit, 1:30 p.m.
January 24	Heights Unit, 10 a.m.

**League of Women Voters of
Central New Mexico
Board Meeting
1st Thursday of each month
Offices of Sutin, Thayer & Brown,
6565 Americas Parkway NE**

Program Committees

Fair Representation Committee

Cheryl Haaker (298-7415)

Drug Policy

Delores Watkins (823-2308)

Natural Resources

Includes transportation, land use, air quality, water, and energy

All League members are invited to all unit meetings, committee and board meetings.

The *Voter* is published on partially-recycled paper each month by the League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico.

Voter to go electronic

Starting in February, the *Voter* goes electronic. It will be emailed to those individuals who expressed a desire for an electronic newsletter in various surveys conducted over the past several months and to those who have email but have **not** indicated they don't want an electronic version. Individuals who have indicated they want a paper copy only will continue to receive one in the mail. Those who have not responded to any of the surveys and want only a paper version should contact *Voter* editor Chris Burroughs at 822-9852 or coburroughs@cybermesa.com.

Membership Report

Welcome to new and returning members:

Elbert E. Earnest, 5201 Roma Ave. NE, Apt. 421, 87108, 980-7848; **Kathleen O'Keefe**, 921 Tiffin Meadows Dr., Rio Rancho, 87144, 994-4435; **Betty Mackenzie**, 1078 Prairie Zinnia Dr., Bernalillo, 87004, 331-0061

Member address changes will be reflected in the 2011 member handbook.

Blanche Wilson passes

Blanche Wilson, LWVCNM League member and mother of Mary Wilson, passed away on Dec. 8 at the age of 94. Several years ago Blanche moved from her long-time home in Ohio to Mountainair to live with Mary and her partner, Jose. She was a great supporter of Mary's work as LWVUS president.

Presidents' Corner

Our legislative reception Sunday, Dec. 5 went very well. We had about 50 people, including seven state representatives and senators, each of whom spoke a few minutes. They all agreed that budget issues will be the big focus during this session. Some anticipated that the problems would not all be solved during the session. One legislator made the point that we are really facing a major, short-term crisis because of the economic downturn. He believes we should not try to solve this short-term problem with drastic long-term restructuring and changes but with more appropriate short-term adjustments. Thanks for an outstanding meeting to Jo Porter, Andrea Targhetta and everyone who helped set it up, and especially to Carol Tucker Trelease for hosting the meeting at her house.

Our fundraiser at the Adobe Theater is scheduled for Sunday, March 6. So mark it on your calendar. The play is a mystery, *Wait Until Dark*. More details will follow in next month's *Voter*.

Jan and Olin represented the League Monday, Dec. 6, at a meeting of the local Society of Professional Journalists on ethics. Their code of ethics has a number of points in four areas -- seek truth and report it, minimize harm, act independently and be accountable. Some of the points the panelists made were: always check out multiple sources but consider their motivation for what they are telling you; during campaigns, when you get anonymous information about candidates, not only check it out, but also decide if it is really relevant; many media organizations try to maintain a brick wall between their reporting and marketing staff to keep advertisers from affecting stories; be aware that reporting is time-consuming and expensive. That is one of the reasons many organizations -- especially cable networks -- are moving more towards opinion pieces as opposed to reporting. Also, the dividing line between news and opinion is becoming fuzzier.

Somebody asked if Wikileaks was any different from the release of the Pentagon Papers during the Vietnam War. The panelists said that only a small part of the Pentagon Papers was printed by the press and only after a lot of fact checking and analysis. The panelists asserted that Wikileaks was dumping massive amounts of unchecked raw data with essentially no analysis and/or checking. If we are interested, the state president of the society is willing to set up a program for us. It is something to consider for one of

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Units

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Evening Unit meeting: Jan. 11, 6 p.m., Erna Fergusson Library

Speaker & Topic: Eric Webster, Mid-region Council of Governments, will talk about river crossings in the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area.

The Mid-Region Council of Governments conducts transportation planning for the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area. As part of the long-range transportation plan for the region -- the 2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan -- the policy board has asked MRCOG staff to evaluate various strategies to address the issue of crossing the river in the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area. MRCOG staff would like the League to consider these strategies

and share their thoughts with the Metropolitan Transportation Board.

Midtown Unit meeting, Jan. 17, 1:30 p.m., Manzano del Sol Hobby Room

Speaker & Topic: Janet Saiers, a retired City of Albuquerque Parks and Recreation planner and current president of the Albuquerque Historical Society, will talk about the observance of New Mexico's Centennial celebration of statehood.

The centennial will be observed throughout 2012 with the actual anniversary on Jan. 6, 2012.

Northeast Heights Unit, Jan. 24, 10 a.m., La Vida Llena Card Room, 10501 Lagrima de Oro NE.

The presentation will be the same as the Evening Unit meeting on Jan. 11.

Redistricting New Mexico

Be sure to check your Winter *La Palabra* for the article on redistricting. It's happening in 2011 -- whether we're ready for it or not.

Fortunately, New Mexico's own Mary Wilson is coordinating the League's efforts at the national level. LWVUS will be stressing the "transparency" aspects of the redistricting process, as well compliance with the Voting Rights Act. Bone up on the subject by checking out one or more of these online resources.

References

* LWVUS Redistricting page: Go to www.lwv.org, and select the "Projects" item on the blue horizontal navigation bar. It will expand into a

list of projects; select "Developing an Action Agenda for Redistricting in 2011." (Actual URL is not anything you could type.)

*The Brennan Center: Redistricting 101, http://www.brennancenter.org/content/pages/redistricting_for_advocates#Redistricting-In-A-Box

*George Washington University's Redistricting Project, <http://elections.gmu.edu/Redistricting.html>

* The ACLU: Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Redistricting, But Were Afraid to Ask, <http://www.aclu.org/voting-rights/everything-you-always-wanted-know-about-redistricting-were-afraid-ask> -- Cheryl Haaker

"Great" Moments in Redistricting

From the Brennan Center: "Why Redistricting Matters" article:

http://www.brennancenter.org/content/pages/why_redistricting_matters1

Packing Partisans. In 1991, Texas Democrats crammed loyal Texan Republican voters into a district that spanned hundreds of miles, taking small slivers of land from five counties. **By packing pockets of Republican voters** into districts like the one on the right, Democrats could give themselves a better chance in the districts next door. In 1992, Republicans and Democrats each won about 49

percent of Texas' statewide vote . . . but under the Democratic redistricting plan, Democrats won 70 percent of the state's Congressional races.

Note: The district shown in this picture is the one featured on the cover of the ACLU's "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Redistricting But Were Afraid to Ask" report. Yes, that's one (1) congressional district. It kind of puts Tom Delay's 2003 re-redistricting into perspective. . .



What did visitors look at on the website?

Further analysis of the web statistics for October and November 2010 shows conclusively that the *Voters' Guide* Online was what nearly everyone wanted to see and little else.

The *Voters' Guide* PDF was downloaded about 5,500 times! Somewhat surprisingly, the elections page (gateway to the online *Voters' Guide*) was visited more times than the home page in October (5,000 vs. 4,400), suggesting that many visitors came in directly from the State's LWV election page at lwvnm.org, the only known direct link.

Throughout October and most of November, the pages of the Online *Voters' Guide* website (as opposed to the PDF file of the *Voters' Guide*) were accessed much more frequently than the rest of the

LWVCNM website. In particular, and in this order, visitors looked at the general information web page (corresponding to "Page 1" of the hard copy *Voters' Guide*), the Candidates (index) page, ballot issues (index) page, the details of the state amendments, statewide candidate responses to questions, U.S. Congressional candidate responses and details of State Bond issues.

It is hard to escape the conclusion that visitors will check out lwvnm.org if -- and only if -- they feel there is valuable information there. -- Cheryl Haaker

Presidents' Corner

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the summer lunches.

Remember League Day at the Legislature is Feb 4. Put it on your calendar. The Action Committee will be meeting each Friday during the session. Contact Dick Mason for details.

Current members should have received the 2011 LWVCNM handbook with the membership directory at the end of December. Everyone is encouraged to check the handbook for the numerous changes in address, phone and emails that were received during the recent membership renewal campaign.

If you have not received a handbook by end of December and don't get a February newsletter, it means your membership has lapsed and you have been removed from the mailing list – but we'd be happy to have you rejoin. Please contact Andrea Targhetta if you have any questions.

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