

THE VOTER

december 2008

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Albuquerque, NM 87110
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Diane Goldfarb
President

Aileen Gatterman
Voter Editor

LWVCNM GENERAL MEETING LUNCHEON
Thursday, December 11, 11:45 a.m.
Albuquerque Grand Airport Hotel, 2910 Yale SE
*Reservations Required**

**Speaker: Winthrop Quigley, Business Reporter,
Albuquerque Journal**
**Topic: How Did We Get Here? A Business Reporter's
View of the Current Economic Situation.**

Mr. Quigley has written for the Albuquerque Journal business desk for the past eight years. He is responsible for covering health care policy, economics, finance and the business of medicine. For the twenty years prior to his position at the *Journal*, Mr. Quigley worked for a variety of high-tech companies. He was a product manager with Digital Equipment Corporation; marketing manager with MIOX Corporation; business development vice president with TCI Medical; and a product marketing manager for BASIS International. Mr. Quigley has a bachelor's degree in economics and an MBA in finance, both earned at the University of New Mexico. He was raised in Cleveland and has lived in Albuquerque since 1970. His wife, Bonnie, is a psychotherapist; they have two grown sons.

It is widely believed that the United States is in the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. How did we get here? What are some of the things that the government has done to alleviate the crisis? Was the 700 billion dollar commitment a Wall Street bailout or a financial rescue package that will help both Wall Street and Main Street? Who is on the President-Elect's economic advisory team and what do they propose to deal with the crisis? How could they assure that we don't have another? Mr. Quigley will present his views on these subjects and more.

*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, December 8. If you prefer a fruit plate rather than the menu item, please let us know at the time you make your reservation.

MORE DECEMBER EVENTS

Saturday, December 6

Program Planning and Holiday Party

9:00 a.m. Coffee and "goodies"
9:30 a.m. Program

8409 Guadalupe Trail NW
Los Ranchos de Albuquerque

All members are invited to join in some holiday socializing and to participate in the discussion of our local and state programs for 2009. Please see page 3 for more on Program Planning.

Sunday, December 7

Meet the Legislators Reception

2:00 — 4:00 p.m.

7500 Osuna Road NE
Albuquerque

Don't miss this great opportunity
to meet your representatives to
state government.
For more information see the
flyer inserted in this *Voter*.



**LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
CENTRAL NEW MEXICO**

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

Drug Policy

Delores Watkins

Natural Resources

JoAnne Ramponi

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 Central New Mexico.

NOTICE

Special Natural Resources Commit-
tee meeting on Tuesday, January 13,
5:30 p.m., at 1521 Muriel NE. This is
will be a follow up on the October
2008 Units. Committee members will
look at the different aspects of advo-
cacy on the TIDDS issue.

President's Corner

The excitement of the election is over, and we are now back to our routine League activities. But what an election season it was! Thanks to everyone for your hard work to help encourage an informed electorate. We were busier than usual during early voting, with many phone calls each day. However, it was relatively slow during what in past years has been the busiest time of all--the day before and election day itself. We have attributed this turn of events, not only to early voting, but also to the fact that the Bernalillo County Clerk was so well prepared to handle the influx of calls on election day. The additional phone lines and personnel to answer the calls at that office meant that people were able to get through with their questions and did not have to call our office. This may mean that in the future we won't have to have as many volunteers or install a second telephone line for election day calls. We commend the County Clerk for her responsiveness to the needs of the public.

If you did not attend the October 22 forum on "Safeguarding U.S. Democracy by Promoting an Independent Judiciary," you missed an interesting and worthwhile discussion. Donna Hill, with the help of Josephine Porter, did an excellent job of organizing the evening, and the answers by the judges to questions regarding the courts and the importance of an independent judiciary were enlightening. I hope we can do another similar program in the future.

In case you have wondered about the disposition of the lawsuit regarding photo ID requirements for Albuquerque municipal elections, we have recently learned that the case was argued before a three-judge panel from the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals on September 25. This is the lawsuit against the City of Albuquerque to which LWVCNM is a party. The District Court decision was in our favor but was appealed by the City. We are awaiting a decision from the Appeals Court panel.

I hope you can attend our December activities and socialize with your fellow League members--Program Planning, Meet the Legislators and the December General Meeting. And enjoy the holiday season!

Diane Goldfarb

LWVCNM BOARD HIGHLIGHTS — November 6, 2008

- Due to possible changes of plans by the owners of the building where LWVCNM presently has its office, the office will be rented on a month-to-month basis rather than entering into a contract for a year;
- The Board authorized a contract with the Albuquerque Grand Airport/Sheraton hotel for the luncheon unit meeting for 2009 (Search Committee Report: page 5);
- Invitations are printed for the Meet the Legislators reception on December 7 and the flyer for insert in the December *Voter* has been completed;
- The Board meeting scheduled for December 4 was cancelled; the next meeting of the LWVCNM Board will be on Thursday, January 8, 2009.

LWVCNM EDUCATION FUND BOARD HIGHLIGHTS — November 6, 2008

- It was reported that the Judicial Candidates Forum on October 22 was very successful, with excellent speakers and good cooperation with sponsoring groups and law student organizations;
- The *Voters' Guide* on the LWVCNM website received a great number of hits and downloads in October (Graph showing this activity on page 7).

PROGRAM PLANNING AND HOLIDAY PARTY

Saturday, December 6

9:00 a.m. Coffee and "goodies" — 9:30 a.m. Program

At Dorothy Walton's home, 8409 Guadalupe Trail NW
(Between Ranchitos Rd. and El Pueblo Rd. in
Los Ranchos de Albuquerque)

All members are invited to join in some holiday socializing and to participate in the discussion of our local and state programs for 2009.

WHAT IS PROGRAM PLANNING?

According to *In League*, the LWVUS handbook about the League and how it operates, "program" is the League's "reason for being." It is the basis for both education and action efforts. League program consists of those governmental issues that League members choose for concerted study and action. It includes both adopted positions upon which action is taken and issues for study that will lead to a position and action.

On December 6 we will review our local program. Committee chairs will make recommendations, and we will talk about the ideas that you, as local members, have for League program. If you want to recommend a specific area for study, you should also be prepared to provide leadership for that study. This part of program planning will be a little more extensive this year because of the expansion of the local LWV into three more counties. We may need to review those positions that specifically mention Albuquerque and Bernalillo County.

At this year's program planning we will also be discussing the LWVNM positions in preparation for the State Convention that will be held in Albuquerque in May of 2009.

Don't forget to bring your yellow 2008 Member Handbook. Our current national, state and local positions begin on page 3. You may also want to refer to page 1 of the handbook, where the League Principles are listed. These principles provide the authorization for the adoption of program.

Please come and bring your ideas. The morning discussion will be led by our 3rd Vice President Dick Mason.

THANKS FOR HELPING IN THE OFFICE

Now that the General Election is over, I want to thank everyone who has worked in the office for their help. This includes those who have done their regular shifts in the office for answering all of the questions that came up for the absentee ballots and the where can I vote early, where do I register to vote, what do I have to do to change my registration questions. There were many questions and those who helped in the office rose to the challenge.

Special thanks to Cheryl Haaker for her work on the Website so that it was easy for us to use and explain to people when they called in to ask about it. Thanks also to Josephine Porter, Andrea Targetta and everyone who worked on the *Voters' Guide*. We received many calls thanking us for the publication and telling us that it was of such great help to people as they went to vote.

The people who helped in the office on Monday, November 4, and on Tuesday, November 5, Andrea Targetta, Karen Gatlin, Helen Wright, Dede Eckles, Marilyn Hunter-Torburn, Margaret Krahenbuhl, Josephine Porter, Cheryl Haaker, Meg Wentz and Diane Goldfarb answered numerous calls and directed many people to their polling places. We had questions from Bernalillo, Sandoval, Santa Fe, Tarrant and Valencia Counties. Because of the way our Home Page is set up we were able to find the voting places for all of the people who called and send them to the correct voting sites.

Thanks to everyone who helped make the League office operate so smoothly during the election process.

JoAnne Ramponi, Office Manager

FAIR REPRESENTATION STUDY UPDATE

By the time you read this, the Consensus unit meetings on Redistricting will be over. Due to publishing deadlines, the Study Group is not yet half done. All that can be said now is that turnout and participation have been excellent. Watch for your next *La Palabra* to learn how it's all come out.

Cheryl Haaker, Chair
Fair Representation Study Group



October 22, 2008 Judicial Candidates Forum at the UNM Law School

PHOTO BY AXEL HAAKER

From left to right: League member Lora Lucero; Justice Charles Daniels; Judges Reed Sheppard, Kevin Fitzwater, Elizabeth Whitefield and Maria Dominguez



Audience at October 22 Judicial Candidates Forum

PHOTO BY JOSEPHINE PORTER

JUDICIAL CANDIDATES FORUM RATED A SUCCESS

The Judicial Candidates Forum proved to be an excellent exchange of information. The candidates responded with enthusiasm to the questions; the audience was impressed by the discourse; Josephine Porter and Lora Lucero efficiently sorted the many questions; Cheryl Haaker kept the candidates on time, and Diane Goldfarb did her usual stellar job of moderating. Karen Douglas & Vivian Skadron passed out evaluation sheets. Axel Haaker, Don Goldfarb and Jo Porter took pictures.

Six Law School student organizations, under the direction of their presidents and board members, copied, posted and distributed 360 flyers in students' mail boxes, helped set up the lecture and outside halls, posted LWVCNM direction signs, distributed and collected question cards. They were as impressed with the League as we were with them!

A Channel 7 photographer interviewed Diane and stayed for the forum to give the League event its minute of time on the 10:00 p.m. news. Although the audience was smaller than anticipated (competition with other election news stories,

events and volunteering elsewhere), we were astounded to collect 57 evaluations from the 63 in attendance.

The Community Education Committee believes that the one overall goal of educating the audience to the importance of "Safeguarding U.S. Democracy by Promoting an Independent Judiciary" was achieved. Many written responses gave the League high marks for sponsoring the meeting.

This was truly a cooperative event. Appreciations has been extended to the UNM School of Law (Dean Leo Romero), the Law School student organizations, the American Association of University Women and, of course the candidates: Justice Charles Daniels, Judges Reed Sheppard, Kevin Fitzwater, Elizabeth Whitefield and Maria Dominguez.

This forum was supported by a grant from the League of Women Voters Education Fund and the Program on Constitutional and Legal Policy of the Open Society Institute. A final report has been submitted.

Donna Hill
Community Education Chair

Board Approves Albuquerque Grand/Sheraton for 2009

In response to members' complaints about the food served at the Albuquerque Grand Airport Hotel, President Diane Goldfarb appointed Don Goldfarb and Donna Hill to learn what other restaurants would offer. Twelve restaurants including the Albuquerque Grand were contacted. Discussed were menu choices to include options for dietary needs, price, and a 12-month contract for 2009.

Following a presentation to the LWVCNM Board by Unit Coordinator Lisa Franzen and Donna Hill, the Albuquerque Grand was selected, primarily because its price per meal was \$8.00 less expensive than any of the other restaurants. It is anticipated that the quality will improve when the Sheraton officially takes over on April 1, 2009.

Other restaurants were not recommended because they had add-on room or microphone charges, insufficient room size, or would not agree to a 12-month contract. (For more information on our findings please see the Restaurant Evaluation Report which follows this article.)

The Board instructed President Diane Goldfarb to sign the contract for the 2009 calendar year.

Don Goldfarb and Donna Hill
Search Committee

Restaurant Evaluation Report prior to 2009 Contract Signing

Twelve restaurants were contacted for Unit and General Lunches for the 2009 contract. After presentation to the LWVCNM Board, the Albuquerque Grand Airport—to become a Sheraton Hotel—was approved for the following reasons:

1. Lowest cost to members: \$16.00 January-March.
2. In April, after Sheraton has upgraded rooms, banquet halls and restaurant, luncheon price without dessert increases to \$17.00, brunch \$19.00
3. Food quality better in October; more quality expected with change.

Second lowest cost: luncheon \$25.00 without dessert, brunch \$28.00. This after hotel agreed to waive the fee for room set up. Do the math: Lunch would cost an additional \$8.00, Brunch \$9.00 more.

Other restaurants presented these additional obstacles: \$75.00 for room rental; \$185.00 for mike, podium & speaker; reserve on month to month basis; did not send proposal; 90-day rolling contract; not available some dates; two-weeks notice on reservation number; rooms not large enough; not during Balloon Festival; did not send proposal, and did not return phone calls.

Although we recognize that there have been problems with the Albuquerque Grand, we feel that the interim management is improving the menu presentation and expect the quality to continue to improve when the Sheraton is officially in charge. The Board instructed President Diane Goldfarb to sign the contract for the 2009 calendar year.

Respectfully submitted,
Don Goldfarb and Donna Hill

DRUG POLICY COMMITTEE

The Drug Policy Committee is busy attending several New Mexico Legislative Interim Committee meetings and preparing for an outreach program on pain in December.

At Program Planning on December 6 you can pick up a Pain Community newsletter which contains website materials for gathering reliable information about medical topics and two new publications about fibromyalgia. You can also see a sample of a way for patients to report on their pain. Another Drug Policy display at this meeting will inform you about New Mexico's efforts to decrease under age drinking.

The Drug Policy Study Committee will not meet in December or January. The January units are being arranged by the Committee.

Dee Watkins, Chair

Note: You can help with outreach about pain. See below.

LWVCNM is eager to present a display and handouts to inform the public about pain management. If you know of an organization that has luncheons, conventions or other meetings where 50 people will attend who might be interested in such materials, call Dee Watkins at 884-8441. The informational display would be set up by a person who would be available to discuss any questions raised.

Marita Marshall

LWVNM: LAWSUIT BACKSTORY

“WAY above my pay grade!” was my first reaction when I received an e-mail from Common Cause NM executive director Steve Allen asking if LWVNM would be the plaintiff in a lawsuit to require the New Mexico Secretary of State (SOS) to observe the statute “definition of a vote” when hand-tallying of the vote in New Mexico.

But with the help of League members who are lawyers and of the LWVNM Board, we got it together. If you have been reading your local newspaper, you will probably know that on October 29 the NM Supreme Court agreed to the LWVNM petition for an emergency writ of mandamus. Specifically, the Court required the SOS to reissue August 22 guidelines that had been included in the material distributed to County Clerks for the Election School in early September but subsequently withdrawn. Moreover, it required her to instruct the Clerks to include in her directions the part of the Election Code that the Attorney General (AG) considered contrary to the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), which reads:

B. For paper ballots that are hand-tallied, a vote shall be counted if

(4) the presiding judge and election judges for the precinct unanimously agree that the voter’s intent is clearly discernible. (NMSA 1978, 1-9-4.2.)

Here is some of the story behind the story. Mary Wilson (in her capacity as a member of LWVNM) spoke with the lawyer and Common Cause and then attended our state board meeting on October 18 to outline the pros and cons of taking the case. She suggested that we meet with SOS Mary Herrera to be sure that her current position had been correctly represented to us. Jody Larson, Cheryl Haaker and I met with Secretary Herrera and the new Director of the Bureau of Elections, Gerald Gonzalez, on October 20.

After that things moved rapidly. I spoke with the lawyer lined up by Common Cause late on October 20, outlining our conditions for taking the case, helpfully enumerated for me by Chris Chandler. The petition was filed with the Supreme Court on October 23. By that time we had a new lawyer, Ed Ricco of Rodey, Dickason, Sloan, Akin and Robb. The original attorney could not take the case because of a potential conflict. On October 28, Mr. Ricco and the AG’s office, together with the SOS, agreed to the reissue of the August 22 guidelines but still differed on the B(4) issue. The Court set a hearing for the afternoon of October 29.

The hearing was fascinating. Clues as to the outcome were already visible in questions to the AG’s lawyer. Several justices took issue with his arguments that B(4) was problematic, especially as he could not cite any instance of similar language having been struck down, post-HAVA, in other states. The Court also appeared to have a problem with the idea of reissuing the August 22 standards, which allow for some discretion on the part of the election judges, without readmitting B(4). The Court required only about 20 minutes to reach a unanimous decision reinstating B(4).

While the issue was a relatively small one among the problems that have been surfacing in other pre-election lawsuits, the principle is important and I believe the outcome was satisfactory not only to LWVNM but also to the SOS.

Katherine Campbell, President

League of Women Voters of New Mexico

Footnote: Because no new instructions had been issued by the SOS as of the morning of November 3, 2008, LWVNM was obliged to file an emergency motion for contempt and for an order compelling compliance with the writ of mandamus. In response, the SOS issued revised instructions later in the day.

December 2008 Submission from Membership Committee

The LWVCNM 2009 Member Handbook will be mailed in mid-December to all members who have paid-up memberships as of November 30, 2008. Most of our members have an annual membership renewal date of September 30th and should have received a notice in early September that it was time to renew. A reminder notice was sent out in October. Many thanks to those of you who have renewed already. Those who have not yet renewed still have time to do so before November 30th and be included in the membership directory in the Handbook. Any address changes, including phone numbers and email addresses, should be sent to the office or directly to Kathy Kimler Altobelli by November 30th. If needed before your new directory arrives, members may call the office, at 884-8441, for complete address information for any of the following:

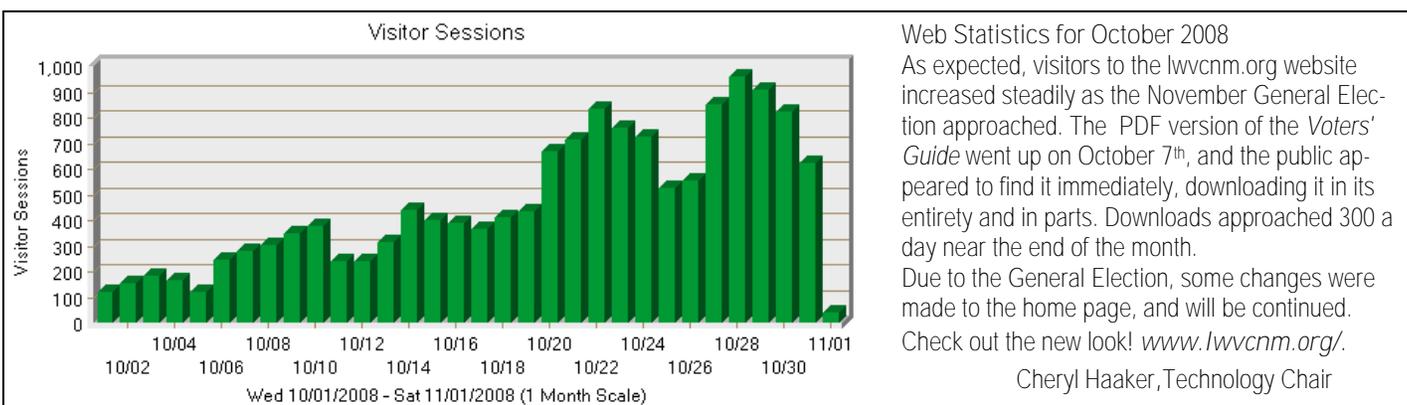
Welcome to new members:

Dr. Edward J. Gerety, John Green, Kathleen Schulz, Susan Scott, Dorothy Curtis Trafton, Sharon Oard Warner

Change of Address and/or Phone:

Brenda Gray (phone), Anita Miller, Lois C. Reed (phone), Arthur A. Schreiber

New and/or changed email addresses available from office or JoAnne Ramponi for Audrey Bell, Sarah Belle Brown, Karen M. Douglas, Jane Flax, Cynthia O. & Leo O. Harris, Anne H. Letherer, Kathleen Schulz, Karl H. Schwerin, Dee Trester, Sharon Oard Warner



Web Statistics for October 2008
 As expected, visitors to the lwvcnm.org website increased steadily as the November General Election approached. The PDF version of the *Voters' Guide* went up on October 7th, and the public appeared to find it immediately, downloading it in its entirety and in parts. Downloads approached 300 a day near the end of the month. Due to the General Election, some changes were made to the home page, and will be continued. Check out the new look! www.lwvcnm.org/.
 Cheryl Haaker, Technology Chair

ADVOCACY CORNER

Issues and action: you can keep up to date by reading this publication; watching from home; attending hearings; and calling your City Councilor or State Legislator. Begin by contacting the Committee to be involved AND meeting your Legislator at the reception on Sunday, December 7.

We are watching for the opportunity to respond on the topics of: Campaign Finance and Ethics (three League members are on the Charter Review Task Force considering this issue from December-March), Voter ID, and Tax Increment Development Districts (TIDDS).

The next Advocacy Steering Committee meeting is December 3, 1-3 p.m. at the League office.

Dee Watkins, Chair

WE WERE BUSY ON TELEVISION

If you were watching the 10 p.m. news on Channel 7 on Monday, November 3, you were privileged to see an interview with LWVCNM 1st VP Josephine Porter and League member Margaret Krahenbuhl who were answering the phones at the office. This was not our only time working with Channel 7. Our President, Diane Goldfarb, served as timekeeper on more than one occasion for their candidate debates, as did 3rd VP Dick Mason.

In addition, JoAnne Ramponi, LWVCNM Membership Chair, appeared on "Knit Together Branching Out" on the Public Access Channel on November 2. It was a half-hour presentation on what League does leading up to the election to help the community.

JoAnne Ramponi

CALENDAR CHANGES FOR DECEMBER

As one can quickly see, our December calendar looks much different from that of November. Please note the following brief explanations of some of the differences:

- There are no Unit meetings scheduled in December; Unit information on times, locations, leaders and membership chairs will again be printed in this space in the January 2009 *Voter*.
- A General Meeting Luncheon is scheduled for the date and time usually reserved for the Luncheon Unit.
- The LWVCNM Board meeting scheduled for December 4 has been cancelled; however, the December 4 deadline for the January 2009 *Voter* remains.
- The office staff is taking a two-week vacation starting December 22.

Happy Holidays!

DECEMBER CALENDAR

- 2 Membership Committee, 10 a.m.
- 4 Deadline: January 2009 *Voter*
- 6 Program Planning, 9 a.m.
- 7 Meet the Legislators Reception 2—4 p.m.
- 11 General Meeting Luncheon 11:45 a.m.
- 16 Fair Rep. Study Group, 1 p.m.
- 22 LWVCNM Office Closed: December 22 — January 2, 2009

Membership:
You can join LWV anytime of the year. Contact Membership Chair JoAnne Ramponi at 884-8441.

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Central New Mexico
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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.