



# The Voter

October 2011

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of Central New Mexico  
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## State Senator Linda Lopez to speak at October Luncheon Unit

New Mexico Senator Linda Lopez, co-chair (with Rep. Mary Helen Garcia) of the state's Redistricting Committee, will be the featured speaker for the Oct. 13, League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico Luncheon Unit. The meeting will be at the MCM Elegante Hotel at 2020 Menaul N.E., at 11:45 a.m.



Linda Lopez

Lopez represents District 11 on the Southwest side of Albuquerque. Her district is currently 57 percent larger than it should be and is thus unlikely to be targeted for "consolidation." On her fourth term in the New Mexico Senate, this is the senator's second redistricting. The first was in 2001 under Gov. Gary Johnson. Lopez is also a member of Albuquerque's Redistricting Committee, which is redrawing the city council districts.

Lopez will talk about the processes within the legislature for reaching agreement, tradeoffs that had to be made, what kind of feedback the committees received from citizens and lobbying groups and how particular plans were finally agreed upon. (Note: at this point, we are assuming that there actually was agreement on particular plans.)

The cost of the luncheon is \$15.00, payable at the door. Reservations must be either called in to the League office at 884-8441 or emailed to [lunch@lwvcnm.org](mailto:lunch@lwvcnm.org) by 10 a.m. Monday, Oct. 10. Be sure to specify if you prefer the vegetarian

option.

Other October speakers will include:

\* Evening Unit, Oct. 11, 6 p.m., Towers Apartment community room, 5404 Montgomery -- The Santa Fe League is doing a two-year statewide study of the Public Regulation Commission. Santa Fe League members Neva Van Peske and Karen Heldmeyer will discuss the scope and direction of the study, which will focus on the PRC's regulation of insurance and utilities.

\* Midtown Unit, Oct. 17, 1:30 p.m., Manzano del Sol Hobby Room &

\* Northeast Heights Unit, Oct. 24, 10 a.m., La Vida Llena Card Room, 10501 Lagrima de Oro NE. -- Several League members traveled the state with the State's Redistricting Committee. A panel of these members, including Cheryl Haaker, Gayle Prinkey and Shelly Shepherd, will talk about their experiences and impressions. The plans that were eventually arrived at and how they related to constituent feedback will be discussed. If there is time, members and the panel can talk about how redistricting could be done better.

### October Calendar

Oct. 5	Voter Deadline
Oct. 7	Board meeting, 5:30 p.m.
Oct. 11	Evening Unit, 6 p.m.
Oct. 13	Luncheon Unit, 11:45 a.m.
Oct. 16	Climate change panel, 3 p.m.
Oct. 17	Midtown Unit, 1:30 p.m.
Oct. 24	Northeast Heights Unit, 10 a.m.

**League of Women Voters of  
Central New Mexico  
Board Meeting**

**1st Thursday of each month  
Offices of Satin, Thayer & Browne,  
6565 Americas Parkway NE**

Program Committees

***Fair Representation Committee***

Cheryl Haaker

***Drug Policy***

Delores Watkins

***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. It is also distributed via email.

### **Part-time office manager sought**

The LWVCNM Board of Directors has decided to hire a part-time office coordinator to help facilitate the smooth operation of the office to support League programs and business, to orient volunteers to office activities and to serve as liaison with the public. The person hired would work about 10 hours a week.

Specific duties include:

\* Adjusting and meeting office staffing requirements and keeping staff informed of any changes;

\* Maintaining paperwork and filing;

\* Developing office procedures which are kept in the Office Staff Notebook;

\* Assuring maintenance of office equipment;

\* Arranging for telephone coverage during elections;

\* Maintaining adequate supplies of League and other publications: i.e., legislative materials for member and outside requests.

Anyone interested should call Shelly Shepherd at 296-1238.

## **Presidents' Corner**

Recently the LWVCNM Board voted and approved for the LWVCNM to serve on the Advisory Board of the community-based journalism project established by Quote-UnQuote Inc. Judith Binder has agreed to serve as the liaison for the League on the Advisory Board of the New Mexico Community Journalism Project. I accompanied Judith to the "Convocation Of Mentor Organizations" program startup meeting on Aug. 20 at the Quote-UnQuote Community Media Center.

The mission of this project is to train community members and journalists to contribute news stories and video clips to a half-hour weekly television broadcast, as well as other future multimedia platforms. Quote-UnQuote recently received some seed money from the McCune Foundation to carry out this project. It is part of a new movement to establish nonprofit news reporting that is an alternative to commercial media. The goal is to strengthen an emerging state-wide rural and urban multilingual news network that represents unheard and diverse voices. It will also provide a multimedia outlet for news that the local residents determine, produce, and contribute, thus connecting them to needs in their community.

Why is community-based journalism important? This question was raised at the Aug. 20 meeting and was discussed by members of 12 partner organizations from across New Mexico that have formed a networking relationship. Community-based journalism is necessary to increase the voice of under-represented people. Community journalism will impart news that reflects the languages and values of New Mexico's many cultures to the greater community.

The presentations given at the meeting on Aug. 20 were inspiring and professionally done. Three vibrant New Mexico examples of community-based journalism were presented, including "Generation Justice: Why Youth-Produced Media Is Important," QuO Video Production: "Bringing a Story from an Idea to a Television Production"; and "Gallup Public Radio: The Impact of Low Power FT Radio."

Judith and I left the meeting energized by the possibilities of this project and the opportunity for the LWVCNM to become more visible as an organization and having the opportunity to network with other community organizations.

-- Shelly Shepherd, Co-President

### **Dues Reminder**

Oct. 30 is the deadline for dues to be in to the League office in order for you to be placed in the Member Handbook. We want your personal information to be current. Only League members receive our handbook. We do not give out personal information to other organizations. Please consider a donation to the Operating Fund. There is a line in your renewal letter for this purpose. Questions: call Andrea Targhetta.

## Redistricting Committee Wraps Up

On Aug. 31, the State Legislature's Redistricting Committee completed its work and adjourned. Since its first meeting on June 20, the committee of 18 members and 35 associate members had traveled the state, holding ten meetings in cities from Las Cruces to Las Vegas, from Farmington to Clovis. They had taken testimony from more than 100 New Mexicans, as individuals or as representatives neighborhoods, business and civic groups. They received feedback on which areas considered themselves to be communities and which plans these constituents and organizations favored or opposed.

The plans, along with very brief and cursory summaries of this testimony, can be found on the committee's website at [www.nmlegis.gov/lcs/red-census](http://www.nmlegis.gov/lcs/red-census). Select the "Redistricting Committee" link from the left navigation menu.



*Attendees pick up handouts prior to the redistricting meeting in Rio Rancho at V. Sue Cleveland High School on Aug. 16.  
(Photo by Cheryl Haaker)*

So, how was all this constituent feedback folded into the "concept" maps that Research & Polling had prepared in early June? It wasn't. No new maps were requested by the committee.

Well then, which concept maps were endorsed or recommended by the committee, in view of the constituent feedback? None of them-- that is, all of them. The direction to the Legislative Council Service was to put a bill number on each of the original concept maps and submit them to the Legislature, as is. Individual legislators could, of course, submit additional maps that they had had drawn up.

This is my concluding opinion: What was the point of the committee? Why did these 50-odd people travel the state with Brian Sanderoff? The State could have saved a small fortune by just having Research & Polling do the redistricting show alone. The resulting notes on constituent feedback would probably have been more complete and accurate than the committee's minutes.

Better still, the state should have had an independent redistricting commission, which would include no sitting legislators. Its duties and responsibilities would be clearly spelled out by statute, and would include the requirement that input from New Mexicans would be factored in and that the commission would produce a very small number of alternative maps for the Legislature to choose from.

The League needs to start work on this in January 2012 with the goal of implementing improvements before the memory of the 2011 redistricting fades.

*-- Cheryl Haaker*



*Hearing attendees outside the Kennedy Lounge at NM Highlands during the lunch break on Aug 30.  
(Photo by Cheryl Haaker)*

### Neighborhood Gathering

CNM league members in the NE heights got together at the home of Olin and Jan Bray on Sept. 18 for a couple of hours and met with their neighbors to socialize. More than 30 people attended the event. It's nice to know that we have close neighbors to carpool, discuss issues and keep each other informed about events of interest. Other sessions will follow in the next year. Thank you Olin and Jan for hosting this get together.

*-- Andrea Targhetta*

## Mexican journalist recounts his story to League members

LWVCNM Co-president Shelly Shepherd and member Judith Binder recently attended a Community Journalism Project (CJP) workshop sponsored by Quote-UnQuote, Albuquerque's Public Access (cable) TV. A goal of the Journalism Project includes broadcasting as widely as possible and in every venue possible the real news that occurs in our communities but is not being adequately covered in the media. There is also the desire to recruit community reporters and anchor organizations. Overall, the intent is to create a statewide network of local community journalists.



*Emilio Gutierrez Soto*

At the workshop we met a journalist and his son who are Mexican nationals seeking political asylum in the United States. Emilio Gutierrez Soto's "story" is not unique, and due to language difficulties, he suggested we explore his activities compiled from several web reports dating from June 2011.

Emilio Gutierrez Soto began his journalism career in 1983 as a reporter and was the founding editor of the newspaper *El Diario de Ciudad Juarez* in Chihuahua state. He remained there for three years before becoming a regional correspondent for northwest Chihuahua. Later, he moved to an area on the Mexico-U.S. border and joined a major group of journalists working for *El Universal*. They covered rural news related to agriculture.

In the early 1990s Emilio began to write about police matters and "special investigations" for two newspapers owned by *Organización Editorial Mexicana* (OEM), the largest newspaper company in Latin America. Fired for "economic reasons," he -- along with several other journalists -- formed a partnership and founded the magazine *Fusion*, of which he became the managing editor. From there, he created the bi-weekly *Revista Edición quincenal*.

His next positions were in radio as news announcer and then correspondent for a number of radio stations located across Chihuahua: San Buenaventura, Joanos, Ascension and finally Puerto Palomas de Villa, a border town near Columbus, New Mexico.

But all was not rosy. In 2005, after Emilio wrote stories about alleged military involvement in drug trafficking in Chihuahua, he began to receive threats. After his home was ransacked and the threats continued, he filed complaints with the national government. Receiving no response, he fled the country, taking his 15-year-old son.

Emilio is now the head of PEMEXX ("*Periodistas Mexicanos en Exilio*" -- Mexican Journalists in Exile), comprised of ten media professionals who were forced to leave Mexico for the United States because of the prevailing uncertainty in their country and the constant fear for their lives for their depictions of drug cartels and the country's military involvement. Emilio and his son were captured by immigration agents and were held at a U.S. immigration detention center for several months. They were released only after his story aired on national television.

"We are living a legal limbo," Emilio told the Associated Press. "We are unable to have any emotional, familial or employment stability." He and his son are now living near Las Cruces where his son is attending college. The rest of their family continue to live in Mexico.

During a panel discussion at the National Association of Hispanic Journalists' annual meeting at Lake Buena Vista in central Florida, Emilio called the drug war a cancer destroying his country. He said losing his country was harder even than the death of his parents.

Emilio has a temporary work permit, but he has been unable to find work. We were told that each week he receives one and sometimes two phone calls from "the government" to determine his whereabouts. Each month since June they must continue to travel to El Paso for "official business." Emilio's next hearing will not likely happen until 2012. These Mexican journalists are desperately seeking U.S. government approval of their asylum petitions. Their hope is to be granted legal status, which would allow them to remain on American soil. Emilio Gutierrez Soto has pleaded with the U.S. government to make a decision in his case and those of his fellow journalists. One colleague has already been detained by the U.S. immigration officials.

-- Judith Binder

## Dick Mason: Close foreign military bases as part of deficit reduction

*Editor's Note: The League believes that national security has many dimensions and cannot be limited to military policy alone. It can be defined as ensuring domestic tranquility, providing for the common defense and promoting general welfare. Key elements include the country's ability to implement social and environmental programs and to maintain cooperative relationships with other nations. Other important components are effective political leadership and a strong economy. Therefore, in decisions about the federal budget, political leaders should assess the impact of U.S. military spending on the nation's economy and on the government's ability to meet social and environmental responsibilities.*

*Given this LWVUS position below is one member's view. The op-ed piece appeared in a recent Albuquerque Journal issue.*

What do liberal Congressmen Barney Frank (liberal) and Ron Paul (Libertarian) agree on: That we should close all U.S. foreign military bases, with the exception of South Korea and bring the soldiers

stationed at these bases back home. Why not South Korea? Because there is a real threat to one of our allies from their northern neighbor.

The U.S. has more than 700 military bases abroad. These cost the U.S. billions of dollars to maintain and in addition, the U.S. military personnel stationed at these bases pump billions into the economies of the host countries. Think of the jobs that would be created if those personnel were stationed at bases in the United States. With modern technology, the U.S. can project its force from domestic bases with minimal reductions in response time.

It is time for the U.S. to ask the rest of the world to share the responsibility for defending themselves. Many countries have gotten a free ride on the backs of U.S. taxpayers. We should be concentrating our resources on building our own economy. Closing U.S. bases abroad and bringing our military personnel home should be one of the first things the debt reduction super committee looks at.

*-- Dick Mason*

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## Perspectives of climate change topic of panel co-sponsored by LWVCNM

Leaders in the area of climate change research will share their views on the topic during an Oct. 16 panel co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico, the New Mexico Chapter of the Fulbright Association and Sigma Xi National Scientific Research Society. The event, called "Perspectives on Climate Change," will be at 3 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center, 5520 Wyoming Blvd. NE in Albuquerque.

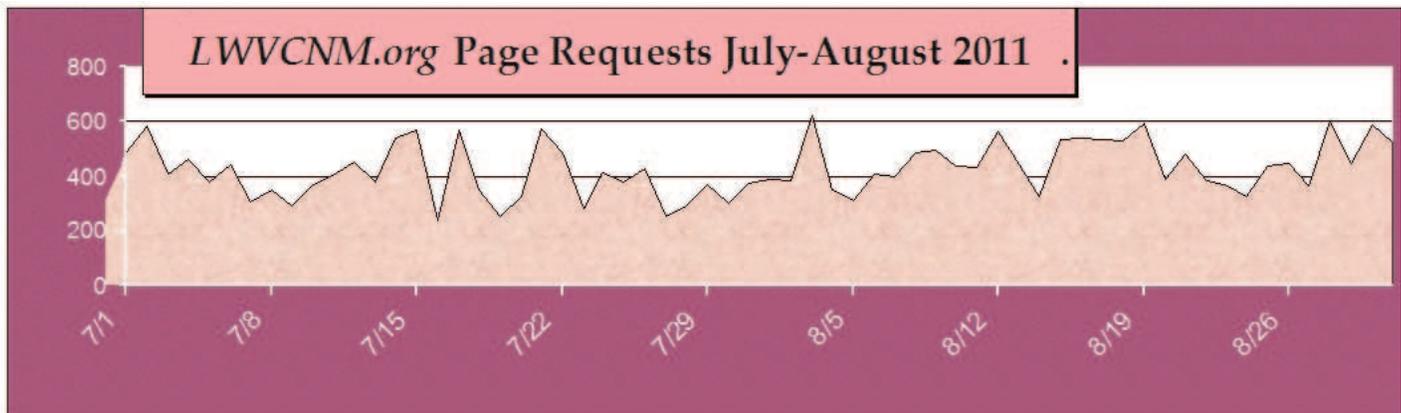
The afternoon will kick off with an introduction by Sen. Jeff Bingaman (by video) who will

talk about "Current views in Congress on the threats of global warming."

That will be followed by a panel discussion featuring University of New Mexico Professor David Gutzler, Dr. Mark Boslough of Sandia National Laboratories and Jeff Sterba, retired CEO of PNM. John Fleck, *Albuquerque Journal* science writer, will serve as moderator.

The event is open and free to the public.

More information can be obtained by emailing [skadron@swcp.com](mailto:skadron@swcp.com).



## Membership Report

### Welcome new and returning members:

**Shirley B. Armijo**, 901 8th St SW

87102

**Joanne Nagel Connolly**, 933 San Mateo

NE, Suite 500-283 87108

**Julie Goodding**, 4907 Royene Ave NE

87110

**Daniel A. Ivey-Soto and Sheri Jett**, 1420

Carlisle Blvd NE, Suite 208 87110

**Lisa K. Leahigh**, 411 Morningside Dr SE

87108

**Liz McMaster**, 2901 Hyder Ave SE

87106

**Alethea Wright**, 4949 Roma Ave NE

#44 87108

Please call the office for emails for the above members .

### Member address changes:

**Marie N. Dolde**, 5201 Roma Avenue NE

Health Care Dept RM 2122 87108

**Anne B. Gonzales**, 1325 Park Ave SW,

Apt 403 87102

**Dean S. Smith**, 8100 Central Ave. SE,

#311 87108

## Drug Policy Study: The latest

The committee has 14 regular members and an additional six volunteers from Albuquerque, Roswell, Las Cruces, Farmington and Taos who have joined the effort to support pain management education and advocacy.

This is a result of the committee's work with the LWVCNM position "supporting pain management for all persons through...education." We also have a new League member who joined in September as a result of one of the committee's presentations. Topics covered in presentations this year: Pain, Pain relief and the Challenge of Access to Medications: The Power of Language and Its Uses for People with Fibromyalgia and Developing Personal Advocacy. Committee members also staffed display tables of information at two events.

If you want to meet friendly people and help educate about pain, this is the group to join. If you want to study, this group is also leading the LWVNM study, Best Ways To Reduce Alcohol Deaths in New Mexico. Handouts and minutes of two meetings are available for you to sample this experience or come to a meeting. Save Oct. 28 for the next meeting. Location to be announced. -- *Dee Watkins, Chair*



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