



The Voter

June 2012

League of Women Voters
of Central New Mexico
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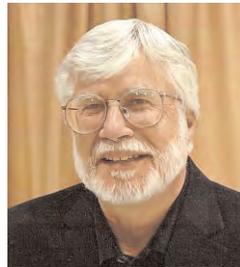
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June meeting to feature New Mexico's journey toward statehood

Dr. Richard Melzer, history professor at the University of New Mexico Valencia Campus, will speak at the general meeting on Thursday, June 14 on "New Mexico's Journey toward Statehood." This meeting will be held jointly with Albuquerque Press Women.



Dr. Richard Melzer

Melzer says as New Mexico celebrates its centennial anniversary of statehood, it is well to remember that statehood did not come easily for our nation's 47th

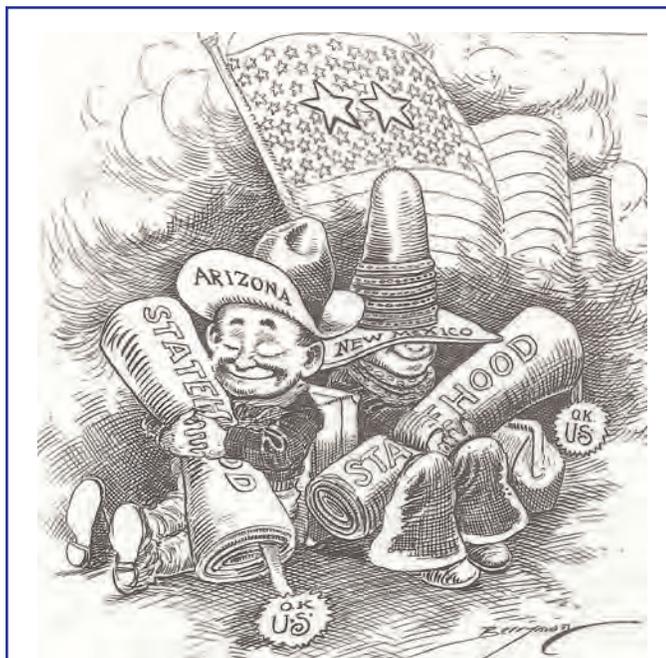
state. In his talk he describes the 62-year struggle, focusing on five main obstacles to achieving this coveted goal. Melzer uses political cartoons from the early 20th century to illustrate New Mexico's political problems and eventual success in 1912.

Melzer is originally from Teddy Roosevelt's hometown of Oyster Bay, New York. He has lived in New Mexico since 1973.

Melzer has taught history at UNM's Valencia Campus since 1979. He is the author, co-author, or editor of 15 books as well as over a hundred articles and chapters about New Mexico history.

He is a past president of both the Historical Society of New Mexico and the Valencia County Historical Society. Of the many awards he has received for writing, teaching, and service to his profession, he is most proud of receiving the UNM's Outstanding Teacher of the Year award in 1995.

The meeting begins at 11:45 a.m. at the MCM Elegante Hotel at 2020 Menaul N.E. Reservations for the lunch must be made by 10 a.m. on June 11. The cost of lunch is \$15. To make a reservation, please call the LWVCNM office at 884-8441 or email lunch@lwvcnm.org.



Richard Melzer likes to use this cartoon to illustrate his talk about New Mexico gaining statehood.

June Calendar

- June 2 Calendar Planning
- June 7 LWVCNM Board meeting, 5:30 p.m.
- June 8-12 LWVUS Convention, Washington D.C.
- June 5 Voter deadline
- June 14 General Meeting, 11:45 a.m.
- June 28 Drug Policy Committee, 1 p.m.

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

Program Committees

Fair Representation Committee

Cheryl Haaker (298-7415)

Drug Policy

Jan Bray

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.

Calendar Planning set for June 2

Calendar Planning, set for June 2, is the best opportunity of the year to have a direct say in the kinds of programs we will hear over the coming year. At the meeting we will discuss topics we want to know more about and possible speakers.

It is a terrific opportunity to get in on the ground floor of League work. We'll supply coffee and refreshments. You supply the inspiration.

Calendar planning will take place on June 2 at 9 a.m. at La Vida Llena, 10501 Lagrima de Oro N.E. We will meet in the card room. If you come in the front door, you can ask for directions. If you want to come in the back door, go to door #24 on the west side of the main building. We will see you there. -- Karen Wentworth

Drug Policy Committee

The Drug Policy Committee will meet Thursday, June 28 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Erna Fergusson Library.

Presidents' Corner

On Wednesday, May 2, I was afforded the opportunity of a lifetime to participate in a New Mexico Centennial event at the State Records Center and Archives. The public was given the opportunity to view the original 1910 New Mexico Constitution and other important documents of statehood.

Many original documents from the 1800's were on display. The 1910 New Mexico Constitution had not been on display to the public in decades -- the last time is thought to have been in 1976 for the United States Bicentennial. Chief Justice Charles Daniels and State Historian Rick Hendricks spoke on the significance of the Constitution. Several descendants of members of the Constitutional Convention were recognized at the event. They were pleased that computers were hooked up to the website for New Mexico's Constitutional Convention (newmexicohistory.org), and they were able to find their ancestors' pictures and short biographies about them.

On display was an original letter from a New Mexico women's organization asking for voting rights for women to be included in the 1910 Constitution. As you are probably aware, women were only allowed to vote in school elections, which had to be held on a different day from other elections. I rather expected the event to be "quite dry." It was anything but that. Even the desk that the Constitution was signed on was on display. The event was very interesting.

As stated in "The Importance of the Constitution" article by Rick Hendricks, New Mexico could not become a state without first having a Constitution. The enabling Act of 1802 set a precedent that Congress had to pass an Enabling Act before a territory could be admitted as a state. The Enabling Act for New Mexico was passed by Congress on June 10, 1910, and was signed into law by President William Howard Taft on June 20. The Enabling Act authorizes the people of a territory to draft a Constitution. There was great debate whether or not New Mexico and Arizona would be entered into the union as single or separate states. The two states voted on the issue. New Mexico, after such a long battle to become a state, was desperate to be admitted, and voted 2 to 1 to join with Arizona. However, Arizona voted 5 to 1 against joining with New Mexico. The 1910 Enabling Act provided for New Mexico and Arizona to enter the Union as separate States.

New Mexico's interests were varied and conflicting. Some delegates were said to keep weapons in their

(Continued on page 5)

Dick Mason, Terry Quinn named to LWVCNM Roll of Honor

Richard (Dick) Mason and Therese (Terry) Quinn have been named to the LWVCNM Roll of Honor. The announcement was made at the May 5 League Annual Meeting.

The following is information on the two honorees.

Therese Quinn

Terry, as we all affectionately call her, was on our Board as a director and our treasurer for four years, starting in 2004. When unable to continue as treasurer for a time, she made certain that someone with experience was there to carry on. She has continued to assist the treasurers every year since, and with Terry's wealth of knowledge, she has assisted in filing our tax returns several times. She has chaired our local Budget Committee, and served on the LWVNM state Budget Committee.

Not only has Terry been active in our League's financial matters, she has given many hours of her time volunteering in the office, offering her home for special events and serving on the Nominating Committee. She currently is serving on the Membership Committee. She has worked on the Natural Resources Committee, as well as assisted the League on Salutes and other fundraising events. Terry has also worked to register voters and one year gone so far as to drive to Las Vegas, N.M. for potential voters.

She volunteered to take over the bulk mailing. Presently, she mails out the *Voter* every month to more than 150 members, all the fundraising letters to donors and members, which is generally around 300 people and does all the mailing for the Member Handbook.

As you can tell, Terry Quinn is a very con-



Dick Mason learns he has been named to the LWVCNM Roll of Honor at the 2012 Annual Meeting. Making the presentation are Co-President Shelly Shepherd and Andrea Targhetta, second vice president.

scientious, hard-working member of this League who has enriched this organization in countless ways.

Richard Mason

Richard (Dick) Mason is one of the most dedicated members of our LWV Central New Mexico league. He came to us from Massachusetts where he was instrumental in progressing that state's healthcare legislation. We have been fortunate that he has continued his demanding push for better healthcare here in New Mexico. He agreed to be our 3rd Vice President in 2008 and worked on the Budget Committee.

Dick co-chaired the state's LWVNM Action Committee for 2010 through 2012, spearheading healthcare issues among other concerns. He also agreed to serve as our LWVCNM treasurer the same years. Dick, ever engaged, served on our Nominating Committee as well.

Two years ago our state LWVNM decided to manage with a leadership team. Dick is a member of that Leadership Team along with five others who guide LWVNM. He is still co-chairman of the Action Committee, which leads our state League's efforts, especially during the legislative sessions every year. This takes a huge amount of his time and his talent for organization and getting things done.

Dick has participated in many of our fundraising events, even making his truck available for large items for our league yard sales and moving equipment to our new offices. He has helped out with elections LWVCNM has conducted for other organizations.

We are pleased Dick has consented to act as our treasurer again this term.



Helen Wright, left, accepts the Roll of Honor Award for her sister, Terry Quinn. With her, right, is Andrea Targhetta, second vice president.

Book Review: The Untapped Power of Independents

Editor's Note: Book Review -- This review of an important public policy book is a regular feature in the Voter.

The Swing Vote: The Untapped Power of Independents by Linda Killian, 2011, St. Martin's Press, pp 326.

This book analyzes independent voters and the moderates in both parties who are frustrated by the super partisanship and stalemates in government. They all want Congress and other officials to solve our problems and put the country, not the party first. Many Republican moderates with years in office, who are losing their primaries to extreme partisans, say the party is leaving them. Some are fighting back and running as independents, and in some cases winning, while others are simply retiring. The same thing is happening to Democratic moderates. In some cases, the threat of a primary challenge is a leadership tactic to keep members in line. The result is that we are seeing members of both parties voting with their congressional leadership over 90 percent of the time, which is a record.

This leads to a polarized and therefore stalemated Congress where compromise is difficult and condemned, rather than rewarded. A study of voting records by National Journal shows that Congress is now more polarized than ever. In the Senate, based on voting records, the most conservative Democrat is more liberal than the most liberal Republican, and the most liberal Republican is more conservative than the most conservative Democrat. The House is almost as bad. Only four Democrats were more conservative than the most liberal Republican and only five Republicans are rated more liberal than the most conservative Democrat. Most of these moderates were defeated in their 2010 reelection bid. This makes compromise more difficult. We are seeing a record number of votes strictly along party lines with no crossovers.

There is a chapter on each of the four types of moderates the author identifies -- the NPR Republicans (New Hampshire), the Facebook Generation (Colorado), the Starbuck Moms and Dads (Virginia) and the America First Democrats (Ohio). The NPR Republicans, with New

Hampshire as the example, are fiscal conservatives, but social liberals. We need to get the budget and the debt under control, but stay out of people's lives. The Facebook Generation is younger, better educated, doesn't trust either party, don't see themselves as joiners and are used to a lot of choices so they question why there are only two parties to choose between. The Starbuck Moms and Dads are suburban, well educated, fiscally conservative, socially moderate, concerned about education, national security, and the environment, and tend to pick individual candidates, not parties. The America First Democrats (many were previously Reagan Democrats) are populist, protectionist, conservative socially, and are hurting economically.

In some states these independents and moderates outnumber the members of one of the two major parties, although both parties tend to ignore them. One of her recommendations is open primaries so that independents can have a say in candidate selection. She contends that this would drive primary candidates toward the center and moderation, whereas now they are driven to the extremes by their party bases. Her other suggestions are for more transparency in governments so people know what their officials are doing, fair and competitive districts rather than safe seats that encourage extremism, and campaign finance reform.

Other chapters address whether congress can be fixed, presidential leadership, trying to restore sanity, and changing the rules of the game.

-- Olin Bray

Vivian Skadron reaches Life Member status

Congratulations go to Vivian Skadron for reaching Life Member status. Vivian has been an active member of the League of Women Voters for 50 years and will no longer have to pay membership dues. A certificate from Elisabeth MacNamara, president of the LWV United States was sent to her, along with a Certificate of Recognition.

Presidents' Corner

(Continued from page 2)

desks. The Congress was divided politically, with a Democratic House and a Republican Senate, and a very conservative president. Writing a Constitution that would pass in the divided and highly conflicted group was problematic. I guess this shows that the old adage that there is "nothing new under the sun" is still true today.

The convention lasted 60 days. Territorial voters approved the Constitution on Jan. 21, 1911. When the United States Congress and President Taft examined the document, they found the amendable article, Article 19, unacceptable, because it made the Constitution essentially impossible to alter. The Constitution was amended before it became effective to remedy the issue on Nov. 7, 1911. It is rare that a Constitution is amended before it becomes effective upon admission of the territory to the Union on Jan. 6, 1912.

The New Mexico 2010 Constitution was by far the most conservative constitution of any of the western states -- denying women the right to vote, excluding provisions for citizens' initiative and recall and mandating that senators be chosen by the state legislature, not by popular vote, among

many other things. But it was a beginning! The New Mexico Constitution is a living document, having been amended many times over the last 100 years. In some ways the New Mexico Constitution is more protective of our right to privacy than the United States Constitution, such as unlawful search and seizure without a search warrant (the U.S. Constitution allowing search and seizure without a search warrant if there is probable cause to do so). Article II, Bill of Rights, Section 10 in the New Mexico Constitution we find, "The people shall be secure in their persons, papers, homes and effects, from unreasonable searches and seizures and no warrant to search any place, or seize any person or thing, shall issue without describing the place to be searched, or the persons or things to be seized, nor without a written showing of probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation." This holds true today!

The latest New Mexico Constitution was adopted by the general and special sessions from 1911 through 2012. I encourage you to browse the newmexicohistory.org website. It is very well done. The Spring *El Palacio* Commemorative New Mexico State Centennial Issue is worth obtaining. It is bursting with interesting articles.

--Shelly Shepherd, Co-President LWVNM

2012 LWVNM biennial Council hears from Peggy Hill, leaders of state studies

Peggy Hill, the LWVUS liaison to New Mexico's leagues, was the luncheon speaker during the biennial League of Women Voters of New Mexico Council meeting May 12. She spent most of the time talking about chairing the national League's Education Study.



Peggy Hill speaks at the LWVNM Council meeting.

The meeting was attended by the LWVNM Board of Directors and delegates representing the various Leagues around the state and Members at Large,

As part of the Council, leaders of three state studies presented reports on their progress.

* **Land Use.** Barbara Calef, chair of the state study of land use, announced that Natural Resources Chair Lora Lucero was stepping down and moving to

the Middle East. Barbara also announced that she was not going to have time to work on the study personally but that it was important to continue working to revise the natural resources position because the current position is outdated.

* **Alcohol Study.** Jan Bray said that she was taking over leadership of the Alcohol Study following the death of Dee Watkins. She said the committee has a lot of information on alcohol treatment but needs to do more research in the area of prevention, the last piece of the study. She expects the committee to have a report completed and ready to present to the state League in the September-October time frame.

* **PRC.** Meredith Machen, member of the LWVNM Leadership Team, said that the study group is making progress on the study. Several members made a presentation on the study to the League of Women Voters Los Alamos earlier this year. More information is expected to come in September.

Three new directors join LWVCNM Board

The LWVCNM Board of Directors appointed three new directors to serve on the board at a brief meeting May 5.

The new directors, who will serve two-year terms are Peggy Howell, Sonia Lersten and Alice Brasfield. The following provides background information on each.

Peggy Boone Howell

After graduating from the University of Northern Colorado, I moved to Phoenix. It was wonderful having access to so much that had previously not been available to me, and it was there in the late 1960's that I joined LWV of Phoenix. The women I met in that organization over the next 15 years had a huge impact on me and the rest of my life. We were mostly stay-at-home moms, at least in my unit, though I worked part-time teaching classes for the local college and Arizona State University.

When I went back to work full time in the mid 1970's, I found less time for LWV activities and finally left the group when I began traveling in my job with a college textbook publisher. After being transferred to New Mexico in the mid 1990's, I met my husband Pat and we moved to Fort Worth.

For the next 10 years, I worked as an editor for Harcourt College Publishers and, when that company moved to California, I took a job as director of development for the College of Art and Design at University of North Texas. I retired from UNT in 2006. For a few years before relocating to Albuquerque, I joined the LWV of Tarrant County. I have my friend Judy Wood, this year's president, to thank for introducing me to League again, and it was very easy to transfer my membership to LWVCNM. I am very happy to be back in the West and look forward to serving on the board next year.

Sonia Lersten

I moved to Albuquerque in 1972 when my husband, Ken, joined the faculty at UNM. During

that time I was active in the League and served on the Board. We moved out of state and when we returned, I concentrated on my career and my family. I taught part-time at TVI (now CNM Community College) in the business education department. Later I became a financial advisor and Certified Financial Planner with A. G. Edwards, which is now Wells Fargo Advisors. I retired two years ago after 26 years as an advisor.

I received my BA In business administration from Augustana College in Rock Island, Ill., and my teaching certificate through the University of California, Berkeley. I have two children and eight grandchildren. I am active in Soroptimist International of Albuquerque, my church, and the Scandinavian Club of Albuquerque.

I value the important role the League plays in our community and try my best to be well-informed on current issues. I look forward to offering what I can to the Board and thank you for the opportunity.

Alice Brasfield

I joined the LWV in 2009 and began attending monthly meetings, then volunteered to staff the office one day a week. Conversations with members who came to the office on those days enabled me to appreciate that my varied cross-cultural experience as wife and mother, teacher, counselor, Presbyterian pastor and researcher fit well with the values of the League. Each activity -- staffing the office, attending naturalization ceremonies, registering new voters, and assisting in collecting lunch money at monthly meetings -- has increased my ties to the League. I want to use my penchant to explore connections of the values and attitudes of persons to social and political outcomes in the vibrant culture of this country.

Remembering LWVCNM's history

Editor's Note: The following is the first part of a series on the history of the LWVCNM given at the 1998 Salute to Albuquerque by long-time member JoAnne Ramponi, who has since died. Co-President Shelly Shepherd thought it contained interesting information that many members might like to know.

The first mention of the existence of a League in New Mexico comes from an article in the *Albuquerque Journal* dated Oct, 30, 1924. It noted that Mrs. Max Nordhaus had loaned her home for the League of Women Voters tea at which the various women candidates would be introduced. On Nov. 27, 1924 the *Journal* reported that "the New Mexico League of Women Voters will concentrate on a campaign of education on the child labor amendment, according to the decision of the board which held an all-day session here yesterday." Four days previously there appeared an announcement that two speakers would address the League of Women Voters on the new election law. After a hiatus of more than a year, there is an announcement that the State Women's League of Voters decided at its board meeting to hold its annual meeting in April. Mrs. R.R. Larkin, president and Mmes. Max Nordhaus, R.E. Dietz and Howard Roosa attended this meeting.

There is evidence that the League was active into the 1930s. It was in 1947 that Mrs. Nordhaus was active in reviving the interest of having League in Albuquerque. On May 3, 1948, Albuquerque and Los Alamos were granted League status by the National Board. The Albuquerque League assisted in the organization of the League of Women Voters of New Mexico which was recognized in May 1950 with Mrs. W.C. (Fem) Porter serving as president.

I had the pleasure of listening to a tape with Dorothy Cline, Carol Martindale and Bea Miller talk about what had happened when the local League went through its rebirth. As I listened to these ladies talk about how things had been in the late 1940s I realized that there have always been issues that concerned women and that they have always been willing to give of themselves to change what they could.

Mrs. W.C. Porter served as the provisional president of the Albuquerque league and was followed by Freda Hayes. In July of 1948 the local League organized the speakers bureau. The topics that were offered that year were the United Nations, "Is Politics Your Job?" -- city planning and recreation

and health in Albuquerque. Sixty appearances before groups and on the radio were made that first year. Over the years the speakers bureau has remained an important tool for informing the public and promoting political effectiveness.

The observer corps was also established with the new league. Members of the local League attended city council meetin, county commission meetings, school board meetings, conservancy district board meetings and other board meetings that were involved with local government. The observers became sources of information for resource committees and league members.

In 1947, while still a provisional League, members staffed a booth at the state fair. This was the year that educational materials about atomic energy were distributed as part of the national league project. Over the years, members dispensed voting information, demonstrated voting machines and registered voters. In 1948 the local League helped to bring voting machines to the city. The League was instrumental in getting machines out into the public so that citizens and the legislature could see the advantage over paper ballots. The machines had their first official use in Albuquerque in 1952 and voting by machine became the official procedure in 1954. League celebrated this with Voting Machine Week in April.

In 1948 the Albuquerque League sponsored a school for election officials, a direct result of a grand jury finding. The District Attorney's office provided the instructors in election procedures and laws. Between 300 and 400 officials attended this school and League continued to provide this service throughout the 1950s until the County Clerk's office took on the responsibility.

In 1953, under the presidency of Mrs. H.C. (Fem) Porter, the League began a detailed look at the structure and function of city and county government. This continued until the end of the decade. The League enthusiastically supported consolidation for the city and county with an emphasis on planning and zoning. This study continued under the presidency of Kay Pelouze and Ann Johnson. In 1957-58 League's study of county financial administration led to the adoption of support for reassessment, equalization of property and other measures to improve the financial administration of Bernalillo County.

(To be continued in a future issue)



The LWV/CNM Board poses for a picture following the May 5 Annual meeting. They are, front row from the left, Co-President Shelly Shepherd, Gayle Prinkey, Mary H. Smith, Carol Tucker Trelease, Andrea Targhetta, Chris Burroughs. In the back from the left are Dick Mason, Pati Brummett, Peggy Boone Howell, Alice Brasfield and Karen Wentworth.
(Photo by Cheryl Haaker)

Mark your calendars

Be sure to mark your calendars for two special meetings coming up this summer.

* July 12 General Meeting.

The speaker will be Tony Sylvester, Special Projects Manager for the Middle Region Council of Governments and the Rio Metro Regional Transit District. He will speak about how the Rail Runner is performing in comparison with other transit systems and provide updates on the fiscal health of the project. He will also speak about the Paseo del Norte Transit Study, which is now underway and discuss transportation plans at UNM and CNM, exploring ways the bus and rail systems are providing commuter service in regional transportation corridors.

* Saturday, August 4

Centennial Luncheon. The speaker will be futurist Dr. Lowell Catlett, a Regent's Professor/Dean and Chief Administrative Officer at New Mexico State's College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences. The luncheon will be held at the Embassy Hotel and Suites in Albuquerque.



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