



The Voter

League of Women Voters of
Central New Mexico
November 2012

League of Women Voters
of Central New Mexico
2315 San Pedro NE, Suite F-6
Albuquerque, NM 87110
(505) 884-8441

Shelly Shepherd
(505) 296-1238
Sandra Browne
(505) 821-0537
Co-presidents

Chris Burroughs
Voter Editor
(505) 306-8163

LWVCNM homepage: <http://www.lwvcnm.org>

November Units: Where do we stand with healthcare reform?

The results of the November elections could have considerable impact on the course of healthcare reform in New Mexico and in the United States. What will happen with implementation of the Affordable Care Act? What will happen with Medicaid expansion? What is the future of Medicare and Medicaid? How will New Mexico deal with the shortage of healthcare professionals? All of these questions will be dealt with in the coming years and discussed at the November LWVCNM unit meetings..

Luncheon Unit – Nov. 8 at 11:45 p.m.

Kelsey McCowan Heilman, staff attorney at the New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty, will discuss “Healthcare Reform after the Election.”

McCowan Heilman has been a staff attorney at the New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty since 2010. The center works with low-income New Mexicans to improve living conditions, increase opportunities and protect the rights of people living in poverty. McCowan Heilman’s work focuses on healthcare reform implementation in New Mexico and on access to healthcare and public benefits for immigrant families. She received her J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania Law School and her B.A. from Trinity University. During law school, she co-directed the Penn Law Immigrant Rights Project and interned with Community Legal Services of Philadelphia’s Employment Unit. She also spent a year of leave during law school working for Mayan Medical Aid, a non-profit clinic in Santa Cruz La Laguna, Guatemala. Prior to law school, she worked as a bartender and server and taught adult GED and ESL classes.

Through administrative advocacy, legislative

advocacy and community outreach and education, McCowan Heilman has worked to ensure that healthcare reform will deliver on its promise of affordable, quality health care for the state’s hundreds of thousands of uninsured, low-income New Mexicans. She has primarily focused on advocating for the Medicaid expansion; a consumer-driven health insurance exchange that provides affordable health coverage, particularly for low-income working adults and outreach and enrollment systems that will maximize access for low-income, Native American, and immigrant New Mexicans. In the 2012 legislative session, she worked to pass memorials calling for legislative oversight of the Exchange establishment process and legislative investigation of affordability of coverage in the exchange.

The meeting will be held at 11:45 a.m at the MCM Elegante Hotel, 2020 Menaul NE. Reservations for the lunch must be made by 10 a.m. on Nov. 5. The cost of lunch is \$15. To make a reservation, please call the LWVCNM office at 884-8441 or email lunch@lwvcnm.org.

(Continued on page 3)

November Calendar

Nov. 1	Board meeting, 5:30 p.m.
Nov. 5.	<i>Voter</i> deadline
Nov. 6	Election Day
Nov. 8	Luncheon Unit, 11:45 a.m.
Nov. 13	Evening Unit, 6 p.m.
Nov. 19	Midtown Unit, 1:30 p.m.
Nov. 26	NorthEast Heights Unit, 10 a.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.

Membership Committee report

New Member

Allyson Hills, P.O. Box 2956, Corrales, NM 87048

LWVCNM celebrates National Voter Registration Day

LWVCNM joined the LWVUS in celebrating the National Voter Registration Day on Sept. 25

Over 200,000 eligible New Mexicans are not registered to vote. The LWVCNM is working to increase the number of eligible voters who can participate in the Nov. 6 election.

Given that the League of Women Voters (LWV) emerged out of the movement for women's suffrage, it has a special commitment to registering voters -- especially those in communities that are under-represented. The LWVCNM has over thirty qualified registrars that are ready to visit public and private locations to help register voters.

Presidents' Corner

By Shelly Shepherd, Co-president

The Voting History in America, Part III

As we prepare to vote in the November, 2012 election, it is a good idea to remember the efforts of women such as Carrie Chapman Catt and men such as Miguel Trujillo and that in some cases one vote can make a difference in American history. We are reminded that we should always remain vigilant to protect the right of every American citizen to vote without fear or obstruction.

For Mexican-Americans -- those in Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico and Texas -- were supposed to get voting rights along with American citizenship in 1848, when the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American war. But property and literacy requirements were imposed in those states to keep them from voting. Violence and intimidation were also imposed in those states to keep them from voting.

In 1836, Texas denied the vote to Mexicans, and in 1948 (yes, that's 1948!) Mexican-Americans were denied voting rights in the Southwest.

In 1836, after revolting from Mexico, the short-lived Republic of Texas denied citizenship (and the right to own property) to anyone who had not supported the revolution. All non-Anglos were assumed to be part of that category -- even those who had fought for the revolution. When Texas was admitted to the union as a slave state in 1845, in theory the Mexicans remaining in Texas were granted U.S. citizenship and property rights by the federal government. But Mexican-Americans who tried to independently vote faced widespread beatings, burnings, lynchings, except in cases where large land owners forced their employees to vote as a group under supervision of their foremen and to ensure that they voted for the owners' preferred candidates. After the Civil War, the methods used in Texas and other southern states to deny voting rights to Blacks were also applied to Mexican-Americans.

Mexican-Americans were denied voting rights in the Southwest in 1848. Under the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, as mentioned regarding Texas, Mexicans who remained in the new territories conquered by the U.S. were supposed to become full U.S. citizens, according to legislation that congress is supposed to pass.

For California that legislation took the form of admitting it to the Union as a state in 1850 while technically U.S. citizens, Mexican-Americans in both Texas and California were denied the vote through violence and state "voter eligibility laws."

Arizona and New Mexico were not admitted to the union as

(Continued on page 4)

Unit Meetings

(Continued from page 1)

Evening Unit – Nov. 13 at 6 p.m.

Joseph Martinez, consumer outreach coordinator for Health Action New Mexico, will discuss “Dental Therapists in New Mexico.”

Poor dental health is an epidemic in the United States and that problem is even worse in rural states like New Mexico. There is an interesting program that would train paraprofessionals right here in New Mexico to help alleviate the shortage of dentists. The dental therapist program works effectively in Alaska and 60 other countries. There will be legislation in the 2013 Legislature to create such a program in New Mexico.

In his position at Health Action NM, Martinez concentrates on coalition building, grassroots organizing, community education and advocacy, consumer outreach, and liaison with governmental and regulatory entities. These efforts are guided by the philosophy that engaged and empowered consumers across the state will lead to the best health policy. His background includes building community-based partnerships, providing leadership training for community members and facilitating citizen involvement in policy-making processes. Some of his previous experience has been with the New Mexico Rural Water Association, Habitat for Humanity and the American Red Cross. He is a native of New Mexico and has a BA in liberal arts from Arizona State University.

The meeting will be at 6 p.m. at the Erna Fergusson Library Community Room, 3700 San Mateo N.E.

Midtown Unit – Nov. 19 at 1:30 p.m.

Terry Schleder, MPH. New Mexico Alliance of Retired Americans, will talk about “Issues in Medicare.” After the elections we will have a better idea of the future of Medicare. This meeting will review the various options under consideration.

Schleder is the field Staff for the New Mexico Alliance for Retired Americans, a national affiliate of the AFL-CIO that advocates for progressive legislation for seniors and retirees. He is a long-time public health community-based researcher in the state. He holds an MPH degree from UNM.

The meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m. in the Manzano del Sol, Hobby Room (1st Floor), 5202 Roma Ave. N.E.

NE Heights Unit – Nov. 26 at 10:30 a.m.

Dick Mason, chair of the Action Committee of the League of Women Voters of New Mexico, will discuss “Health Care Issues in the 2013 New Mexico Legislature.”

The 2013 New Mexico Legislative session will be dealing with issues such as Medicaid expansion and implementing the Affordable Care Act. The LWV will be active on these and other health care issues during the legislative session. The meeting will be held at La Vida Llena Retirement Community, 10501 Lagrima de Oro N.E.

Voters' Guide thank you

By Judith Binder & Andrea Targhetta,
Voter Guides Editors

The 2012 LWVCNM *Voters' Guide*, published with grateful appreciation to the staff at Automated Elections, has now been distributed!

We wish to thank Meredith Machen, LWV New Mexico editor; Josephine Porter, liaison; Marilyn Fifield who chaired calling the distribution locations; our League volunteers and friends of League who stepped up to assist with delivering over 50,000 *Guides* across Bernalillo and Sandoval counties. In addition, we are indebted to our “web monkey” Cheryl Haaker, who has posted a copy on our web page: <http://www.lwvcnm.org/elections/>. Paper copies of the LWVCNM *Guide* are also available in southern Santa Fe County.

For the first time this year, a public appeal through the Community Page of the *Albuquerque Journal* brought additional volunteers. We deeply appreciate those who stepped up.

And another first -- our LWVCNM *Voters' Guide* is being distributed to qualifying students in the Albuquerque and Rio Rancho School Districts. Students must be 18 and registered and eligible to vote by Nov. 6. Look for future updates.

Our warm thanks go to everyone who joined us in this wonderful service to our community. A full list of those who participated in editing, proofing, phoning and solving problems -- like chasing down delivery sites and those candidates who were sluggish with their responses, can be found on page 46 of the 2012 *Guide*.

Presidents' Corner

(Continued from page 2)

states until 1912. During the 64 years between the signing of the treaty and statehood, Mexican-Americans in those territories were held in a kind of non-citizen limbo without voting rights. Their other civil rights were often violated. They also suffered the same kind of violence and legal trickery that was being directed against Mexican-Americans in Texas and California. The Sons of America organized in 1921 to fight for equality and the right to vote, but all Mexican-Americans did not receive the right to vote until 1975.

With the California gold rush, Asian immigration became significant for the first time, mostly in the West. Asian Pacific Americans were considered aliens ineligible for citizenship under the "whites-only" clause of the 1790 Nationalization Law. There was a legal concern about their children born in America. Governmental officials tried to avoid this "problem" by preventing Asian women from coming ashore. Many were sent back, but some avoided detection and managed to get off the ship. Some Asian men would marry women of other races -- some of whom were citizens. There was a question about what would happen to their boys when they reached age 21. Interim changes to naturalization and immigration laws were made in 1943, 1946 and 1952 which gave the franchise to some, but not all immigrant Asian Pacific Americans. Nevertheless, because citizenship is a precondition for voting, immigrant Asian Americans did not vote in large numbers until

1965, when the immigration and naturalization laws were changed. Asian Pacific persons born on American soil were American citizens and had the right to vote. When 77,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry were placed into American concentration camps during World War II, their right to vote was not allowed.

The movements in the 1960s and 1970s were substantial. The Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, enacted thanks to the pressures from Dr. Martin Luther King and a powerful civil rights movement, banned literacy tests, provided federal enforcement of voting registration and provided other rights in several southern states plus Alaska. Five years later the Voting Rights Act of 1970 provided language assistance to minority voters who did not speak fluent English. Asian Pacific Americans and Latinos were the major benefactors of this legislation.

In 1970, the 26th amendment lowered the voting age to 18. Faced with widespread protests against the Vietnam War and growing resistance to military participation, the voting age was lowered to equal the draft age.

Despite federal laws and amendments to attempt to guarantee fair and open elections and the ideal of "one person one vote," even with the struggle of many dedicated Americans, restrictions and roadblocks are still occurring, even if inadvertently. Our League must be the watchdog and continue to lobby against legislation that would restrict voter participation, and continue our legacy of providing comprehensive voter education.

A brief overview of campaign finance reform: One step forward and two steps back

Editor's Note: This article is the first in a series on campaign finance reform by Josephine Porter.

Campaign finance reform is the common term for the political effort in the United States to change the involvement of money in politics, primarily in political campaigns. The history of politics in the U.S. is peppered with great stories about campaigns and the influence of money.

Andrew Jackson was really one of first presidential candidates to even campaign. In the late 1820's President Andrew Jackson began a polit-

ical patronage system that rewarded his cronies.

Giving jobs to those who helped get you into office jobs was definitely cheaper than paying them off. Political appointees, no matter what their position, paid a portion of their pay, referred to as an "annual tax" back to the political machine. This practice continued until the Supreme Court finally quashed it in 1882. Jackson's campaigns were also marked by some of the first attempts by corporations to influence politicians. Jackson claimed that

(Continued on page 5)

Campaign finance reform

(Continued from page 4)

his charter battle against the Second Bank of the United States was one of the great struggles between democracy and the power of money. The Bank of the United States in turn spent over \$40,000 from 1830 to 1832 in an effort to stop Jackson's re-election.

Abraham Lincoln's attempt to finance his own 1858 US Senate run bankrupted him. Eventually they say he bought a bank so he could finance his campaign for the presidency in 1860.

After the Civil War, parties increasingly relied on wealthy individuals for support. The Vanderbilts and the Astors were large contributors to campaigns and their support bought many a favorable action.

In the campaign of 1872, a group of wealthy New York Democrats pledged \$10,000 each to pay for the costs of promoting the election. On the Republican side, one Ulysses S. Grant supporter alone contributed one-fourth of the total for Grant's campaign. One historian said that never before was a candidate under such a great obligation to men of wealth. Vote buying and voter coercion were common in this era.

By the end of the 1800's fundraising from corporations for presidential campaigns had become so accepted that in 1896 in the William McKinley versus William Jennings Byran race it is said that the Republican National Committee systematized fund-raising from the business community for McKinley. They assessed banks 25 percent of their capital, and corporations were assessed in relation to their profitability and perceived stake in the prosperity of the country.

Finally in the early 20th century the tide began to turn, and voices were heard to argue against the most blatant corporate and individual abuses of campaign contributions. Progressive advocates, muckraking journalists and political satirists argued to the general public that the policies of vote buying and excessive corporate and moneyed influence were burying the interests of millions of taxpayers. They advocated strong antitrust laws, restricting corporate lobbying and campaign contributions, and greater citizen participation and control, including secret ballots, strict voter registration and women's suffrage.

Along came Teddy Roosevelt who had

made a name for himself with trust-busting and anti-corporate-influence actions. But fearing defeat when running for his second term in 1904 he also turned to bankers and industrialists for support. Roosevelt was embarrassed by his corporate financing and there was a resulting national call for reform, but Roosevelt claimed that it was legitimate to accept large contributions if there were no implied obligation. Does that sound familiar? He did propose making illegal corporate contributions for any political purpose but included no restrictions on campaign contributions from the private individuals who owned and ran corporations.

Finally in 1907 the Tillman Act was passed. It prohibited corporations and interstate banks from making direct financial contributions to federal candidates. However, the Act was ineffective. Many other laws limiting contributions and expenditures followed but they were also largely ineffective, unenforced and had huge loopholes. But it is interesting to note that although many attempts at campaign reform have failed, the Tillman Act's prohibition against corporate contributions directly to candidate campaigns still stands.

Really it wasn't until the early 1970's that congress bit the bullet and worked to pass effective enforceable campaign control laws. In 1971 congress passed the Federal Election Campaign Act, requiring broad disclosure of campaign finances. In 1974, fueled by public reaction to the Watergate scandal, congress passed amendments to the act establishing a comprehensive system of regulation and enforcement, including public financing of presidential campaigns and creation of a central enforcement agency, the Federal Election Commission. Other provisions included limits on contributions to campaigns and expenditures by campaigns, individuals, corporations and other political groups.

As soon as the FECA was passed, the challenges began and the Supreme Court found unconstitutional many of these these provisions as violations of First Amendment.

In 1976 the Supreme Court case of Buckley v. Valeo struck down restrictions on campaign expenditure and independent expenditures by individuals and groups in FECA as unconstitutional violations of free speech (unless the candidate

(Continued on page 6)

Book Review: It's even worse than it looks

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

By Olin Bray, Author of ebook, Political Incompetence: What's Wrong With Our System and How To Fix It

Book Review: It's Even Worse Than It Looks: How the American Constitutional System Collided With the New Politics of Extremism, Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein, 2012, Basic Books, 226 pp.

Mann and Ornstein have been studying congress since they came to Washington in the late 1960s. They are from the Brookings Institute and the American Enterprise Institute, mainstream establishment liberal and conservative think tanks. Their previous book, *The Broken Branch: How Congress is Failing America and How To Get It Back On Track* (2006) looked at congressional problems in a historical perspective and suggested some solutions.

This book, six years later, is even more pessimistic, although they are still hopeful. It clearly identifies a set of difficult problems. First, they see

Campaign finance reform

(Continued from page 5)

accepts public financing). The key to this ruling was that the Court found that spending money to influence elections is a form of constitutionally protected free speech, and on that basis struck down the limitations on campaign expenditures. The court also ruled candidates can give unlimited amounts of money to their own campaigns. *Buckley v Valeo* did uphold the FECA's limits on individual contributions, as well as the disclosure and reporting provisions and the public financing scheme.

Ultimately, the precedent the Supreme court set in *Buckley v Valeo* resulted in numerous other court challenges to campaign reform laws. Despite criticism of *Buckley* from both sides, the case remains the starting point for court to analyze the constitutionality of campaign finance restrictions. This culminated in 2010 in the *Citizens United* decision.

Next time ... more on the continuing saga of campaign reform and the dramatic impact of Citizens United.

a critical mismatch between what have become ideologically polarized, parliamentary parties and our separation of powers system that makes it hard for even a majority to take action. Second, major changes in the mass media, going from a few, widely watched and respected network news sources to a highly fragmented cable system where networks build and keep their audiences by extreme ideological rather than balanced reporting. Third, a coarsening of American culture -- you are with me or against me and demonizing those who disagree. Fourth, a populist distrust of all leaders, especially political leaders. The military seems to be the only respected part of government. Fifth, the increasingly insidious and destructive role of money, especially anonymous money, in politics, campaigns, and policy making.

Although they say neither party is perfect, they clearly place the bulk of the blame on the Republicans. To quote, "Today's Republican Party...has become ideologically extreme; contemptuous of the inherited social and economic policy regime; scornful of compromise; unpersuaded by conventional understanding of facts, evidence, and science; and dismissive of the legitimacy of its political opposition, all but declaring war on the government." They talk about an asymmetric polarization. While the Republicans have moved far to the right, the Democrats have moved somewhat to the left but stayed much closer to the center, and remained more diverse and more willing to compromise to reach agreements. In 1978 Mann and Ornstein started the Congress Project, which involved regular informal meetings with a group of the new freshmen, ironically including Gingrich, Cheney and Santorum. Gingrich was already talking about his strategy to win a majority by challenging and obstructing everything so that people would see congress as an inefficient, ineffective, corrupt, and unrespected institution and would throw out the majority. It took 16 years for him to succeed, but in the process he seriously damaged the institution of Congress and even the government.

Given these problems, solving them will be difficult. However, they propose a number of solutions for fixing the party system and reforming

(Continued on page 7)

Book review

(Continued from page 6)

some of our political institutions, as well as some things to avoid. Proposed solutions they say won't work are: ignore it, it will correct itself; a third party candidate for president, who can't win and would only be a spoiler; a constitutional amendment for a balanced budget; term limits; or public financing of elections.

What they do propose are fixing the party system and reforming our political institutions. To fix the party system they propose expanding the vote, changing the way votes are converted into seats and campaign finance reform. First, under expanding the vote they propose modernizing voter registration, fighting voter restrictions, moving election day which creates problems for many people and allowing early voting and making voting mandatory. In the second area, they propose non-partisan redistricting commissions, open primaries to bring in more moderate voters rather than just the extremists and pull the parties to the center - perhaps even the top two vote getters (TTVG) regardless of party, and alternatives to our winner take all approach, such as instant runoff voting (IRV) and proportional representation (PR) with multi-member districts. Under campaign finance reform they want to increase disclosure and enforce the independence of groups from candidates, reform leadership PACs (which involve Congressional leaders and future leaders rather than lobbyists buying influence in Congress with campaign contributions from their leadership PACs), and to the extent possible prohibit lobbyists and government contractors from contributing. They propose two types of reforms for our political institutions. First, restore majority rule in the Senate by limiting the filibuster and holds on appointments and confirmations. Second, shifting the authority between the branches. If congress can't or won't act, then allow the executive more

authority to act, such as recess appointments, more independent agencies like the Fed, and more independent commissions like the BRAC (Base Realignment and Closing) whose recommendation require an up down vote.

Unfortunately, to get some of these alternatives, you may need a more reasonable congress to accept them and ways to prevent an obstructionist congress from dismantling them when they are most needed.

Finally, they want to begin to change or restore our political culture. For example, they call for restoring public shame by constantly challenging negative personal attacks, attempts to undermine legitimacy and openly and repeating lying about candidates and issues. They also want a place for open and serious debate suggesting perhaps PBS and NPR to help restore the traditional media's role in educating voters. Perhaps their most interesting idea here is a shadow congress of former members (who seem to be much more open, reasonable and partisan but willing to negotiate and compromise) who could seriously debate the issues both to educate the public and to provide a role model for congress. Basically, what they would like to see is the parties laying out and articulating policy choices, the media educating the public, and the voters rewarding the good behavior and policies and punishing the bad.

The upcoming election can be framed in one of two ways. First, it can be seen as a clear choice between two distinct sets of policy alternatives and their implications. Second, it can be framed as a referendum of how well the incumbents are doing (i.e., "throw the bums out") without any clear idea of the alternatives. They say the democrats want the first election and the Republicans want the second. In November we will see what type of election we had and begin to see the consequences.

Remembering LWVCNM's history

Editor's Note: The following is the final part of a series on the history of the LWVCNM presented 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.

Voter's Service projects included two *Voters' Guides*. One of these was published in the *Albuquerque Tribune*, multiple forums, Get Out the Vote billboards and public service announcements on KNME. We also were able to hold two historic home tours and the Salute to Albuquerque grew, too. The Roll of Honor was instituted to recognize League members who have made outstanding contributions to the organization.

Our next president was Shelly Shepherd. She had served as Membership Chair and chaired the Salute to Albuquerque dinner before taking on her new responsibilities. It was during her term in office that the Dorothy Cline award was established, honoring New Mexico women who have contributed in special ways to League. Initial honorees included Virginia Ahem, Anne Bingaman, Vivian Boyle, Susanne Burks and Marian Matthews with a special recognition of Nina Otero-Warren. Shelly prepared a series of articles honoring the women's suffrage movement in New Mexico. The "Suffrage in New Mexico" series was read into the 104th Congressional Record in commemoration of

the 50th anniversary of the suffrage movement in the United States.

During Shelly's term, League came out in support of the Ground Water Protection Policy and Action Plan, initiative and referendum consensus came about in 1995 and the Board of Directors voted to ask the New Mexico Court of Appeals for permission to appear as a friend of the court to present the League program position opposing term limits for elected officials.

Sandra Browne became president in 1995. This was the beginning of the 75th Anniversary Celebration of League. 70,000 *Voters' Guides* were prepared and distributed for the city election. League also moved to a larger office in the same building. 100,000 *Voters' Guides* were prepared and it was also put out on the internet.

The UNM unit was again activated; Adopt a Precinct board was assembled and included AAUW, Bernalillo County Clerk, New Mexico Business and Professional Women, Ink Impressions and the New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women, First Vote, a cooperative venture with the Secretary of State, Bernalillo County Clerk, Ink Impressions and LWV/ABC Education Committee and the transportation committee was actively lobbying for the Regional Transit Authority in the legislature



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