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The Voter

League of Women Voters of
Central New Mexico
November 2014

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

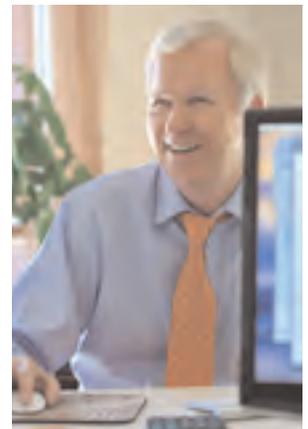
Political Blogger Joe Monahan To Speak at Nov. 13 Luncheon Unit

Albuquerque political blogger Joe Monahan will be the speaker at the Nov. 13 luncheon unit of the League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico. He will discuss "Evaluating the General Election: Where Are We Now?"

Monahan is the author of *New Mexico Politics with Joe Monahan*, the state's most widely read and influential political blog, now in its 12th

year of publication.

Monahan writes not only of politics but also of business and social trends that impact the state and its future. He provides analyses on campaigns and politics for both the local and national media and also writes a regular column for the ABQ Free Press. Since 1988 he has anchored and produced election coverage for public radio station KANW.



Joe Monahan

Monahan has extensive experience as a news reporter, news manager, public relations professional and campaign consultant. He served as communications director for Albuquerque

(Continued on page 3)

Ebola Hits U.S. Public's Radar

By Dr. Leah M. Ingraham

Editor's Note: Dr. Leah M. Ingraham is a retired public health professional and League member. During her career she taught in science programs at the college and university levels. For 17 years she served as a consultant for the Indiana State Departments of Health and of Education on federally funded programs in drug education, HIV education/services, school safety, emergency preparedness and response.

When did we last hear about exotic diseases with high mortality that set off public anxiety? Does anyone remember Anthrax (2011), SARS (2003) or H1N1 flu (2009)? Now it is Ebola, a disease known since 1976 but finally hitting the U.S. public's radar by causing the death of a Dallas patient. What is our risk in the U.S. and who looks out for us? Our own Centers for Disease Control and Prevention function as the key, not only in advising and supporting front line care givers

(Continued on page 3)

November Calendar

- | | | |
|---------|--|---|
| Nov. 4 | Election Day |  |
| Nov. 5 | Voter deadline | |
| Nov. 5 | Board meeting,
5:30 p.m. (Change from usual meeting date) | |
| Nov. 11 | Evening Unit, 6 p.m. | |
| Nov. 13 | Luncheon Unit, 11.45 a.m. | |
| Nov. 18 | Westside Unit, 5 p.m. | |

Note: There will be no NE Heights meeting in November.

Note: Election Day LWVCNM office hours will be 9 a.m.-3 p.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
Mental Health Study

Jan Bray & Shelly Shepherd

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 and can be accessed online at our website www.lwvcnm.org.

**Ragin' Granny Takes a Walk
Against Money in Politics**

Our CNM member, Sally-Alice Thompson, says that she has been bouncing from issue to issue and finds that they all end up in the same place -- money in politics. She says the "wealthy have more power than we do."



Sally-Alice Thompson on walk

Sally-Alice is a Navy veteran of WWII and belongs to the Veterans for Peace. She started walking on Oct. 13 from Albuquerque to Santa Fe, hoping to walk six miles a day. Anyone was invited to walk with her on any part of journey.

Did I tell you she had a birthday two days into this walk? Sally-Alice is 91 and going strong! She also belongs to the Albuquerque Raging Grannies who work for peace and justice by joining together to sing outrageous new words to old songs. CNM is proud of our Ragin' Granny.

-- Andrea Targhetta

President's Corner

By Andrea Targhetta

Being in the military family, I often think of the sacrifices our men and women in the armed forces endure because they choose to enlist. The United States has active duty military troops stationed in nearly 150 countries. The Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force share the task of keeping this nation safe. Beyond the obvious ultimate sacrifices of life and limb, is the very little-thought-of fact that military personnel have difficulty in registering to vote and voting while abroad. Mail might be slow and ballots and ballot applications may never get there. The men and women of our armed forces may change addresses frequently and have a hard time obtaining information about current candidates.

Luckily in this day and age, most military personnel have the ability to browse the Internet and discover our LWV *Voters' Guide* to help with these challenges. They can also go online at www.vote411.org and get the information on all the candidates (federal, state, county, and judicial), bonds issues and constitutional amendments. This entails looking up which state they want and clicking onto several screens to get the entire information.

Our local www.lwvcnm.org website also has information delivered in this manner, but we have the added advantage with information in PDF form which provides the entire publication with one link. This means these military members and their families can click onto this link once and just scroll down to whatever office, bond issue or constitutional amendment they wish.

Fortunately, our county clerk mailed ballots overseas by the deadline last month. The federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act and the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act both provide a Federal Post Card Application on which military and overseas citizens can register to vote and ask for an absentee ballot at the same time. These two pieces of legislation also supply an option to use the Internet to obtain blank absentee ballots which are mailed once completed by the voter. Of course, this only applies to federal elections. These federal laws don't cover local and state elections, but many states have complied with the federal regulations locally.

Our government takes care to see that every U.S. citizen has an opportunity to vote, especially for those who choose to serve their country away from their native land. So let's don't forget to VOTE ourselves and don't let your neighbors and family miss their chance to VOTE.

On this Veterans' Day, Tuesday, Nov. 11, please remember to take a few minutes and honor those women and men who have served and those who are currently serving in our armed forces.

November Units

(Continued from page 1)

Congressman Manuel Lujan in Washington, D.C. and founded his own public relations firm where he advised both private and political clients.

Monahan's blog has been named "Best of the City" by *ABQ Magazine* and has also proven to be a business success--a rarity in local Internet publishing.

The meeting will be held at 11:45 a.m. at the MCM Elegante Hotel, 2020 Menaul N.E. Reservations for the lunch must be made by 10 a.m. on Nov. 10. The cost of lunch is \$17 for mem-

bers and \$20 for non-members. To make a reservation call the LWVCNM office at 884-8441 or email lunch@lwvcnm.org. Indicate if you want the vegetarian option.

There is no NE Heights Unit in November. November Westside and Evening unit attendees will receive an update on the state League's Mental Health Study by committee members. The Westside Unit will meet Nov. 18 at 5 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn, 1771 Rio Rancho Blvd.

The Evening Unit will meet Nov. 11 at 6 p.m. in the Erna Fergusson Library Community Room, 3700 San Mateo NE.

Ebola

(Continued from page 1)

(both in Africa and in the U.S.) but also in monitoring the risk for all of us.

If we examine the instance of the Dallas patient we see where the failures occurred in protective measures. First, the patient omitted reference to his exposure as he exited Liberia on his way to Texas and, upon his arrival, he exhibited no symptoms. Days later he gradually became more and more ill and sought evaluation at a hospital, the staff of which, upon intake, ignored his travel history. These two breaches of protective processes have led to a laser-like focus upgrading both the travel

examinations and the "heads-up" to all hospital staff.

Who in the U.S. now needs to worry about the risk of contracting Ebola and how can he/she keep safe? As a private citizen not contemplating travel to Africa or tending patients exhibiting fever, vomiting, diarrhea, etc. you are safe. Continue the ordinary precautions against infectious disease (wash hands frequently, avoid close contact with individuals coughing and sneezing). Remember it will soon be flu season again. If you are a health-care worker be sure your facility is updating infection control procedures (both the putting on and the taking off of protective wear) and is noticing travel history and/or suspicious symptoms that trigger isolation procedures.

The main challenge to all of us is how to support the African nations on the front line of this raging epidemic. Contributions to reputable aid organizations such as Doctors without Borders are a place to start.

Ebola Data as of Oct. 17, 2014

<i>Nation</i>	<i>Cases*</i>	<i>Deaths</i>
Guinea	1519	862
Liberia	4262	2484
Nigeria	20	8
Sierra Leone	3410	1200
Senegal	1	0
Spain	1	0
USA	3	1
Democratic Republic of the Congo**	68	49
Totals	9284	4604

*reported to WHO **different virus strain
A member of the Filoviridae, Ebola is a single-stranded RNA virus, characteristically having frequent mutations. Thus, it is difficult to develop effective vaccines.

Education Committee to Meet Nov. 13

Beth Cicconi, long time second grade teacher at Manzano Mesa and formerly at Navajo elementary schools, will bring "Perspectives from the Classroom" to those attending the Education Group meeting to be held at 1201 Columbia Dr, NE, following the LWVCNM Nov. 13th Luncheon Unit. Members and guests must register to assure sufficient parking stickers will be available. Please call 265-4336 or email bjudy@unm.edu for reservations.

-- Judith Binder

Book Report: *Active Liberty: Interpreting Our Democratic Constitution*

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

Active Liberty: Interpreting Our Democratic Constitution by Stephen Breyer, 2005, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, Hardcover, 161 pages.

Supreme Court Justice Breyer makes a strong case that in interpreting the constitution and laws' legislative intent, not simply the text, should be a major factor in judicial decisions. A guideline is what a "reasonable legislator" would have intended. Furthermore, he suggests that the "will of the people" is best represented by Congress, and then by the executive branch, and finally by the judiciary, assuming something is not unconstitutional. Therefore, he proposes judicial deference rather than judicial activism. He gives examples of how a textual or an intent oriented approach can result in different decisions in six areas -- free speech, federalism, privacy, affirmative action, statutory interpretation, and administrative law.

Contrary to what some people seem to believe, he contends that the constitution does not solve most, or even many, of our problems. Instead it provides a framework to allow us to solve our problems, many of them totally unanticipated by the original drafters, as they arise. Therefore, pragmatism sometimes plays an important role in Supreme Court decisions.

He identifies two types of liberty that the constitution protects. Active liberty, or the ability of citizens to participate in government and decision making to the greatest extent possible, and passive liberty in the sense of privacy and the right to be left alone.

He contends that all speech is not created equal with the same protections. For our system to work, political speech has the greatest, almost absolute, protection. On the other hand, commercial speech, such as advertising, is much less important and is widely regulated by the government, e.g. to prevent fraudulent advertising and to prevent mislabeling and misrepresentation with food and drugs.

Given that our society and economy has become so complex, he contends that there need to be mechanisms for expert opinion and analysis to affect decisions. Therefore, in administrative law cases, the court tends to defer to the positions and interpreta-

tions of the agencies that have much greater expertise, although this deference is not absolute. For example, an agency position stated by senior executives and supported by research has more credibility than a simple opinion by a mid-level manager. This approach, along with relying on legislative intent is part of what Breyer refers to as judicial deference, which he supports over judicial activism.

Critics of the intent approach contend that it allows for too much subjectivity in judicial decisions, with current justices substituting their own intent for the intent of legislators or the drafters of the constitution. They sometimes emphasize the original intent of the drafters, as if nothing has changed in the intervening 200-plus years. Breyer contends that the intent approach is no more subjective than the textual approach. Words can have subtle shades of meaning and sometimes precise technical meanings are different from common usage, which may be what was intended by a "reasonable legislator." Also the usage and meanings of words change over time. He gives an example from labor law which was written under an earlier narrow interpretation of the commerce clause of the constitution. You get different results considering only the text of the law rather than the intent and what that intent means under the new interpretation.

Although many think that the Supreme Court is fractured ideologically, he contends that this is not apparent in most decisions. About 40 percent of the decisions are unanimous, another 40 percent involve only one or two dissenting votes, and only 20 percent are a 5-4 split.

This is a short, but very enlightening and easily readable book. Anyone interested in Supreme Court decisions and how they are made should read it and think about the points he raises.

Welcome New Members

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**State Convention 2015
For League of Women
Voters**

When: May 15, 16, 17, 2015

Location: Albuquerque

Crowne Plaza

**1901 University NE Crowne
Plaza**

All members invited

**Excellent speakers are planned,
so invite guests
to luncheon and banquet.**

**See you there!
Membership Leadership
Development**



**A BIG Thank You to all
Voters' Guide Volunteers**

We congratulate you on assisting in the publication of our current *Voters' Guide*, but it doesn't even begin to thank you. You are appreciated for all the hours of proofing, all the phone calls to candidates, the conversations with government agencies, the fact checking and all the data gathering. You can be proud of your hard work. Once again you have provided an extremely valuable service to the community.

We particularly thank our *Voters' Guide* Editor Josephine Porter, who not only coordinated our local candidates and issues, but worked with the state *Voters' Guide* editor, Marilyn Machen and all three of the other League editors from Las Cruces, Los Alamos and Santa Fe on the federal offices. This was our largest Guide ever. -- *Andrea Targhetta*

October Voter Services Report

There was a candidate forum for Bernalillo County Sheriff on Oct. 2 at the Event Palace. The candidates were Scott Baird and Manuel Gonzales. Mary H. Smith was moderator and Gayle Prinkey was timekeeper. Karen Wentworth and Alice Brasfield were the question sorters. LWVCNM was the sponsor with the Democratic Black Caucus hosting the event.

KOAT held a gubernatorial debate on Oct. 19. Cheryl Haaker was the timekeeper.

Several high schools requested the League to come to register its eligible students. Gayle Prinkey went to Eldorado on Oct. 2 and Highland High School on Oct. 7 to register any students who would be 18 years old on or before Nov. 4. Judith Binder and Pam Harris went to Next Generation Academy on Oct. 2 and registered 10 students.

There was a Naturalization Ceremony on Oct. 10. Pam Harris attended and welcomed 167 new citizens. -- *Pam Harris*

Danice Picraux is a Strong Supporter for Women's Issues

Danice Picraux, a long-time League member, is well known as a strong supporter for women's issues, health care, and education. She served the 25th District in the New Mexico Legislature from 1991 to 2013 and was appointed to numerous House committees, including Appropriations, Finance, Rules, Voters and Elections.



Danice Picraux

Danice was the first female caucus whip in half a century and then the first female majority leader in New Mexico's Democratic party. During her time in office, she lobbied for women's rights and equality, including support for abortion rights and for the first time in the state's history, making domestic violence a crime.

Several years ago, I asked Danice a series of questions, beginning with: What were the major obstacles you faced when entering the political sphere? Did these obstacles also impact on your ability to perform in the Legislature?

Danice's Responses:

"We as women, have always taken responsibility and defined tasks and then completed them. Our problem has been the authentication of our responsibility. It isn't just getting credit for what we have done. Lots of people thank us for what we do. The authentication comes from being up front, out in the open, obviously in a position of leadership, which can also be interpreted as power and control. In public life that authentication has only recently become more prevalent for women.

"The obstacle, then, is achieving the authentic position of leadership, being publicly acknowledged as the leader. Once in a leadership position, we still face the issue. Unless women have already paved the way for us, we'll continually be measured and evaluated: Is she 'good enough? Did she hold the reins of power or is there someone else who initiates and performs? Hence, the testing never stops."

Danice's accomplishments span far beyond women's issues. Stay tuned as this is the first in a series of Insights from the Legislative Floor. --

-- Judith Binder

