



League of Women Voters  
of Central New Mexico  
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# The Voter

League of Women Voters of  
Central New Mexico  
August 2015

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

## LWVCNM to Consider NM Water Resources in at August Meeting

Dr. Bruce Thomson, director of the UNM Water Resources Program from 2006 to 2013, will address the LWVCNM General Meeting Thursday, Aug. 13. The meeting will be held at 11:45 a.m at the MCM Elegante Hotel, 2020 Menaul Boulevard NE in Albuquerque.

Thomson will discuss factors influencing the stability of surface and ground water resources in New Mexico with a special emphasis on the Middle Rio Grande Basin.

The challenges of meeting the water needs of New Mexico become greater each year due to the combined effects of increasing demands, a decreased supply due to a multi-year drought and expected decrease in water supply as a result of a warming climate. In order to meet these



Dr. Bruce Thomson

challenges, it is important that professional water resource managers, our political leaders, and especially the public understand this resource. Thomson will discuss factors influencing the stability of surface and ground water resources in the state with a special emphasis on the Middle Rio Grande Basin.

Thomson is a Research Professor and Regents Professor Emeritus in the Department of Civil Engineering at UNM. His areas of research include chemistry of inorganic contaminants, groundwater contamination and water resources management.

Make reservations for the August General Meeting by calling LWVCNM office (884-8441) by 10 a.m. Monday, Aug. 10. Specify if you would like a vegetarian meal.  
-- Karen Douglas

### Municipal Voters' Guide

Your League has settled into a quiet summer schedule. BUT WAIT! Behind the scenes League volunteers are already working hard to produce the 2015 *Municipal Voters' Guide*. Already we are fielding requests to moderate candidate forums. Already our office volunteers are answering voters' questions. Already our League voter registrars are attending community events to make sure all who are eligible are registered to vote. We won't let rain or sunshine keep us from our mission -- to educate all citizens and encourage them to vote. Kudos to our editor, Jo Porter and her talented team of League volunteers.

Your League needs financial support to produce the 2015 *Voters' Guide* and provide our extensive voter education and outreach efforts. The *Voters Guide* is truly a "group" effort. All of the extensive labor required for data gathering, candidate contact, writing and editing is provided by League volunteers. But we need funding to print the Guide. Please support these efforts by making a generous tax-deductible donation to the LWVCNM Education Fund.

### August Calendar

Aug. 5	Voter dead.line
Aug. 6	Board meeting, 5:30 p.m.
Aug. 13	Luncheon Meeting, 11:45 a.m.
Aug. 22	Women's Equality Day Celebration

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

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

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](http://www.lwvcnm.org).

## **NOW Equal Rights Day**

Join the National Organization for Women for a Women's Equality Day Celebration and Poetry Reading Aug. 22 from 1:30-4 p.m. in the Botts Hall of Special Collections Library, 423 Edith NE.

There will be speakers on the meaning of Women's Equality Day and the progress made toward full equality for women in the United States. Also planned is a poetry reading by Albuquerque Word Weavers with an open microphone hosted by Jules Nyquist.

People are encouraged to bring their poems about women's rights in the US -- Four minutes max.

Inspire Us! Tell us about:

\* **Triumphs** -- Milestones achieved, such as winning the vote.

\* **Progress** -- What has improved for women since 1920?

\* **Struggles** -- What is yet to be achieved, including the ERA?

\* **Justice** -- Why ensuring equal rights for all women in our country is the just and right thing to do?

For more information email: [smremd@hotmail.com](mailto:smremd@hotmail.com)

-- *Sylvia M. Ramos, M.D., chair,  
ERA Task Force, Albuquerque NOW*

## **2015-16 LWVCNM Program Update**

*By Karen Douglas*

LWVCNM members convened for annual Calendar Planning June 13 to address current issues of interest and consider LWVUS and LWVNM initiatives in a timely and thoughtful manner. No ongoing LWVCNM studies required position formulation for future advocacy. However, LWVUS identified two areas requiring local LWV consensus summary responses:

\* **Money in Politics (MIP)** - LWVUS studied this issue following the 2010 Supreme Court decision in Citizen's United vs. Federal Election Commission. Campaign Finance and Ethics issues related to this decision prompted LWVUS study and informative presentations for Local LWVs. The decision permitted "coordinated contributions" by SuperPACs, bypassing campaign contribution limits and "in-kind" restrictions, thereby resulting in unlimited contributions. Jeanne Logsdon, retired Regents Professor of UNM Anderson School of Management and LWVCNM member, also serves as a member of the LWVUS MIP committee. Jeanne presented LWVUS "Meeting in a Box" discussion of MIP impacts on transparency and fair elections during July LWVCNM general meeting in preparation for November 2015 LVCNM Consensus (Consensus questions available October).

\* **US Constitutional Amendment/Convention** - LWVUS expedited the local LWV Consensus response deadline Constitution study to December 2015, resulting in LWVCNM conflicts with current programs committed 2015. The consensus addresses the protocol for convening a constitutional convention (including 34 of 50 states affirming initiation), the propriety of an item to be proposed as an amendment (effective, enforceable, uniformly interpreted), selection of convention delegates (appointed vs. elected). The LWVUS study material is available along with extensive consensus questions. In addition to difficulty identifying a member prepared to inform LWVCNM membership are challenges.. LWCNM Board members are currently considering whether to decline participation in Constitution Consensus.

Recent and planned LWVCNM membership meetings address a wide range of issues related to current LWV positions. Pria Jackson presented a perspective on voter responsibilities to LWVCNM membership in July. The August general meeting will address water resources in New Mexico. Albuquerque Press Women and LWVCNM will co-sponsor a presentation by U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich in October. Upcoming 2015-16 unit meetings may highlight issues including education, open primaries, community banking, predatory lending, healthcare challenges, open government, APD Forward and other topics proposed by LWVCNM membership.

## Book Review – *The Professor and the President*

*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.*

*The Professor and the President: Daniel Patrick Moynihan in the Nixon White House* by Stephen Hess, 2015, Brookings Institute Press, hardcover, 172 pages.

This short easy book is very interesting today, given our problems with political gridlock and ideological rigidity. The author has been involved in presidential politics since the 1970s alternating between White House staff and Brookings Institute researcher and author of the classic *Organizing the Presidency*, which has been through three major editions (1976, 1988, and 2002). He describes how conservative Nixon and liberal Moynihan got together, developed a working relationship and even friendship, and the policies they developed. It describes what they accomplished and how they did it, which makes a stark contrast to how Washington seems to work or not work today.

Nixon won in 1968 without a majority – 43.4 percent to Humphrey's 42.7. (George Wallace was the spoiler with 13.5 percent.) Therefore, he wanted a democrat in his administration to provide some bipartisanship. Moynihan says he got his position as a result of his 1967 speech, "The Politics of Stability." In it he "... proposed that American politics were approaching instability, and that liberals who understood this should seek out and make alliances with their conservative equivalents in order to preserve democratic institutions from the looming forces of the authoritarian left and right." (Sounds like something that could have been written today.) Also Moynihan's critiques of the failures of 1960s liberalism resonated with Nixon. However, Moynihan was not abandoning liberal programs. As a democrat he had supported Humphrey against Nixon. He simply wanted to replace failing, unworkable programs with programs that worked. When asked what job he wanted, he initially said transportation, but since that was not available, he said the domestic equivalent of Kissinger's job, which became head of the Urban Affairs Council.

Moynihan was surprised that Nixon knew very little about domestic policy and admitted it. Nixon thought the country could run itself domestically and really needed a president for foreign affairs. In a sense

this gave Moynihan a clean slate to work with for the president, not a lot of hardened positions that he had to change. Moynihan provided Nixon with a Harvard professor and an intellectual (a group that generally detested Nixon) who treated him with respect and basically mentored him on domestic policy with lengthy memos and books and reports to read. Moynihan's early effect showed in the inaugural address that mentioned "lowering our voices" and that "we can't learn from each other when we are shouting."

As a counter to Moynihan's liberalism, Nixon appointed Arthur Burns a conservative friend from the Eisenhower administration as Counselor to the President for Domestic Policy and with Cabinet rank. (Burns later became Chairman of the Federal Reserve.) An executive order in January of 1969 established the Urban Affairs Council consisting of the president, vice president, Burns, and related cabinet secretaries, with Moynihan as its Executive Director, who set the agendas. An indication of Moynihan's close developing relationship with Nixon was when Burns lost the argument that "cabinet covers staff" and Moynihan kept control of the UAC. Another important indicator is that Moynihan kept the president's attention enough for him to attend and chair 21 of 23 UAC meetings --- and if the president comes so do the cabinet members.

Moynihan's major accomplishment was welfare reform. In January of 1969 he sent Nixon and memo saying that "Welfare as we know it is a bankrupt and destructive system." He took the idea of a negative income tax from conservative Milton Friedman, modified it and relabeled it the Family Assistance Plan, and got it through the administration where only a minority supported, but one of them was Nixon. Even Nixon's old friend Arthur Burns opposed the program. In August Nixon announced the program, which had become AFDC (Assistance for Families with Dependent Children). Moynihan describes the political process and fights in his book, *The Politics of a Guaranteed Income* (1973).

Moynihan went on to become Counselor to the President when Burns moved on to the Federal Reserve. He also served as the U.S. Ambassador to India and was a four term senator from New York.

This book provides an interesting lesson in how politics and compromise can work when compared to today. And remember then we did not think of the early Nixon years as a time of compromise and effective government.

# The Debate of 1988 and What Happened Next

*Editor's Note: This article is a follow-up to what Judith Binder wrote in the July Voter.*

League of Women Voters members across the country have always understood that the League's central role is to provide unbiased education about civic issues to the public. In addition to our studies, consensus groups and forums, we are best known for our *Voters' Guides* available just prior to most elections and for conducting local political debates.

LWV proudly sponsored the United States presidential election debates in 1976, 1980 and 1984; however, by 1988 the campaign between Michael Dukakis and George Bush had become quite confrontational. The two parties had, in 1987, established the bipartisan Commission on Presidential Debates that established the form, venue and time for the debates. The CPD shut out smaller political parties and eased the debate format. Candidates and/or their advisors began to make demands regarding the procedures, and they presented a 12-page secret contract to the League. The League could not agree to a "staged" debate nor the campaigns' "take it or leave it" attitude, because it was felt that all citizens should be involved

and were entitled to know how the candidates respond in a neutral setting.

For that reason, LWV President Nancy Neuman issued a press release on Oct. 3, 1988 stating that the trustees had voted unanimously to pull out of the debates, and she condemned "the demands of the major candidates' campaigns whose scripted debate format would perpetrate a fraud on the American voter and that the organization did not intend to become an accessory to the hoodwinking of the American public."

The main reason for a presidential debate is to educate the public about the nominees from all political platforms so that voters can hold them accountable after the election. With no aids nor teleprompters, nominees should be sincere and answer the tough questions. The League of Women Voters was and should again be the appropriate and ethical producer of presidential debates.

*References:*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_presidential\\_election\\_debates#Debate\\_sponsorship](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election_debates#Debate_sponsorship)

<http://lwv.org/multimedia/league-women-voters-and-presidential-debates>



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