

The VOTER

League of Women Voters
of Greater Las Cruces
(575) 524-VOTE (8683)
Web Site: www.lwvglc.org
November 2015



Lunch with a Leader

Craig Fenske & Viki Harrison, COMMON CAUSE

"Campaign Finance Reform and Dark Money"

**Monday, November 9, 2015
11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m**

**Good Samaritan Social Center
Creative Arts Room, 3011 Buena Vida Circle**



Craig Fenske is currently working with Common Cause New Mexico to bring public campaign financing to Las Cruces. He served as the Keep Las Cruces Beautiful Coordinator for the City of Las Cruces from 2006 to 2013, engaging individuals to take greater responsibility for improving their community. His efforts engaged a diverse corps of volunteers to conduct City wide cleanups and beautification projects including mural paintings, school recycling programs and helped initiate the City's Tree Steward program.

He was a youth development faculty member for Washington State University Extension for over 30 years and was last located in Whatcom County at the time of his retirement in 2006.

After retirement from WSU he and his wife, Britt, moved to Las Cruces to enjoy the sun and new adventures. He has a M.A. degree from Pacific Lutheran University and a B.S. from Iowa State University.

Viki Harrison is the executive director for Common Cause New Mexico where she coordinates legislative initiatives, does public education and research, organizes volunteers and is responsible for fundraising and budget oversight. She joined CCNM in early 2012, and successfully led the coalition in NM to become the first state in the country to pass a fix to public financing laws in the wake of the *Arizona Free Enterprise* ruling with broad bi-partisan support (unfortunately the Governor vetoed the measure) and to become the second state to oppose the *Citizens United* ruling.

Prior to joining Common Cause, Viki was the Executive Director of NM Repeal, where she led the winning campaign in New Mexico to abolish the death penalty. Earlier in her career she was the Program Manager for Animal Protection of New Mexico, and part of the team that successfully banned cockfighting in the state.

The modern campaign system is broken and prevents elected officials from solving big problems. The vast majority of elected officials in New Mexico are hard-working, ethical people who want the best for our state. Unfortunately, candidates must raise a massive amount of money to run for office. This makes candidates unduly dependent on major fundraisers that drown out the voices of normal New Mexicans who can't afford to contribute.

Consequently, 80 percent of New Mexicans think that the impact of money in politics on the outcome of elections is a serious problem according to a 2014 poll by Common Cause New Mexico. Most voters believe that powerful interest groups use their donations to steer policy in the direction of their own interests, which may not be in the public interest. We've seen it before. Now, we have a path forward to fix this problem. **The New Mexico Pledge** is a commitment to put our state on a path to lead the nation in creating a transparent and responsive state government that works for ALL New Mexicans.

The VOTER

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**The League of Women Voters of
Greater Las Cruces**

P.O. Box 8322
Las Cruces, NM 88006-8322
(575) 524-VOTE (8683)
Web Site: www.lwvglc.org

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and Speakers**
Ardyth Norem

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Treasurer - Ruth Benjamins

Director, Membership
Yvonne-Magdalena Flores

Co-Directors, Voter Services
Marcia Anderson &
Dale Yeo

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Christina Little-373-1882

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Election Procedures
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Barbara Goedecke - 522-0323

Health Care
Vicki Simons - 522-4813

Immigration
Sue Cain - 647-8250
Yvonne-Magdalena Flores 521-3980

Metropolitan Court
Marjorie Burr - 522-2528

Quality of Life (Happiness)
Cynthia Pelak - (575) 496-3170

Water Issues
Win Jacobs - 521-9331

Action Committee
Barbara Goedecke - 522-0323

President's Message

Gwendolyn (Gwen) Hanson

November 2015



Fall has arrived! We are enjoying the season of campaigning and elections, with holidays on the horizon. New voter education materials have been developed and distributed, as well as the distribution of the 2015 Voters Guide. A Candidate Forum was conducted to offer our community the opportunity of meeting and learning more about the candidates running for office in the Las Cruces Municipal Election. We thank the Co-Directors of Voter Services, Marcia Anderson and Dale Yeo, all the members who volunteered to register voters, coordinated by Marjorie Burr and scheduled by Rosemarie Sanchez, and the members who volunteered to work at the Candidate Forum. It is only through this willingness to participate that our very important goals are accomplished.

The Proposal for LWVUS Consensus Study – “Amending the Constitution” Unit Meeting was held October 29, 2015. Due to unexpected scheduling conflicts, was unable to attend. Kelly Burnham agreed to lead this important discussion as Erica Graf-Webster was unable to attend.. Consensus questions were answered and submitted to national. Lunch was provided to those members attending. Our thanks to Erika Graf-Webster for her volunteering to research the constitutional amendment study materials, and sharing with our members. It was a yeoman's task, and we appreciate her efforts. Very early in the process, Bonnie Burn provided a proposal for our preliminary meeting in July about the constitutional amendment study. Thank you, Bonnie.

Please check out a new section in our newsletter, "Building your Capacity". In this section websites of interest will be suggested. If you have a suggested website, please send it to Jennifer Coppolo, Newsletter Editor.

I call your attention to a Feature Article, "Online Voter Registration" written by Scott Krahling, Chief Deputy County Clerk, Dona Ana County, and a League member. Thank you, Scott.

November will offer our members the opportunity to enhance their knowledge about the challenge of campaign finance reform and “dark” money. Craig Fenske and Viki Harrison from COMMON CAUSE will present a program on this very timely and important topic at our monthly meeting. It also supports increasing our knowledge base as we approach the second LWVUS Study Proposal about “Money and Politics” Consensus Meeting later this winter.

President's Message

Our monthly meeting time will revert to LUNCH, due to time change evening darkness. **PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THIS TIME CHANGE. Luncheon time is 11:30-1:00 p.m.**

Although we associate League activities with elections during the Fall, equally important has been the activities of our committees. There is unlimited opportunity to join and participate in any one of these groups. Please feel free to contact the leaders of those groups about which you have an interest.

We look forward to November League activities, and of course, the beginning of the holiday season. Mark your calendars now for the **Annual Legislative Breakfast, December 12, 2015.**

Our thanks to Jennifer Coppolo for her willingness to continue as Editor of the VOTER newsletter after returning to the classroom full time.

Happy Halloween!

CALENDAR

November 3 (Tuesday) - Election Day

November 5 (Thursday) - LWVGLC Board Meeting, City Hall, Room 2007A, 2:00-4:00 p.m.

November 9 (Monday) - Lunch with a Leader-"Campaign Finance Reform and Dark Money", Craig Fenske & Viki Harrison, COMMON CAUSE Good Sam's, 11:30-1:00 p.m.

November 11 (Wednesday) - Veterans Day

November 19 - Third Thursday Book Club, *End of College*, 2:00-4:00 p.m., at Vicki Simons home. Please call for directions: 522-4813.

November 26 -Thanksgiving Day





League News



Voter Services Activity

By Marcia Anderson

The election season had its usual busy start. Candidate information for the **Voters Guide** was verified by phone thanks to Dale Yeo, Yvonne M. Flores and Liz Taylor. Questions to the thirteen candidates were sent out and responses from all were received and compiled. Christine Sorg, Dale Yeo and Gwen Hanson proofread the draft copies and the Sun-News published the Voters Guide on October 18.

The **Candidates Forum** was held on October 21 in with Gwen Hanson as Moderator. The following League members volunteered as greeters, runners, question reviewers and timer: Sadie Valverde, Johnnie Aldrich, Roberta Gran, Sue Cain, Dale Yeo, Cathy Mathews and Bob Burn.

Voter Registration was very productive this fall. As of September 29, Marjorie Burr reported that League voter registrars had signed up 76 new voters at Centennial and Onate High Schools and NMSU. Rosemarie Sanchez arranged places and times, and Marjorie Burr coordinated volunteer registrars from the League: Johnnie Aldrich, Martha Duran, Marjorie Burr, Kurt Anderson and Charlotte Lipson.

Kudos to all who helped with the important work of Voter Service.

LWVGLC Immigration Committee Tours Otero County Processing Center

LWVGLC Immigration Committee members, Yvonne Flores, Sue Cain and Gwen Hanson attended a tour of the Otero County Processing Center (Detention Center), as a part of a larger tour group set up by Jan Meslin, Director, Social Change Development (CIVIC), San Francisco CA. CIVIC, Community Initiatives for Visiting Immigrants in Confinement, is a national movement. She is also a League member in Orange County, CA.

Jan Meslin came to Las Cruces as one of the speakers at the Community Forum on Immigration Issues - Humanitarian Responses to Border Immigration, Part 1, Unitarian Universalist Church, October 17, 2015.





League News



Online Voter Registration to Launch in January 2016

by Scott Krahling

Registering to vote is about to get a lot easier for many New Mexicans.

In January 2016, the New Mexico Secretary of State will launch online voter registration. This will give people who have access to the Internet a convenient way to update their registrations or register for the first time.

To register online, qualified voters must have a state identification number issued by the Motor Vehicle Department. This allows the system to match the data, preventing fraud and ensuring accuracy.

This is an invaluable tool in at least 23 states already. Pennsylvania launched online registration at the end of August 2015 and had over 5,000 users in the first week. It had over 32,000 by the first week of October.

While Internet access is not universal, we believe the response in NM will be big and are preparing for large numbers of users.

Encouraging and increasing online registration will reduce the potential for error, increase the accuracy of the rolls, reduce lines and congestion at the polling location, improve the voter experience by updating records immediately, and increase the integrity of our system.

Studies of online registration show that younger voters are more likely to register when online tools are available. There is also evidence that turnout may be higher among those registering online than those who register on paper. It also removes barriers to participation for voters with disabilities.

Finally, we know that many people in Doña Ana County do not have access to the Internet.

Online registration will help many, but it should only be one part of our attempt to make voter registration more accessible.

In Doña Ana County we are interested in your feedback. Your election experience matters to us. Visit www.dacelections.com and share your ideas to help us improve.



“Building Your Capacity”

Dona Ana County, County Clerk’s Office: External Review Committee Report

“Risk Evaluation of the Protection of Private Personal Information Collected by the Dona Ana County Clerk’s Office”

donaanacounty.org/sites/default/files/pages/External_Review_Committee_Report_Final.pdf

LWVUS Consensus Studies:

1. Constitutional Amendment

forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/our-work/constitutional-amendment-study

2. Money in Politics

forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/our-work/money-politics-review

3. Voter Registration in a Digital Age: 2015 Update

www.Brennancenter.org/publication/voter-registration-digital-age-2015-update

Board Meeting Highlights— Gwen Hanson, President

Voter Services: Report by Marcia Anderson

Voter Registration Report by Marjorie Burr: On September 28, 2015, Rosemarie Sanchez scheduled volunteers to register new voters. They had a good turnout. Douglas Mosely helped register several voters. The League was unable to gain permission to register voters at the Farmers Market.

Studies and Committees:

Election Procedure Committee: Ardyth Norem reported the update on getting the new voter card translated into Spanish. that she is looking for someone to translate the Voter Card into Spanish. "Spot checks" at Motor Vehicle Dept. sites was discussed. Ardyth will meet with Dr. Renay Scott, President, Dona Ana Community College to discuss ways to inform the students and personnel of the importance of voting.

Immigration Committee: Yvonne Flores reported the activities of the committee. The goal of this committee is to propose updating the language of LWVUS Position Statement on Immigration by submitting the change to national by February, 2016, in order that it can be presented at the 2016 National Convention.. In addition Yvonne, Sue Cain, and Gwen Hanson will be visiting the Otero County Detention Center in Alamogordo on October 24th.

Engagement Committees: (LCPS), (NMSU), (DACC). Yvonne reported that Rosemary Sanchez with Prof Anita Hernandez are doing a great job at NMSU. Yvonne will meet with Wendy Miller about ways she can help us with LCPS and Ardyth is meeting with President Renay Scott to get information on how to inform the students and personnel at DACC.

LWVNM Board Meeting: Gwen reported having attended the State Board Meeting in Santa Fe, September 19, 2015. Gwen discussed the activities of the Immigration Committee at the request of State President, Meredith Machen. Meredith is supporting the updating of the national position statement, and invited the committee to attend and update the State Board at the January 16, 2016, Socorro, NM meeting..

External Review Committee – Dona Ana County Clerk's Office: Gwen Hanson was asked to be a member of the External Review Committee, which met and made recommendations in a report, entitled "Risk Evaluation of the Protection of Private Personal Information Collected by the Dona Ana County Clerk's Office", presented to Dona Ana County Commissioners, August 28, 2015.

Bonnie Burn Scholarship changes: Gwen Hanson, Ruth Benjamins and Ardyth Norem originally met August 27, 2015, with the Las Cruces Scholarship Foundation, Executive Director, Betsy Geery, to discuss the transfer of scholarship funds from LWVGLC to the LCPS Foundation. At the time of the board-approved transfer of the League entered into an "Expendable Donor Advised Fund Agreement", the fund not qualifying for an "endowment". We were then made aware that the minimum amount to qualify for an endowment was \$5K. Gwen was asked to attend a meeting with Bob and Bonnie Burn with the Scholarship Foundation to discuss the endowment option. The family of Bonnie Burn opted to make a personal donation in order that the fund would qualify as an endowment. For reasons of sustainability Mr. Burn made the commitment to continue to donate money annually for the scholarship that the League created to award to a Las Cruces Public Schools graduating senior. A new agreement, "LCPS Foundation Endowment Agreement" was signed by Bob and Bonnie Burn, September 15, 2015. The agreement was submitted for LWVGLC Board approval October 1, 2015. After a discussion a motion was made by Ruth Benjamins, seconded by Marcia Anderson, to accept the new agreement. Motion carried. Gwen Hanson signed and delivered the agreement to Executive Director, Betsy Geery.

New Business and Activities:

Constitutional Amendment Consensus Meeting: Erika Graf-Webster arranged for Dr. Daniel Chand to be our guest speaker at the Unit Meeting October 29 2015, 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m., with lunch included. Erika is going to be gone on that day and has asked Kelly Burnham to lead the discussion.

"Money in Politics" Consensus Meeting: Tabled to be discussed later.

LEAGUE OBSERVER REPORT

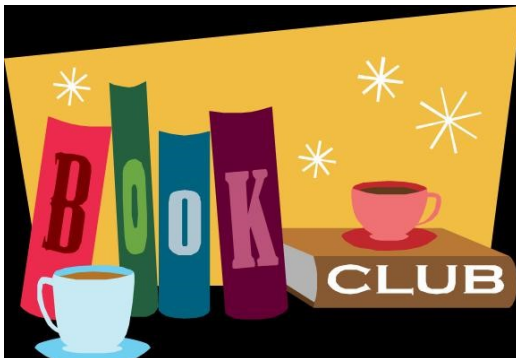
The League's Observer Corps can enable greater coverage and information gathering, provide early warning of upcoming issues of concern, increase League's visibility, and assist in networking with other groups. We appreciate the reports that are submitted by Observers. Following the League practice of publishing nonpartisan, objective reports, the information submitted may be edited for content and brevity.

Observer Report: South Central Solid Waste Authority

Regular Board meetings: September 18 and October 15, 2015

League Observers: Susan Schmugge and Johnnie Aldrich

South Central Solid Waste Authority will be hosting the 7th Annual E-Cycling Collection Event at the Doña Ana County Government Center located at 845 N. Motel Blvd **on Saturday, November 14, 2015**. Residents will be able to drop-off old electronics between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. See list of sample electronics that are accepted below. Types of items that are not accepted include "white goods" such as refrigerators, washer and dryers, household appliances, etc. Residents can also visit our webpage at www.scswa.net/AnnualEcycling to view the list of accepted materials and what is NOT accepted.



Third Thursday Book Club Meeting 2:00-4:00 p.m.

November 19 - *The End of College: Creating the Future of Learning and the University of Everywhere* by Kevin Carey
At the home of Vicki Simons. Please call 522-4813 for directions.

New Members are Welcome!



October's *Dinner with a Leader* speaker, Dr. Steven Sanchez (center), with LWVGLC President Gwen Hanson and member, Bob Burns.





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*Las
Cruces
City*

FIRST CLASS

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Information Links

LWV - Greater Las Cruces

www.lwvglc.org

LWV - GLC Who's Who

www.lwvglc.org

LWV - New Mexico

www.lwvnm.org

LWV - United States

www.lwv.org

City of Las Cruces

www.las-cruces.org

Las Cruces Public Schools

www.lcps.ks12.nm.us

New Mexico State University

www.nmsu.edu

Dona Ana Community College

<http://dacc.nmsu.edu>

Dona Ana County

<http://donaanacounty.org>

State of New Mexico

www.newmexico.gov

New Mexico Secretary of State

www.sos.state.nm.us

New Mexico Legislature

www.nmlegis.gov/lcs

U.S. Senate

www.senate.gov

U.S. House of Representatives

www.house.gov

U.S. White House

www.whitehouse.gov

Membership Application

After November 1 - \$30 for Individual;
\$15 for each additional household member
Annually: \$60 Individual; \$30 Second
Household; \$30 Students

Date: _____

Name: _____

2nd Household: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Contributions:

_____ League of Women Voters Education
Fund (Tax Deductible)
_____ LWV of Greater Las Cruces
(Not tax deductible)

Mail checks to LWV of Greater Las Cruces,
P.O. Box 8322, Las Cruces, NM 88006

The League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces is a nonpartisan organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.