

the VOTER

MARCH 2020
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Co-Presidents' Messages

Hello LWVSNM Members,

Please join me in expressing appreciation to Eileen VanWie for all she has done and continues to do to bring the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment to the attention of our community. The recent High Tea and Proclamations by the City of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County Commission, the work with the City, the National Votes for Women Trail, and the Pomeroy Foundation to identify the roles of Pioneer Women's Park and Laura Frenger, and especially the organization of the local Suffrage Alliance all reflect Eileen's commitment.



Kathy Brook

Congratulations are also due to Meredith Machen who took the lead in organizing the festivities in connection with League Day in Santa Fe (*see photos on page 4*).

With respect to the celebration I recommend the book, *Shall Not Be Denied*, which is an accompaniment to an exhibition at the Library of Congress. A copy had been passed around at an LWVNM board meeting some months ago and it is a quick and highly informative read (only about 100 pages with photos of various artifacts to accompany the text).

In light of the upcoming elections, we were contacted by two students from Centennial High School about being interviewed for their media program. I was able to meet with them to discuss how to register, why one should register, and other ways to participate in public affairs besides registering and voting. In addition, Eileen and I will soon be meeting with Pi Sigma Alpha, a political science honor society at NMSU.

Other activities are reported elsewhere in this Voter.

—Kathy Brook, Co-President

Greetings LWVSNM Members,

February was filled with rewarding events that celebrated the 100th anniversary of the League of Women Voters and of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution giving women the right to vote. I wish all of you could have been in Santa Fe on February 6th for the excitement of being with many women dressed in white and legislators voting unanimously to proclaim February 6th as LWV Day and Suffrage Day in New Mexico. The Governor delivered the Proclamations at a program in the Rotunda.

At the Rio Chama Restaurant the evening before, we heard an address by Virginia Kase, the chief executive officer of the League of Women Voters of the United States. Her personal stories were inspiring. One story stands out, when Kase



Eileen VanWie

described how the LWV US decided to oppose the nomination of Brett Kavanaugh for Supreme Court Justice in September 2018. Their lawyers confirmed that it was legal for the League to oppose the appointment because Kavanaugh was not campaigning for an elected position. Board members then discussed why they would do it and how they could do it. They decided it was the right thing to do as Kavanaugh had not demonstrated a commitment to protect voters, that the late release of the nominees' full record lacked transparency, and his record showed a consistent refusal to uphold campaign finance restrictions.

The story continued when Virginia Kase described how a friend called to ask her to join a protest of Judge Kavanaugh at the Capitol in early

—continued p. 2

Co-Presidents' Messages (cont.)

October and it would probably mean getting LWV arrested. She replied, "I'll call you back." She called US President Chris Carson and asked if the League would support her in this civil disobedience. Chris replied, "I'll call you back." The Board talked and decided to support Virginia participating in the protest. She said she didn't get "the message" that the protestors were all going to wear black, so she showed up in a bright purple tee shirt with the letters "League of Women Voters" printed on it. This brought attention to her actions from the press.

Virginia spoke about how the LWV was founded by women who fought for suffrage and "disrupted the *status quo*, facing arrest and punishment to advance the cause." She wanted to take the fear out of activism. Kase made it sound like it was "no big deal to get arrested, you just line up, pay the \$50, and leave." What she didn't count on was that Breitbart would pick up the story and she received many threats. But Virginia Kase is right — the LWV needs to stand up for our mission of empowering voters, strengthening democracy, and "do the right thing."

The Valentine High Tea party was fun. About 90 valentines were sent out thanking local, state, and U.S. elected officials that represent us. A special recognition was given to two of our members (see page 6).

Rosemarie Sanchez gave suggestions for getting people to register to vote and then out to vote. A key idea was to give relevant reasons why a person should vote. For example, in talking with university students, describe how the legislature provides funds for student centers.

The Nominating Committee — Chair Sharon Thomas, Judy La Pointe, and Kim Sorensen — is seeking candidates for Vice President, Secretary, and Voter Services. 2020 is a good year to become more active in the League with lots of opportunities to help "get out the vote" on critical elections. The League of Women Voters is highly respected for the services and education we provide. The work is rewarding. Feel free to volunteer to be a candidate for one of these Board positions or other roles.

The League Board election will happen at the **Annual Meeting on Saturday, April 18 at 9am at Good Sam**. With the start of a new League year in May, we would like to experiment with having our general meetings held at lunchtime on Saturdays. Hopefully this would be a better time for employed people, as well as students, to join us. Dates and times will soon be sent to the membership.

—With warm regards,
Eileen VanWie

Sheriff to Meet with League

DAC Sheriff Kim Stewart is the guest speaker at the next General Meeting at 5 pm, Mon., March 9 at Good Sam. Be sure to **RSVP** to Cindy Murrell (cmurrell@nmsu.edu) if you plan to eat dinner.

One of the topics Sheriff Stewart will address is a pilot project called Amigos de DASO Senior Program. She has also been hard at work developing greater community involvement and increasing the number of officers. She was elected to her position in Nov. 2018 based on a distinguished career in law enforcement and investigations.



UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 2020

March 4 – Coffee & Action Club, 9:30-11:00 am, Kiva Room, Good Samaritan

March 5 – Board Meeting, 11:30 am, Branigan Library Board Room

♦ **March 9 – General Dinner Meeting**, 5 pm, Good Sam Social Center; Speaker Sheriff Kim Stewart; **RSVP** to cmurrell@nmsu.edu if you plan to eat.

March 10 – Immigration Committee, 9-10:30 am, NMSU Barnes & Noble, upstairs

March 19 – Youth Engagement Committee, 4pm, LCPS Teaching & Learning Center, Loretto Towne Centre

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO BOARD:

Kathy Brook & Eileen VanWie – Co-Presidents

Cindy Murrell – Vice President, Events & Speakers

Cindy Murrell & Mary Ellen Kebbel - Interim Secretary

Erika Graf-Webster – Youth Engagement Director

Bob Burn – Treasurer

Kim Sorensen – Member-At-Large

Vicki Simons & Dale Yeo – Voter Services Directors

Maryellen Kebbel and Laura Harper – Membership Directors

Jo Galván Nash – Public Relations Director

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575.524.VOTE (8683)

www.lwvsnm.org

Suffrage Celebration Draws Community Support

Costumes, music, girl scouts and plenty of sign-carrying enthusiasts created a celebratory atmosphere on Feb. 22 when women, men and children joined in the 2020 Suffrage Celebration at the Las Cruces Civic Plaza. The LWVSNM and other partners of the Southern NM Suffrage Alliance put forth a great effort to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment. Several speeches were made, and a proclamation was presented to League co-president Eileen VanWie by County Clerk (and League member) Amanda López Askin. The two-hour event culminated with a “suffrage” walk around the plaza.



If Every Woman Voted ...



Kudos to the 2020 Suffrage Alliance

Many thanks go out to the 2020 Suffrage Alliance for the multitude of events that have taken place recently. From proclamations, to suffrage walks, to writing to legislators, and receptions at the Capitol, there have been many individuals who helped bring these and other activities to life. The Alliance members have put their hearts into the slogan ... "If Every Woman Voted..." Thanks also to the Progress Club for the banner.



Photo Courtesy of Michael Allen

Members of Alliance are (l to r): Eon Williams (supporter), Rebecca Courtney (Progress Club), Deanise Marta (AAUW), Debra Bailey (Progress Club), Dr. Bobbie Green (NAACP), Eileen VanWie (LWVSNM), Jessica Kurtz (PFLAG), Jamie Patterson with her son (LCPS Civics Project), Laura Bemis (AAUW), Sadie Valverde (LWVSNM), Josie Miller (LCPS Civics Project), and Verlan Schwehn (Soroptimist International).

League Suffrage Day and Anniversary at the Roundhouse

It was a treat when the Chief Executive Officer of the League of Women Voters of the U.S., Virginia Kase, visited with League members and Legislators in Santa Fe, Feb. 5-6, 2020. She was there to help New Mexicans celebrate the League's 100th Birthday and for the Suffrage Centennial. Several Las Cruces League members were in attendance at the event.

The state Capitol's West Hall was filled with women in white, purple, and yellow suffrage costumes and multiple displays depicting the history of the suffrage events and the League's work through the decades. Legislative memorials on the suffrage centennial and the League's accomplishments were read in both Senate and House chambers. The sponsors include League members Representative Joanne Ferrary of Las Cruces, Senator Nancy Rodriguez, Senator Liz Stefanics, and Representative Gail Chasey. Other legislators also spoke about the long struggle for the right to vote and its importance.

In the Rotunda, Kase delivered the keynote address, and Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham delivered proclamations. New Mexico ratified the 19th Amendment, the women's right to vote, in February 1920.

—Thanks to Meredith Machen and LWVNM for this content



Virginia Kase, CEO of the LWVUS, speaks to a crowd at a Santa Fe reception on Feb. 5.



League members Bob and Cathy Burn man the Las Cruces display table at the state capitol.



Co-Presidents Eileen VanWie (left) and Kathy Brook represented LWVSNM throughout the events.

Photos Courtesy of Bob Burn

Spent Nuclear Conference Call Summary

Participants in the Feb. 1 conference call included Susybelle Gosslee (Dallas) and Tonya Kleuskens and two others (Amarillo) as well as various NM members. I did not get the names of all New Mexico participants, but the group included Karen Douglas, Hannah Burling, Karen Wentworth, Barbara Calef, and Kathy Economy.

In the fall, LWVNM (under the leadership of Karen Douglas) submitted an advocacy statement concerning Spent Nuclear Fuel to LWVUS. In their response, LWVUS noted the opposition of Navajo leaders and of Representative Deb Haaland to the transport of spent nuclear fuel through the reservation. In addition, they asked for strengthening of the statement concerning abandonment of nuclear waste facilities to include greater detail on post closure maintenance and financial guarantees.

LWVUS also called for inter-League cooperation given that the site is near the border with Texas. In response to this recommendation, Karen Douglas arranged the conference call. Participants included four representatives of the Texas League -- Susybelle Gosslee (Dallas), and Tonya Kleuskens (Amarillo) and two others—as well as a number of NM League members.

Some of the concerns raised by the Texas representatives were the lack of transparency and accountability on nuclear topics in Texas, including large amounts spent in lobbying the Texas legislature in the early 2000s. There was also a concern that the public is not well-informed on transportation issues and the means for addressing accidents and that there is still no long-term plan for dealing with spent nuclear fuel.

Following are the decisions and actions provided by Karen Douglas as follow-up to the conference call:

1. TX LWV supports NM LWV in efforts to hold SNF Storage Caucus with other states during the June 2020 LWVUS Convention in Washington, DC;
2. TX LWV supports NM preparing and submitting SNF Storage Safety Advocacy Statement to LWVUS and encourages LWVNM to move forward with Advocacy as required;
3. Hannah Burling/LWVNM President will contact Liz Bander/LWVUS Liaison for NM to explore SNF Storage Caucus in June;
4. Bobbi Merryman/ANS Public Outreach will either identify a suitable ANS representative in Washington, DC or attend, if LWVNM funding permits.

—Kathy Brook, Co-President

Development Committee Update

The initial meeting was held on Nov. 19, 2019 at Santorini's Restaurant. Present: Eileen VanWie, Kathy Brook, Marjorie Burr, Mary White.

At this meeting there was brainstorming about opportunities for fundraising:

- Make members of a certain age aware of the opportunities for contributing from their IRA and/or 403B accounts;
- Focus on the new Who's Who in fundraising since this is a document that serves a wide range of people;
- In general, highlight the opportunity for contributing on our website and in Voter Guides as well as Who's Who;
- Send out a fundraising letter in March, focusing on our good government credentials and celebration of the 19th Amendment anniversary;
- Next steps:
 - Develop a mailing list
 - Look at what other Leagues are doing (Kathy will see what she can find on the web.)
 - Begin to explore opportunities for grants from foundations that are interested in our issues.

—Kathy Brook

Check out Vote411

If you haven't yet, check out the information you can get on the 411 website: www.vote411.org/. With the Presidential election only eight months away, the website is a good source of information.

Our League is supporting this effort launched in 2006 as a one-stop-shop for election information and a way to register to vote. It was created through the national League's Education Fund.

[Go to VOTE411.org to see what's on your ballot, check your registration, find your polling place, and so much more.](http://www.vote411.org/)

Valentines High Tea

League members donned costumes, dined, drank tea and wrote cards to lawmakers at the Bite of Belgium during a Valentine High Tea gathering on Feb. 8 in celebration of the 100th birthday of the national League (which was on Feb. 14). One of the highlights at the tea was a special recognition to two local members who have provided service to the League for over 50 years! Marjorie Burr and Sallie Hunt were awarded certificates from the LWV US in recognition of this milestone.



LWVSNM co-president Eileen VanWie (right) awards member Marjorie Burr with a certificate of recognition from the US League. Both Marjorie and Sallie have achieved a lifetime membership for providing service for more than 50 years.

Attendees at the High Tea also replicated a 100-year-old tradition of writing to Congressmen, Senators, and other legislators thanking them for their service and for supporting the League. About 90 valentines were sent out with personalized messages

Dale Yeo (right) was one of many who wore period clothing to the tea.



VOLUNTEER HELP NEEDED!



Historian

Do you enjoy history and knowing how people and organizations developed? If so, you might be the person to serve as the archivist for LWVSNM. With your help, future League members will have a better understanding on a variety of subjects: how LWVGLC evolved into LWVSNM; celebrations of the first 50 years; why our members thought it important to take action on immigration and affordable housing. You will not be starting from scratch. The NMSU library already has League archival materials. The historian will provide additional LWVSNM documents to the Special Collections at the NMSU library. Please contact kathybrook@comcast.net if you are interested.

Social Media Coordinator

Do you have expertise in using Facebook, Instagram, and/or Twitter? If so, the League needs your help in getting the League's message to users of social media. This work can be matched to your schedule and doesn't require attendance at meetings. And, there are others who can assist in posting messages and photos. Please contact Kathy Brook at kathybrook@comcast.net if interested.

A Summary of the Annual Program Planning Meeting

The annual meeting was held on Feb. 15, 2020 at Good Samaritan. Participants during the three-hour discussion were Eileen VanWie, Kathy Brook, Dale Yeo, Bonnie Votaw, Marjorie Burr, Erik Graf-Webster, Christine Newton, Lou Huyge, Chris Little, Elisa Sanchez, Liz Taylor, Bob Burn, Jo Galván Nash, and Judy LaPointe.

Following introductions, Eileen explained that the purpose of the meeting was to review and make recommendations on program and identify priorities for the coming year. The agenda included topics at the local, state, and national levels to which Spent Nuclear Fuel (SNF) was added. With the addition of SNF it was noted that we need to be aware of “down-winders” and that we have at least one member who is included in that group.

Direct election of the president was also suggested as a topic.

Electoral Systems Concurrence

At the national level we have been asked to make a decision on a concurrence (with some other state and local Leagues) on Electoral Systems. The position in brief is: Support electoral systems at each level of government that encourage participation, are verifiable and auditable and enhance representation for all voters. LWVUS does not currently have a position on this topic.

The LWVNM board recently concurred with this position except for one bullet point in the full position –the provision to support electoral methods that promote sincere voting over strategic voting. The state board discussion along with the LWVSNM discussion raised questions about what this statement meant. The SNM planning group concurred with the state board in agreeing to the statement except that point. Perhaps this will receive clarification before or during the national convention.

While reviewing the concurrence we also looked at the state position on this topic and had questions about the meaning of support for a centralized voter registration and election management system. Kathy Brook will try to get some clarification at state Council if not sooner.

LWVNM has a position in support of an open primary and that LWVSNM participated in the consensus process to reach that position.

Climate Emergency

LWV Massachusetts has asked for support of its proposal to make climate emergency a priority for national, state and local Leagues. The planning group supports bringing this topic to the forefront.

Making Democracy Work

There was some concern expressed that the emphasis on the Campaign to make Democracy Work overwhelms other worthy endeavors.

Census Complete Count

Jo Nash is following up on the local complete count committee and the governor has signed a bill to provide funding in support of this endeavor. It was agreed that this should be a priority for our local League.

Early Childhood Education

We don't know the status of the proposal for creating a new permanent fund to support early childhood education, but support was expressed for adding language to the LWVSNM education position concerning respect for the culture and language of the people of New Mexico, including multicultural and multilingual curricula. (At this stage, the legislature is only talking about funding.) Eileen Van Wie noted that the Education Committee is looking at some of these issues and Erika Graf-Webster indicated that LWVNM might be agreeable to adding such language if we modify the SNM position to include these issues.

Solar Tax Credit

This has been a priority for LWVNM in the legislative session and we do not know its status.

Reproductive Rights

LWVNM has concurred with the Florida position and the planning group approved as well. The discussion was focused on whether “access” to services included the ability to make use of those services.

Tax Reform and Funding/State Bank

Interest was expressed in a state study of a state bank.

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Judicial Election Study

This is an ongoing study at the state level in which Jo is participating. The study committee will be developing a set of questions to talk with judges in the lower courts, with Jo covering four counties.

Immigration

We have an ongoing local immigration committee which has developed an advocacy statement that has been approved by the state board. They want this statement brought to the LWV US convention. The group is working on creation of a kiosk focused on humane treatment of immigrants to be placed in the mall one weekend in March. They are also working on articles for the LC Bulletin and KRWG programming.

Diversity

Eileen reminded the group of Meredith Machen's donation of \$1,000 to support diversity and Erika noted that Meredith would especially like to have funds used to support a civic engagement project. In the discussion a community forum on multicultural education was suggested as a possibility along with alternative locations, such as Klein Park. Lynn Middle Community School was the location of a recent education forum and two other community schools have been added. Working with other groups focused on the Yazzie-Martinez decision, collaborating with NAACP, the Hispanic Chamber and the Green Chamber were other suggestions.

Voter Suppression

This topic includes activities that discourage and/or misinform voters. We could have a media literacy forum and engage in poll watching.

Youth Engagement

Erika provided a written report and a flyer summarizing the activities of the Committee and sought wider participation in the committee. Plans for the coming year include attracting more student members, collaborating with NMSU students to form a focus group on 2020 election issues and voting, collaborating with LCPS and the county clerk on another "Celebrating Democracy in Doña Ana County" event with participation across all local high schools including those in Hatch and Gadsden, working with LCPS to add more civics education in the early grades, and promotion of another "Get to Know Your Government" event.

—continued

We have a commitment to sponsoring a community forum using one of the Harvard case studies from the program attended by high school teacher Julie Wojtko last summer. The recommendation of those attending was to use "James Madison, the 'Federal Negative,' and the Making of the Constitution (1787)."

Affordable Housing

Chris Little reported that the committee has been very active with Beth Bardwell serving as the chair. The committee has been interviewing various agencies concerned with affordable housing. The Housing Authority is always looking for people to serve on their board, an activity that Chris described as very meaningful.

Voter Service

Dale Yeo reported on the state's plans to use VOTE 411 for both the primary and the general elections. Questions will be needed for the various races along with data entry. Chris recommended putting together a budget for printed copies soon so that we will know what kind of fundraising is required.

Other Items:

A study of county government was suggested but it was noted that we probably do not have the resources to do this in the near term.

Chris noted that LWV SNM delegates to the U.S. Convention go "informed by local planning, but not instructed" on how to vote. Another suggestion was that we think of how our priorities relate to one another. For example, we need to think about how our program priorities might interest a more diverse membership. The group suggested having small unit meetings on a regular basis.

Priorities for LWVSNM

- Census Complete Count
- Voter Guide/VOTE411
- Case study community meeting (Youth Engagement)
- Immigration
- Education
- Affordable Housing
- Forum on voter suppression/misinformation/media literacy

Meeting adjourned about 2:00 p.m.

—Kathy Brook

Website Renovation to Enhance Communication

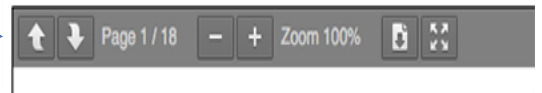
Our new website at <https://www.lwvsnm.com> has and will contain much valuable information that LWVSNM members and the general public will want to access. It is a work in progress, and we are indeed making progress.

The Voter is available from the upper task bar on the main page and from a box on the right side. Click on "Newsletter." Once you are reading a Voter, you can download it by going to the small task bar at the top of the Voter page and finding and clicking the little icon that looks like a piece of paper with a downward pointing arrow. Then you can download The Voter into your computer. (You will need to repeat the process.) This task bar also lets you turn the pages with the arrows and perform other functions.

The **Who's Who** is available from the menu on the right side and easy to download. Also look on the small task bar for arrows to turn the pages.

On the top task bar on the main page is the **Members** tab. The membership committee and volunteers have entered contact information for each of the members. In order to ensure privacy, a password will be required for entry into the Membership Directory. You will have received or will soon receive information from the Membership Directors about accessing member contact information.

Other information, such as a listing of Board members and a description of what their positions entail, is accessible now without the use of a password. Eventually all of the information that is currently in the Membership Directory will live in this section of our website.



Meanwhile, remember the old saying, "Patience is a virtue." (It is not only a virtue but sometimes a necessity.)

—Dale Yeo, Voter Services Director



The 100-Year Minute

We hope you've been enjoying these wonderful bits of history each month. The 100-Year Minute features, written by State League Member Susan Haase, give historical perspectives of the 19th Amendment.



U.S. citizens can vote, yes? Not always. We're celebrating the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment this year because it gave women the right to vote.

But, the privilege to vote in 1920 was not extended to Native Americans, male or female. They were not given citizenship until 1924, and even then, they had to fight for the vote on a state-by-state basis. The last states to grant them the right were Utah and New Mexico in 1962.

In several other states, the right to vote was a sham anyway because it was made difficult or impossible due to poll taxes, literacy tests and intimidation.



OBSERVER REPORTS

LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Regular Meeting

Feb. 3, 2020

Observer: Kathy Brook

The Mayor and all councilors were present

Cannabis

A major item on the agenda was a resolution in support of legislation at the state level to legalize recreational use of cannabis. The proposed act included recall/dismissal of sentences and expungement of records for offenses that will no longer be offenses after legalization. There was also provision for an excise tax of 9% to be earmarked for a variety of purposes. Councilors discussed a number of issues ranging from the impact of legalization on homelessness and addiction to the need for education of law enforcement. Several members of the public spoke, all in support of legalization. One had used meth from the ages of 15 to 25 and has used cannabis to stay off meth for the past 10 years; another was a military veteran who has used opioids and morphine and described cannabis as saving her life. The Resolution was approved with one vote in opposition.

Economic Development

A second item of interest was a request for approval of \$75,000 in LEDA (Local Economic Development Act) funds for Big Tuna, a firm which provides pipes for the oil and gas industry. These funds are provided on a reimbursement basis to acquire land, buildings, equipment, etc. and the funding requires that the business remain at least to 2023 (with 30 employees at an average of just over \$32,000 per job). The company is investing \$6.8 million. While focused on the oil and gas industry, its product could be used in other sectors (water, sewer). Eric Montgomery of Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance spoke in favor of the funding, noting that the parcel that will be occupied has been vacant for three years. Questions from councilors focused on the state and local processes for identifying appropriate entities to work with. The state's vetting involves review of financial information which is confidential and not available to city councilors. The item was approved unanimously.

LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Regular Meeting

Feb. 18, 2020

Observer: Kathy Brook

The Mayor and all councilors were present

Proposed quarterly budget adjustments were presented and approved. Included was about \$900,000 in additional revenue from the Internet sales tax, this being the first year for which this revenue has been received.

Zoning

The topic of most interest was the rezoning of a plot of land at Boutz and Stern. The land was zoned agricultural, involving a zoning category that is no longer in use. Denial of the zoning change would have required that new information or facts not previously considered by the Planning and Zoning Commission be identified.

The proposed new zoning involved 64 single family houses and 60 apartments in two story structures. Anticipated rental charges for the apartments were reported as \$750-900 and housing prices at \$185,000-205,000. A decision on this item had previously been postponed based on questions about traffic.

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OBSERVER REPORTS

City Council cont.

An amended version of the proposal was approved. This involved lower density housing along Crossley (adjacent to existing housing) with somewhat higher density elsewhere for houses and one-story rather than two-story multi-family units. This plan was approved unanimously.

League Announcement

Thanks to Councilor Yvonne Flores for calling to the attention of the Council the Suffrage Celebration on February 22 on the plaza in Las Cruces and the work of Erika Graf-Webster in organizing the “Get to Know Your Local Government” event scheduled on February 21 at City Hall for high school students.

Las Cruces Board of Education (BOE) • Regular Meeting

February 18, 2020, LCPS Administration Building

Observer: Jo Galván Nash

All Board members were in attendance as was Superintendent Dr. Karen Trujillo

Funds Flow to LCPS

The Superintendent proudly announced that the LCPS Instruction team was awarded \$5.8 million from the NM Public Education Department to improve literacy skills. The funds will hire reading specialists to benefit kids Kindergarten-8th grade. The district also will conduct more diagnostics and provide critical interventions for reading. Dr. Karen Trujillo also said a capital outlay request of \$270,000 also was awarded to replace furniture in autism classrooms. And, \$100,000 has been awarded to expand schools’ media program opportunities.

Volunteer for NEA Reading Event

Teachers and other members of NEA-Las Cruces will host their annual Read-Across-America event on March 14, 12:00-2:30 pm. Adults will read with kids at the Frank Papen Community Center in Mesilla Park. **Volunteers are welcomed.** There will be free food, prizes and books!

Low Interest Rates Impact School Bonds

The Board heard about a potential refunding plan from their financial advisor Erik Harrigan of RBC Capital Markets. He reported that typically, the district sells their school general obligations bonds in the fall after the assessed valuation is done and the tax rate is set. However, the district’s tax-exempt interest rates have hit an all-time low recently and that impacts the LCPS tax debt. Currently, there are 2011 and 2012 bonds in the aggregate amount of \$34 million that can be refunded (akin to refinancing one’s home mortgage to lower the payments). He said there could be a total of \$2.6 million in savings if the last two bonds are refunded, which generates interest savings. If the School Board agrees, RBC would come to the next School Board meeting with a resolution to refund. When asked if there’s a way to know what will happen with the interest rate in the near future, Harrigan said it’s uncertain because of what’s happening to the global market due to the coronavirus.

In addition, the district still has outstanding tax-exempt bonds to sell later this year. The school bonds have been approved by local voters for a wide variety of capital outlay needs throughout the school district, ranging from new classrooms, to roof repairs, to other major renovations.

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OBSERVER REPORTS

BOE (cont.)

Tashiro Road Improvements

The LCPS Chief Financial Officer presented a proposition to transfer LCPS property to the City of Las Cruces in order to expand and improve Tashiro Road. The street is south of Mayfield High School and leads to the Field of Dreams Activities Complex. The City will make \$70,000 in improvements including expanding the width to 80 feet for three driving lanes and adding two bike lanes, sidewalks, curb/gutters, and street lighting. The City needs the LCPS property, valued at approximately \$20,000, to complete the improvements. The land would be transferred in exchange for the improvements along the busy street.

South Central Solid Waste Authority Board Meeting • Regular (Quarterly) Meeting

February 20, 2020

9:00 a.m. @ Transfer Station Board Room

Observer: Johnnie R. Aldrich

Quorum Present

Expansion caused by population growth was a constant theme in this meeting of the Authority Board, a joint city/county governing entity. In his report to the Board, Director Patrick Peck mentioned that when the Authority began operations 15 years ago, a total of 19 employees were on the payroll. Today, the administrative staff alone numbers 20. Total waste collection now averages 15,000 tons per month; last year's average was 12,000 tons.

Solid waste collection has increased so drastically that the constantly enlarged Corralitos Landfill has recently failed EPA regulations regarding the amount of methane emitted from that site. A remedy for the excessive emissions is the construction of a landfill gas collection system, a technique used by many waste disposal departments throughout the U.S. Such a system, a series of gas "wells" to omit methane, must be designed and built within the next 30 months. This will be a major addition to the budget.

Meanwhile, waste collection continues, and services will expand to include White Sands Missile range on April 1, 2020. Furthermore, Director Peck and his staff have begun a dialog with the NM State Land Office for a new facility near Holman Road and Porter Road since "most of the future growth of Las Cruces will be" on this east side of the city.

One of the several resolutions discussed and passed today concerned the need to renegotiate attempts to acquire additional property for Transfer Station headquarters and large, safe truck parking. The high hopes reported in September for acquisition of ideal space at 2820 Las Vegas Court were squashed when Las Cruces Public Schools brought suit against the property's owner and negotiations for purchase had to be curtailed.

Director Peck and his staff spent much of the December holiday period investigating other potential sites for the badly needed equipment parking space and ready-to-move-in offices available at the nearby Vegas property. Nothing proved suitable. Thus, the new resolution authorizes Director Peck to renegotiate temporary leasing possibilities with the owner. Peck stated that he might have to ask for a special meeting in March to present the results of the negotiations. Stay tuned!

Treasurer's Report

Reported by Bob Burn, Treasurer

FEBRUARY 2020

Date	Description	Deposit/Credit	Payment/Debit	Balance
	Citizen's Bank Balance			\$ 3,924.07
	Outstanding Payments/Debts Previous Months			
	LWVUS 83 Full Members (x\$32)+17 Household(x\$16)			
1-Feb	Membership Via PayPal	\$ 62.81		\$ 62.81
1-Feb	Ck 1021 ABC Printing Who's Who		\$ 210.00	\$ (210.00)
1-Feb	Ck 1022 USPS Stamps for High Tea		\$ 55.00	\$ (55.00)
1-Feb	High Tea	\$ 180.00		\$ 180.00
1-Feb	Interest	\$ 0.01		
1-Feb	Ck 1023 ABC Printing Democracy Brochure		\$ 230.71	\$ (230.71)
1-Feb	Ck 1024 ABC Printing Vote Business Cards		\$ 86.65	\$ (86.65)
1-Feb	Ck 1025 ABC Printing Valentine/Envelopes		\$ 61.74	\$ (61.74)
3-Feb	Membership Via PayPal	\$ 62.81		\$ 62.81
3-Feb	Donation Via PayPal	\$ 9.41		\$ 9.41
3-Feb	Membership Via PayPal	\$ 62.81		
4-Feb	Membership	\$ 65.00		\$ 65.00
4-Feb	High Tea	\$ 330.00		\$ 330.00
4-Feb	Ck 1026 USPS P.O. Box Annual Fee		\$ 118.00	\$ (118.00)
10-Feb	High Tea	\$ 60.00		\$ 60.00
10-Feb	High Tea	\$ 30.00		\$ 30.00
11-Feb	Ck 1029 Consumer Cellular		\$ 19.06	\$ (19.06)
12-Feb	LWVUS Education Fund	\$ 2,137.47		\$ 2,137.47
12-Feb	Ck 1027 KW Sound		\$ 126.22	\$ (126.22)
12-Feb	Ck 1028 Bite of Belgium High Tea		\$ 744.21	\$ (744.21)
12-Feb	Ck 1030 Dale Yeo for STORMWEB		\$ 101.62	\$ (101.62)
12-Feb	Membership	\$ 65.00		\$ 65.00
14-Feb	Membership Via Paypal	\$ 62.81		\$ 62.81
14-Feb	High Tea	\$ 30.00		\$ 30.00
15-Feb	Ck 1032 Good Samaritan Program Planning		\$ 132.00	\$ (132.00)
17-Feb	Good Samaritan Program Planning Lunch	\$ 132.00		\$ 132.00
17-Feb	Contribution	\$ 20.00		\$ 20.00
21-Feb	Membership	\$ 32.50		\$ 32.50
21-Feb	Contribution	\$ 32.50		\$ 32.50

\$ -

Citizens's Bank Balance (Actual)	\$ 3,312.32	\$ 1,885.21	\$ 5,351.18
Diversity Fund	\$ 1,000.00		
Immigration Study Donation Fund	\$ 725.00		
Payments/Checks Not Cleared			\$ 5,351.18
Future Payments/Debits Outstanding		\$ -	
Account Balance After All Payments			\$ 3,626.18

Candidate Books for LWVSNM Book Club – March 2020

Status	Book
Books Selected for Future Meetings	
March 26 At Vicki Simons'	Blowout: Corrupted Democracy, Rogue State Russia, and the Richest, Most Destructive Industry on Earth by Rachel Maddow Big Oil and Gas versus democracy - winner take all. With her trademark black humor, Maddow takes us on a switchback journey around the globe, revealing the greed and incompetence of Big Oil and Gas along the way, and drawing a surprising conclusion about how and why the Russian government hacked the 2016 US election. She deftly shows how Russia's rich reserves of crude have, paradoxically, stunted its growth, forcing Putin to maintain his power by spreading Russia's rot into its rivals, its neighbors, the West's most important alliances, and the United States.
April 23	The Education of an Idealist: A Memoir by Samantha Power Pulitzer Prize winner Samantha Power, has been heralded by President Barack Obama as one of America's "foremost thinkers on foreign policy." In her memoir, Power offers an urgent response to the question "What can one person do?". Humorous and deeply honest, <i>The Education of an Idealist</i> lays bare the searing battles and defining moments of her life and shows how she juggled the demands of a 24/7 national security job with the challenge of raising two young children. Along the way, she illuminates the intricacies of politics and geopolitics.
Candidate Books for Future Selection	
Date in left column is the date on which the book was added to this list	
9-14-19	Deep Medicine: How Artificial Intelligence Can Make Healthcare Human Again By Eric Topol One of America's top doctors reveals how AI will empower physicians and revolutionize patient care. Medicine has become inhuman, to disastrous effect. The doctor-patient relationship--the heart of medicine--is broken: doctors are too distracted and overwhelmed to truly connect with their patients, and medical errors and misdiagnoses abound. In <i>Deep Medicine</i> , leading physician Eric Topol reveals how artificial intelligence can help.
9-14-19	She Said: Breaking the Sexual Harassment Story That Helped Ignite a Movement by Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey From the Pulitzer Prize-winning reporters who broke the news of Harvey Weinstein's sexual harassment and abuse for the <i>New York Times</i> , Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey, the thrilling untold story of their investigation and its consequences for the #MeToo movement. During months of confidential interviews with top actresses, former Weinstein employees, and other sources, many disturbing and long-buried allegations were unearthed, and a web of onerous secret payouts and nondisclosure agreements was revealed.
9-26-19	Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption by Bryan Stevenson Just Mercy is not brand new (2014) but is a clarion call to fix our still broken system of justice. It is a NY Times best seller and an inspiration to thousands of people. The book has won awards and accolades and its reviews are a rarity in that thousands have given it five stars. Although academic discussion is there, the book is strongest when telling the tragic stories of prisoners suffering systemic abuse. While the book is a bit hard to read, there are many (relatively) happy endings.
10-27-19	The Second Founding: How the Civil War and Reconstruction Remade the Constitution by Eric Foner From the Pulitzer Prize-winning scholar, a timely history of the constitutional changes that built equality into the nation's foundation and how those guarantees have been shaken over time. The Declaration of Independence announced equality as an American ideal, but it took the Civil War and the subsequent adoption of three constitutional amendments to establish that ideal as American law. The Reconstruction amendments abolished slavery, guaranteed all persons due process and equal protection of the law, and equipped black men with the right to vote.
10-27-19	Waste (Resources) by Kate O'Neill Waste is one of the planet's last great resource frontiers. In this unique book, Kate O'Neill traces the emergence of the global political economy of wastes over the past two decades. She explains how the emergence of waste governance initiatives and mechanisms can help us deal with both the risks and the opportunities associated with the hundreds of millions – possibly billions – of tons of waste we generate each year.

Status	Book
10-27-19	Permanent Record (Paperback) by Edward Snowden Edward Snowden reveals for the first time the story of his life. He shocked the world when he broke with the American intelligence establishment and revealed that the United States government was secretly pursuing the means to collect every single phone call, text message, and email. Six years later, Snowden reveals for the very first time how he helped to build this system and why he was moved to expose it.
11-15-19	Crime in Progress: Inside the Steele Dossier and the Fusion GPS Investigation of Donald Trump By Glenn Simpson and Peter Fritsch Before Ukraine, before impeachment: This is the never-before-told inside story of the high-stakes, four-year-long investigation into Donald Trump's Russia ties—culminating in the Steele dossier, and sparking the Mueller report—from the founders of political opposition research company Fusion GPS focusing on Trump's entanglements with Russia.
11-10-19	Don't Be Evil: How Big Tech Betrayed Its Founding Principles -- and All of Us by Rana Foroohar A penetrating indictment of how today's largest tech companies are hijacking our data, our livelihoods, our social fabric, and our minds. Unfortunately, it's been a while since Google, or the majority of the Big Tech companies, lived up to the founding philosophy of "Don't Be Evil". The utopia they sought to create is looking more dystopian than ever: from digital surveillance and the loss of privacy to the spreading of misinformation and hate speech to algorithms targeting the weak and vulnerable to products that have been engineered to manipulate our desires.
11-30-19	A Warning by Anonymous An unprecedented behind-the-scenes portrait of the Trump presidency from the anonymous senior official whose first words of warning about the president rocked the nation's capital.
11-30-19	Tough Love: My Story of the Things Worth Fighting For by Susan Rice Recalling pivotal moments from her dynamic career on the front lines of American diplomacy and foreign policy, Susan E. Rice—National Security Advisor to President Barack Obama and US Ambassador to the United Nations—reveals her surprising story with unflinching candor. Mother, wife, scholar, diplomat, and fierce champion of American interests and values, Susan Rice powerfully connects the personal and the professional.
12-30-19	Crossfire Hurricane: Inside Donald Trump's War on the FBI by Josh Campbell From an FBI insider, a riveting, fly-on-the-wall account of the historic investigation into the Trump campaign's ties to Russia and the president's unprecedented attacks on the bureau - and a passionate defense of the men and women who work every day to uphold democratic institutions and the rule of law.
1-5-20	Trump and His Generals: The Cost of Chaos by Peter Bergen From one of America's preeminent national security journalists, an explosive, news-breaking account of Donald Trump's collision with the American national security establishment, and with the world. From Iraq and Afghanistan to Syria and Iran, from Russia and China to North Korea and Islamist terrorism, Trump and His Generals is a brilliant reckoning with an American ship of state navigating a roiling sea of threats without a well-functioning rudder. Lucid and gripping, it brings urgently needed clarity to issues that affect the fate of us all.
1-29-20	Why We're Polarized by Ezra Klein America's political system isn't broken. The truth is scarier: it's working exactly as designed. In this book, journalist Ezra Klein reveals how that system is polarizing us—and how we are polarizing it—with disastrous results. Klein reveals the structural and psychological forces behind America's descent into division and dysfunction. Neither a polemic nor a lament, this book offers a clear framework for understanding everything from Trump's rise to the Democratic Party's leftward shift to the politicization of everyday culture.