

the VOTER

APRIL 2021
Volume 52, Issue 11



INSIDE

Upcoming Events	2	Observer Report	5-7
Pomeroy Marker	3	Treasurer Report	8
Draft Minutes	4	Book Club	9
LWV Convention	5		

Co-Presidents' Messages

News surrounding the close of the New Mexico legislative session is quite good in terms of League priorities. Particularly important to me as well as to the League is the passage of legislation to create a citizens' redistricting commission consisting of seven members with no more than three Republicans and three Democrats serving. This will be the first time that the process of drawing district boundaries for the US House of Representatives, the two houses of the legislature, and the Public Education Commission has been delegated to a group outside the legislature. While we did not get quite all of the features that LWV NM supported through Fair Districts NM, we did get approval for many important elements. We are disappointed that the legislature retains the right to amend the maps developed by the commission.



Kathy Brook

Redistricting has been an issue in New Mexico for many years, generating legal costs for the state when courts ruled against the maps drawn by the legislature.

If you are interested in more on this topic, see the Census Bureau website's interactive maps on [apportionment](#) of the House of Representatives, 1910-2010.

Other items supported by LWVNM and awaiting the Governor's signature include paid sick leave, end-of-life options, Native American polling place protection, public funding for judicial candidates, and broadband expansion.

Wishing all of you a wonderful spring with vaccines available to all.

—Kathy Brook, Co-President

Attend Annual Meeting April 10

An important gathering for all League members will be held on **Saturday, April 10 beginning at 2 pm**. The virtual 2021 Annual Business Meeting will wrap-up the organization's 2020/21 accomplishments and it will also set the stage for what's to come in the upcoming fiscal year (May 1, 2021-April 30, 2022).

All League members have hopefully received the e-packet of materials that will be discussed. Please take a few minutes to review it. In the packet you'll see draft positions to consider and the proposed Program for Study and Action. And, if you're able to attend, please have your Members Directory for reference which contains our positions and bylaws, among other information.

If you cannot attend, we would still like to hear your comments or questions; send to either [Kathy Brook](#) or [Eileen VanWie](#) before April 10.

It's important to remember that there is an opportunity for any member to provide input and ideas on how the organization can evolve or in which direction it should head in the next fiscal year.

A summary of the Annual Meeting agenda includes:

- Election of Officers/Board (please read their bios);
- 2021/22 Budget with a discussion of annual dues;
- Adoption of proposed changes to the bylaws and the nonpartisan policy;
- Program Planning Priorities;
- Immigration and Education positions; and
- New and Open Positions and Committees.

Dear LWVSNM Members,

March went by very quickly but addressing women's rights and history is an important theme every month. March 30 was *National I am in Control Day* to

-continued next page

Co-Presidents' Messages (cont.)

encourage people to take control of their lives. Another reason the day is commemorated is that in 1981 there was an assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan. Then Secretary of State Alexander Haig stated at a press briefing, "I am in control." Obviously, there are things in life we cannot control, but it's a good reminder to control the things we are able to control, like our attitudes.

I recently took time to "attend" virtual sessions of the United Nations, especially the Commission on the Status of Women (<http://webtv.un.org/>). There were 45 countries represented at the 65th session of the CSW (2021). The theme for this year was "Women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls." The written statement prepared supporting the theme recognized progress. Gender quotas in many countries have contributed to progress, but progress needs to be amplified to meet the goal of achieving the outcomes by 2030.

The Commission acknowledged the important contributions made by women's organizations to promote legislation and mechanisms to advance gender equality, eliminate laws that are discriminatory against women, and to increase women's inclusion in public life. It also recognized the importance of full engagement of men and boys as agents and beneficiaries of change and their valuable role as partners and allies in the elimination of violence, achievement of gender equity, and empowerment of women and girls.

The Commission suggested numerous actions that would support the goals of this year's theme, for example:

1. Undertake comprehensive reforms to eliminate laws, policies and regulations that discriminate against women.
2. Adopt electoral gender quota laws with 50% targets.
3. Reform legal frameworks to criminalize violence against women in political and public life both online and offline.
4. Strengthen an enabling environment for women's participation in public life and decision-making by addressing women's poverty, unpaid care burdens, unequal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, education and technology, and by fostering skills-development.



Eileen VanWie

With warm regards,
Eileen VanWie

Upcoming Events

APRIL 2021

April 4, Sun.: **Easter**

April 7, Wed.: **Affordable Housing Committee**, 3:30-5:00 pm, contact Beth Bardwell for information/Zoom link (betbardwell@gmail.com)

April 10, Sat.: **Annual Business Meeting**, 2pm, via Zoom; watch for your email from Eileen to attend. Bring your membership guide for reference at the meeting. If you don't get an email invitation from Eileen VanWie just prior to April 10, contact [Eileen](#). (The 10th is also National Siblings Day.)

April 10, Sat.: approximately 4:15 pm, **Board Meeting following Annual Meeting**

April 21, Wed., **Youth Engagement Committee Mtg**, 4p.m., contact [Erika Graf-Webster](#)

April 22, Thurs.: **Earth Day**: The Diné have a strong heritage of living in harmony with Mother Earth. Find a way to honor the earth, for example the White House plans to hold a global climate summit that Thursday.

April 24-25, Sat. & Sun.: **LWVNM state convention hosted by SNM**. Begins at 8:30 am with Eileen's pre-convention coffee. Bring yours and logon. See page 7 for more details.

April 29, Thursday, [People Powered Day of Action by LWVUS](#)

2020/21 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO BOARD:

Eileen VanWie & Kathy Brook – Co-Presidents

OPEN – Vice President

Johnnie R. Aldrich – Secretary

Sadie Valverde – Treasurer

Kim Sorensen – Immediate Past President

Maryellen Kebbel – Membership Director

Erika Graf-Webster – Youth Engagement Director

Dale Yeo – Voter Services Director

Jo Galván Nash – Public Relations Director

Kim Sorensen, Judith LaPointe and Johnnie

Aldrich – Nominating Committee

P.O. Box 15142 • Las Cruces, NM 88004

575.524.VOTE (8683)

www.lwvsnm.org

Pomeroy Marker Erected in Pioneer Park During Women’s History Month

With March being Women’s History month, it was appropriate to celebrate the actions of the Woman’s Improvement Association (WIA) of Las Cruces, which contributed to the community for over 100 years (1894-2000). On March 22, LWVSNM members participated in the unveiling of a “Votes for Women” marker placed in Pioneer Women’s Park.



Eileen VanWie and WIA member Rebecca Courtney stand by the new historical marker.

In February of 2019 members of the League of Women Voters of New Mexico (LWVNM) were approached by a representative of the William G. Pomeroy Foundation, a New York based foundation committed to supporting the preservation and recognition of community history. To celebrate the centennial of the 19th Amendment, the Foundation worked with the *National Votes for Women Trail* (<https://ncwhs.org/votes-for-women-trail/>) and state coordinators to encourage nominations from New Mexico for markers recognizing suffrage sites, leaders, and actions.

With some research by members of the League of Southern New Mexico, it became evident that in Southern New Mexico the WIA had included influential suffragists. Since WIA was a General Federation of Women’s Clubs (GFWC) affiliate, the GFWC Progress Club joined the project to apply for a marker. A marker provides evidence of the spirit and fortitude of determined early advocates for women’s rights in Las Cruces.

The application required the site to be on the *National Votes for Women Trail* and primary sources of documentation, which showed that WIA Secretary Laura Frenger sent a telegram to President Woodrow Wilson in December of 1917 with the message “Pass

women’s suffrage amendment.” Meeting minutes of January 1918 showed it cost 80 cents to send the telegram.

Throughout the existence of the WIA, many improvements for Las Cruces were made. The organization watered dusty streets, provided citizenship classes, well-baby and mental health clinics, and developed a junior women’s club. Members of the WIA purchased a hearse for community use and property for “Union Park” (now Pioneer Women’s Park) and the “pavilion,” and built the first community library.



Members of GFWC Progress Club joined LWVSNM members for the unveiling at Pioneer Women’s Park

Women’s rights and voting were also important parts of their agenda. Members were active in getting the right for women to vote in school elections into the 1912 New Mexico Constitution during the statehood process. The right was weak however because, if enough men objected at the local level, the “right” could be taken away. The marker at Pioneer Women’s Park will support the legacy of the Woman’s Improvement Association.

The City of Las Cruces is playing an important role in celebrating the history of the Woman’s Improvement Association by placing the marker in Pioneer Women’s Park. [Click here for more information about the WIA.](#) Brochures about the WIA are available at various places around the City. Thanks go out to all who have supported recognition and celebration of local women’s history.

—Eileen VanWie, Co-President
LWVSNM



DRAFT SUMMARY OF MINUTES

(Complete set of minutes will be sent to League Members)

LWVSNM Board Meeting

MARCH 18, 2021, 1:30-4:10 p.m. • via Zoom

Board Members Attending: Johnnie Aldrich, Secretary; Kathy Brook, Co-President; Erika Graf-Webster, Director of Youth Engagement; Maryellen Kebbel, Membership Director; Jo Galván Nash, PR Director; Kim Sorensen, Immediate Past President; Sadie Valverde, Treasurer; Eileen VanWie, Co-President; Dale Yeo, Director Voter Services.

The Board did not deal with all of the items on the lengthy agenda because focus was on preparations for two significant end-of-year activities: Annual Meeting on April 10 and the State Convention, which LWVSNM will host on April 24 and 25.

Preparation for the April 10 meeting involved discussion of reports from the directors of all working committees and rewritten “portfolio” (job) descriptions for the directors of our standing committees. At the Annual Meeting, members will be asked to approve a new group, the Development Committee, which Rosa Morales will co-chair.

Another topic that evoked considerable discussion was the report from the *ad hoc* Budget Committee. As committee chair, Kathy Brook wrote: The proposed budget assumes no change in dues for the coming fiscal year. However, in reviewing the proposed budget, the Board noted that in the future we are likely to need additional resources to support the League’s activities. In the near term, the Board recommends [that we encourage League members to continue making additional donations as they have done this past year]. The Board will also move forward in seeking grants and other sources of revenue.

The Board also approved a few revisions in the Bylaws and Policies of LWVSNM. These will be published immediately on the website and in the next issue of the Membership Directory next fall. Board members also approved the suggested program for the coming year. Members attending the Annual Meeting will be asked to accept or reject the program plans, including our position on Immigration.

The LWVNM Convention will begin at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, April 24, when Eileen opens the Zoom meeting for a “Pre-Convention Coffee,” a “bring your own beverage” event that will give us an opportunity to chat informally with attendees from Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Los Alamos.

City Councilor and local League Member Yvonne Flores will welcome all to the Convention at 9:00 a.m. She’ll be followed by LWVUS Liaison Liz Bander before the business session begins. Lunch speakers on the 24th will be Dr. Jim Peach, NMSU Professor Emeritus of Economics and Dr. Christa Slaton, NMSU Professor of Government. Plenary Session items will include votes on both the updated Education and new Spent Nuclear Storage position. Eileen announced that state press releases are planned to emphasize the LWVNM rejection of the proposed Holtec facility in eastern New Mexico. Johana Bencomo, Las Cruces City Councilor, will be the Convention closer after the Sunday morning April 25 Plenary Session.

Get Registered for April 24-25 LWV Convention

DEADLINE: APRIL 15

Don't forget to get registered for the state LWV convention, hosted by LWVSNM. There is a variety of topics that are scheduled, and we'll hear from our own local leaders City Councilors Yvonne Flores (welcome) and Johana Bencomo (discussing border issues), and Economist Dr. Jim Peach (New Mexico's economic future). Other special guests are also scheduled. And, many important decisions such as an Education position will be discussed. [Read the agenda on page 4 of the state League's newsletter *La Palabra*.](#)

April 15 is the deadline to register; you need to register for each day you attend at the following links:

[Click here to register for Saturday, April 24.](#)

[Click here to register for Sunday, April 25.](#)

There is no registration fee since the convention this year is virtual. So, instead of a silent auction, please consider a contribution to LWVNM, by clicking here: <https://www.lwvnm.org/support.html>

REMINDER:

LWV US People Powered Day of Action, April 29,'21

On April 29 the League of Women Voters US will host a 'People Powered Day of Action' with events around the country to shine a light on the redistricting process. [Click here for more information about the day of action.](#)



OBSERVER REPORTS

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS (BOCC) • Regular Meeting

March 23, 2021

Observer: Jo Galván Nash

In attendance: Commissioners Diana Murillo-Trujillo (acting chairwoman); Lynn Ellins; Shannon Reynolds; and Susana Chaparro; and County Manager Fernando Macias.

The Commission spent more than two hours considering a unique stray animal population reduction program with Barkhouse of New Mexico, which proposes to take stray/abandoned dogs from this county and fly them to Oregon to place them in good homes. The BOCC agreed in a vote of 4-0 to grant Barkhouse a sole source contract of \$185,000 which still has to be negotiated.

Many individuals spoke against and in favor of the company. The company explained their services which are aimed at reducing unowned and abandoned animals in the county. Doña Ana County is said to have an uncontrollable overpopulation due to the number of pets not spayed/neutered. And, the issue has worsened during the pandemic. Barkhouse also provides surgeries, vaccinations and is hiring a fulltime vet from Argentina.

The Barkhouse proposal is a short-term pilot project that will be reviewed by the BOCC in six months. Currently, the County contributes \$1.2 million to the Animal Service Center of the Mesilla Valley (ASCMV); and Manager Fernando Macias said it's also the county's intent to continue to use the SNAP spay/neuter non-profit program next fiscal year.

Snapshot of the total number of animals from the county placed at the ASCMV in 2020:

2018: 2,965; includes 1,096 dogs

2019: 2,897; includes 2,013 dogs

2020: 2,024; includes 1,478 dogs (COVID YEAR)



OBSERVER REPORTS

LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Observer, all meetings: Kathy Brook

Regular Meeting • March 1, 2021

The meeting began with a Covid-19 update. Other items on the agenda included a contract for senior meals (including discussion of whether the city could make better use of local suppliers); passage of a resolution in support of HB111 which would provide more time between non-payment of rent and eviction proceedings, prohibit discrimination in housing based on legal sources of income (such as unemployment compensation and housing vouchers), and establish a State Housing Council; and a new fee and rate structure at the airport. Councilors also shared their thoughts on the passing of LCPS Superintendent Karen Trujillo.

Work Session • March 8, 2021

City Clerk Christine Romero discussed possible changes to the city's election process. These include an electronic (rather than paper) filing packet for candidates, developing a city campaign in Spanish and English concerning ranked choice voting, campaign finance software which would make information available online to the public and searchable, and possible restoration of a signature requirement for establishing candidacy.

Discussion of revision to the animal ordinance included extended discussion about issues relating to unowned, free roaming cats.

Regular Meeting • March 15, 2021

The meeting began with a report to Council on work that has been done in providing funds and services to the community during the pandemic. The [report](#) is now available on the city's website.

A topic of significant discussion was the draft strategic plan which has been facilitated by hiring Management Partners. The plan was approved at the meeting. There are six themes, each with a set of goals: community prosperity (19 goals); education and community services (4); environmental sustainability (8); capital improvements and infrastructure (6); communication, involvement and follow-up (4); and public safety (4). The next step is to present performance measures to the Council. Departments will come up with action plans for presentation in July or August.

Work Session • March 22, 2021

In the Covid report, hope was expressed that more people would register for a vaccine as the eligibility categories were expanded. Communications about the vaccine are being developed in English/Spanish for distribution with utility bills.

The Alliance for Regional Military Support (ARMS) provided an update to councilors, the first under a \$10,000 annual agreement with the city. The group which works with the City of El Paso, El Paso Electric, the Borderplex Alliance, and other public and private entities in the region, seeks to coordinate with local economic development organizations to expand defense and aerospace industries, attract research and development through partnerships with higher education, retain a highly qualified workforce to support these goals, improve the region's appeal for future stationing initiatives, and address related infrastructure needs.

There was also a presentation on the 2021-2025 Consolidated Plan relating to low-income and affordable housing and impediments to fair housing. The plan is currently available on the city's website and public comment is being accepted. The LWV SNM Affordable Housing Committee recently provided input to the consultant who wrote the plan. Other topics included Council priorities for the FY22 budget and the procurement code.



LAS CRUCES PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION • Regular Meeting

March 16, 2021

Observer: Eileen VanWie

Members Present: President Ray Jaramillo, Vice President Carol Cooper, Secretary Teresa Tenorio, Members Terrie Dallman and Maria Flores.

The legacy of Dr. Karen Trujillo was discussed after a video of elementary students interviewing her in January was shared.

Sean Barham read public comments limited to 2 minutes per comment and 30 minutes total.

Las Cruces Bulletin's Best of 2021 "School Board Member" was awarded to President Ray Jaramillo.

NEA-LC Report: Denise Sheehan sent sympathy to the Trujillo/Apodaca family. Teachers are getting vaccinated. The NEA is advocating for teachers who have ADA accommodations. Teachers will engage in bargaining on Thursday. CSEC-LC Report: Irma Valdespino sends condolences to the Trujillo family, friends, and staff. Adelaide, (Junior) Vice Chair of Student Advisory Council, gave condolences to the Trujillo family and friends. The SAC hopes the Board will make accommodations needed as students return to in-school classes. Check out their Instagram: @lcps_SAC Instagram.

Interim Superintendent Ralph Ramos introduced Director Carla Regan to discuss the Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) Funds Update. The District also received funding from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA). The biggest concern for funding purposes is "learning loss" by students this year. They also want to address social and emotional learning. They have close to \$30,000 to spend.

Interim Superintendent Ramos said, "It's been an honor to serve these fast past two weeks." He's impressed with the teamwork that is happening.

There was discussion about filling the Superintendent vacancy. Board members agreed to Señora Flores' suggestions that the search be within the state and not to use a costly outside agency.

LCPS plans to have "full reentry" in schools beginning Tuesday, April 6. There is no school on Monday April 5 which is spring break. Students will have options for how to attend school beginning on the 6th. Some will continue with online learning. Wednesdays will remain as a remote learning day for all grade levels, where online students can meet with teachers. It appears about 64% of students will return to in-school classes. About 75% of staff have received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Treasurer's Report

Provided by Sadie Valverde, Treasurer

MARCH 2020

Date	Description	Deposit/ Credit	Payments/ Debt	Balance
	Bank Balance as of 3/24/2021			\$3,652.25
Deposits:				
	March 17, 2021 – donation	\$73.05		
	Transfer from PayPal			
	Total Deposits in March	73.05		
Expenses:				
	3-23-2021 Center for Advancement of Public Pol. Martha Burk Ck#1067		\$100.00	
	3-22-2021 Woman's Improvement Assoc Flyers – Rebecca Courtney ck#1068		260.00	
	3-24-2021 Consumer Cellular – phone ck#1069		19.74	
	Total expenses		\$379.74	
	Current bank balance as of 3/24/2021			\$3,652.25
	One outstanding ck#1070 – We Are It		14.08	\$3,638.17
	Donation from Members	\$4,437.25		
Committed Funds:				
	Diversity Fund	935.00		
	Immigration Fund	625.00		
	Youth Engagement	525.00		
	Total Committed Funds included in bank balance			\$2,085.00
	Leaving a bank balance			\$1,553.17

DUES RENEWAL

All members will soon receive additional information about paying their 2021/22 dues. The renewal process begins on May 1 – the first day of the new fiscal year. Pending approval of the dues amount at the Annual Meeting on April 10, members can begin to renew online (with a credit card) via the League's website or send checks to the League's PO Box.

Whenever you submit your payment be sure to include your name, address, email address and daytime telephone number. More to come.

Books for LWVSNM Book Club – APRIL 2021

If you would like to participate, contact Erika at grafwebster@icloud.com

BOOK CLUB MEETINGS ARE ON 1ST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH

Status	Book
Books Selected for Upcoming Meetings	
April 1, 2 PM Via Zoom	<p><i>A Promised Land</i> by Barack Obama A riveting, deeply personal account of history in the making—from the president who inspired us to believe in the power of democracy. In the stirring, highly anticipated first volume of his presidential memoirs, Barack Obama tells the story of his improbable odyssey from young man searching for his identity to leader of the free world, describing in personal detail both his political education and the landmark moments of the first term of his historic presidency.</p>
May 6, 2PM	<p><i>How to Avoid a Climate Disaster: The Solutions We Have and the Breakthroughs We Need</i> by Bill Gates With the help of experts in the fields of physics, chemistry, biology, engineering, political science, and finance, he has focused on what must be done in order to stop the planet's slide to certain environmental disaster. He lays out a concrete, practical plan for achieving the goal of zero emissions, suggesting policies that governments should adopt and what we as individuals can do to keep our government, our employers, and ourselves accountable in this crucial enterprise.</p>
June 3, 2PM	<p><i>This Is How They Tell Me the World Ends: The Cyberweapons Arms Race</i> by Nicole Perlroth The untold story of the cyberweapons market—the most secretive, invisible, government-backed market on earth—and a terrifying first look at a new kind of global warfare. The US paid top dollar, later millions of dollars, to hackers willing to sell their lock-picking code. Then the US lost control of the market. Now controls are in the hands of hostile nations and mercenaries who do not care if your vote goes missing, your clean water is contaminated, or our nuclear plants melt down.</p>
Candidate Books for Future Selection	
Date in left column is the date on which the book was added to this list; books on the list for 6 months and not selected for discussion are deleted	
9-13-20	<p><i>Compromised: Counterintelligence and the Threat of Donald J. Trump</i> by Peter Strzok The FBI veteran behind the Russia investigation draws on decades of experience hunting foreign agents in the United States to lay bare the threat posed by President Trump.</p>
12-07-20	<p><i>The WEIRDest People in the World: How the West Became Psychologically Peculiar and Particularly Prosperous</i> by Joseph Henrich A bold, epic account of how the co-evolution of psychology and culture created the peculiar Western mind that has profoundly shaped the modern world. In <i>The WEIRDest People in the World</i>, Joseph Henrich draws on cutting-edge research in anthropology, psychology, economics, and evolutionary biology to explore these questions and more.</p>
12-07-20	<p><i>The System: Who Rigged It, How We Fix It</i> by Robert Reich An urgent analysis of how the "rigged" systems of American politics and power operate, how this status quo came to be, and how average citizens can enact change. With the characteristic clarity and passion that has made him a central civil voice, Robert B. Reich shows how wealth and power have interacted to install an elite oligarchy, eviscerate the middle class, and undermine democracy.</p>
1-22-21	<p><i>On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century</i> by Timothy Snyder The Founding Fathers tried to protect us from the threat they knew, the tyranny that overcame ancient democracy. Today, our political order faces new threats, not unlike the totalitarianism of the twentieth century. <i>On Tyranny</i> is a call to arms and a guide to resistance, with invaluable ideas for how we can preserve our freedoms in the uncertain years to come.</p>
1-22-21	<p><i>Saving Justice: Truth, Transparency, and Trust</i> by James Comey James Comey uses his long career in federal law enforcement to explore issues of justice and fairness in the US justice system. He knows better than most just what a force for good the US justice system can be, and how far afield it has strayed during the Trump Presidency.</p>
3-12-21	<p><i>The Code Breaker: Jennifer Doudna, Gene Editing, and the Future of the Human Race</i> by Walter Isaacson An account of how Nobel Prize winner Jennifer Doudna and her colleagues launched a revolution that will allow us to cure diseases, fend off viruses, and have healthier babies. They turned a curiosity of nature into an invention that will transform the human race: an easy-to-use tool that can edit DNA. Known as CRISPR, it opened a new world of medical miracles and moral questions.</p>