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Message From the Board – The Voter

You may notice that this month's issue of *The Voter* looks a little different. After seven years of being the Editor, I feel it's time to let someone else take the role. At the top of the page, you'll see that this publication has been sent to members for "57" years, in a variety of styles. Beginning in May, I'm confident that there's someone within our 108 members who is willing to organize this newsletter. I've deliberately changed the style this month to make it super simple to enter content. If you have Microsoft Word (or similar software) you can easily publish *The Voter*. You may even have an easy desktop publishing program like Canva that does a lot of the set-up and graphics with just a couple of clicks.

We don't need fancy! This newsletter simply needs to communicate what our League does and how others can get involved in our fight for democracy. My last newsletter will be the April issue, so please contact Kate Mangelsdorf from the Nominating Committee if you are willing to be the next Editor. And yes, I'd be happy to help you get started or organize your first edition as a template that will allow you to simply cut-and-paste new information each month.

Thank you for reading all these years!

■ *Jo Galván Nash, The Voter Editor*

Celebrate Women's History with LWVSNM

Patti Wojahn, coordinator, Rebecca Courtney, Elisa Sánchez and other LWVSNM members are partnering with the Mad Hatter Gallery for a special event on **Sunday, March 15**, 2-4 p.m. at 221 N. Main, Suite C, in celebration of Women's History Month.

A tentative schedule for the agenda includes a panel of women artists. There will also be a presentation on the background of Women's History Month and the League of Women Voters. The artist panelists and gallery owner Penny Peace will present their artwork and discuss women's histories. There will also be a Q&A with the audience.

The local event is free and refreshments will be served. Let's join them for the celebration. Several members will also be wearing their League Democracy t-shirts at the Sunday event!

This year's national theme is "Leading the Change: Women Leading a Sustainable Future." According to the National History Women's Alliance, the theme honors the women who have and are reimagining and rebuilding systems to ensure long-term sustainability — environmental, economic, educational, and societal. It recognizes the powerful leadership of women in creating a future that is rooted in equity, justice, and opportunity for all.



Women's History Month honors the successes and sacrifices of U.S. women. It dates to March 8, 1857, when hundreds of women from New York City garment and textile factories rallied to protest harsh working conditions.

Upcoming Calendar Events

MARCH 2026

Women's History Month

March 5, Thurs.: **Book Club**, 3 p.m., contact [Erika](#) for a link

March 8, Sun.: **Daylight Savings Time** ends.

March 9, Mon.: **League Education Committee**, 5:00 p.m., Via Zoom; contact [Kathy Brook](#) for a link;

March 15, Sun.: **Women's History Month celebration**, 2-4 p.m., Mad Hatter Gallery, 221 N. Main, free.

March 17, Tues.: **St. Patrick's Day**

March 20, Fri.: **League Healthcare Committee**, 1:00 p.m. in-person at Las Cruces Village, Building E conference room.

March 28, Sat.: **No Kings Rally**, 9:00 a.m.; Albert Johnson Park at Branigan Library; **Wear your LWVSNM Democracy t-shirt!**



Vote411 Preparations Underway

The state League's Voter Services Committee (VSC) has held several meetings recently in preparation for the launch of Vote411 – the online tool used by the national, state and local leagues to provide voters will accurate information about elections and candidates. The primary election in New Mexico will be Tuesday, June 2, and early voting begins May 5.

LWVSNM Secretary Edwina Jaramillo is heading up the state VSC. The committee has been organizing candidate questions that all NM leagues can use for the state Vote411 online Voter Guide. In addition, the committee is also standardizing the majority of race descriptions throughout the state so that voters can read what the responsibilities are for most state races, regardless of which county they vote in. For example, a description of a race for the state Senate would be the same whether the candidate is running in Doña Ana County or in Sandoval county. The standardized race descriptions will be available on Vote411 when it goes live around May 1.

For your information, the local League will not publish a printed Voters' Guide for the Primary Election. However, Doña Ana County candidates will be sent League questions to answer in Vote411 for the Primary. Candidates will have the opportunity to answer in English, Spanish or both. Typically, LWVSNM reserves its funds to publish the guide for the elections in November.

▪ *Jo Galvan Nash, Past President*

Healthcare Committee Efforts Successful

Big news: House Bill 99 (Medical Malpractice Changes) was overwhelmingly approved by the State Legislature during the 2026 Session. As of this writing, the bill awaits the governor's signature. New Mexico's malpractice laws have been cited as barriers to physician recruitment and retention, and the new law will hopefully begin to address the physician shortage.

The Healthcare Committee did not meet in February. At our March meeting, we will review the status of all healthcare-related bills introduced during the 30-day session and discuss the proposed statewide study, *the impact of medical malpractice on access to health care*, that will be presented to the state Council in April.



Joanne Turnbull

We're pleased to welcome Randee Greenwald, who has a strong background in health care, to the committee.

Our next committee meeting is Friday, March 20th at 1 pm at Las Cruces Village, Bldg. E Conference Room. Please email turnbulljoanne@gmail.com for more information.

- Joanne Turnbull, Chair, Healthcare Committee LWVSNM

Consider Joining the Board or Volunteering for an Activity

During March, the Nominating Committee will be sending emails and making phone calls to find members, new or renewing, who are willing to serve as an Executive Officer and/or Board of Director. It's not overly burdensome and the League has only one Board meeting each month (not July).

As we've mentioned before, here are the seats we need to fill at our April Business Meeting which is held toward the end of our fiscal year. New Officers and Board Members would be elected or appointed for one or two years, depending on the office. Plus, if you can volunteer for one specific task, we'd love to hear from you!

Here's a chart of what's needed:

POSITION	ELECTED TERM	GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES (negotiable, based on your skills)
President or Co-Presidents	1 year	Organize & chair the monthly Board Meetings; Organize & chair the April Annual Mtg.
1 st Vice President	2 years	Organize guest speakers/topics for approx. 5-6 general membership meetings; Organize Program Planning Mtg.
Voter Services Director	2 years	Oversee voter services by organizing or chairing a variety of activities, such as voter registration, candidate forums, get-out-the-vote communications, Voter Guides/Vote411.
Youth Engagement Director	2 years	Network with schools, college, university students & staff on youth-related events, projects and voter engagement.
	APPOINTED TERM	
Public Relations Director	1 year	Oversee 10 issues of the League newsletter, write newspaper columns or news releases, assist with social media.
Webmaster	1 year	Oversee basic updates to LWVSNM website (Word Press) and be liaison to local web maintenance company that addresses more technical changes.

The Board will support you in whichever task you select, and the responsibilities are very flexible. There are also several individual tasks that could use a volunteer, such as serving on the Observer Corps, coordinating the annual Making Democracy Work award, helping with the Legislative Conversation & Holiday Social, or joining the Healthcare or Education Committees. (By the way, the Education Committee needs a chairperson.)

If you have questions, please [contact Kate Mangelsdorf](#), nominating committee chair, to discuss your interests. Thank you!

- Jo Galván Nash, Past President

Thanks to Two League Leaders

The month of March — Women’s History Month— is an appropriate time to give thanks to two women who are leaving LWVSNM. Last month we announced that former Vice President Beth Bardwell had stepped down from the Board as she was moving temporarily to California. Her daughters are having babies and Beth and her husband will be helping the growing families. Beth was instrumental in updating the League’s Position for Affordable Housing and co-authoring the 2024 “Building Electrification and Affordable Housing Study.” We look forward to her return to Las Cruces.



Eileen VanWie



Beth Bardwell

We also must thank Eileen VanWie who is moving to the upper Midwest to spend more time with her family. Eileen was the guiding light in updating the League’s Education Position over a two-year period. The Position also contains a thorough Addendum that will serve our advocacy for many years. Eileen, also a past co-president, was previously involved with the annual Making Democracy Work Award, the Know Your Local Government high school event, and Women’s History Month events. Eileen said she’ll be looking for another local League organization to join when she’s settled.

We thank these two women for the leadership they have provided to our league.



Las Cruces City Council • Regular Session

February 2, 2026

Observer: Jennifer Kreie

The Council considered three resolutions and each passed. There were two modifications to ordinances and both passed. Of note, the City now has police service aides and this required an amendment to the municipal code. The City terminated the agreement with a company called 828 Productions. The agreement dealt with what the City would pay for services from 828 Productions to develop the local film industry. (This was reported in the local news. Google it for more details.)

Las Cruces Board of Education • Regular Session

Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 6:00 pm

Observer: Eileen VanWie

Members Present: President Pam Cort, Vice President Robert Wofford (online), Secretary Patrick Nolan, and Teresa Tenorio. (Absent: Ed Frank)

Public Comment:

Carol advocated for clean air in schools, giving reasons why this is so vital. Wearing masks is very important. She will mail information with documentation to the Board members. Paul is a proponent of size 3.5 A high schools. 3 A is less than 500 high school students. Schools should be small enough to provide all students with a good education.

—continued

Superintendent's Report:

Organ Mountain High School has been experiencing some vandalism and people are having difficulty finding their way around. They'd like better signage to guide people around the campus. Superintendent Ignacio Ruiz shared district policy to keep students safe and still respect their first amendment rights. There were student protests on January 29, February 2 and 4 at some middle and high schools. Schools have provided space on campus for students to protest and yet remain safe. It's important to help students understand why they are protesting. The protests that occurred were student-driven.

Leaders of the LCPS District participated in the NM Legislative session that ends Thursday, February 19. By the next Board meeting, they will have a report of what was accomplished that impacts the district. On February 12, Mesilla Park Elementary School was recognized in Santa Fe with a bilingual-multicultural education award. Congratulations to Principal Barela and the entire school for their commitment to bilingual-multicultural education. The Safe Routes to School event is happening on Feb. 27; it's a bicycle skills training event.

New Mexico School Board members are required by law to attend training events. President Cort has attended 20 hours of training at the NMSBA Board Member Institute. All LCPS Board members have had at least 20 hours of training.

Old Business:

The Third reading of Policy GBJC – Employment: Hires, Investigations, Verifications and Exams. The purpose of the policy is to establish a process ensuring that employment candidates and school district employees meet the standards of employment as required by LCPS and/or state statute. The Board voted to approved the Policy GBJC.

New Business:

There was discussion of the New Mexico All-Electric Purpose-Built Zero Emission School Bus Pilot Project. Two electric buses will be delivered to LCPS on March 20 by the Green Powered Motor Company. The Board approved this pilot project. Meanwhile, work on the LCPS Public Schools Strategic Plan Benchmarks was tabled to the next work session (March 3), so more information can be gathered.



LWVSNM COMMITTEES

If you want to know who's on which League committee, or who's involved with which project, there is an updated list of Committees on our website. [CLICK HERE](#) or go to lwvsnm.org, then click on the "Members Page" menu and open the "LWVSNM Committees."

Email lwvsnm@gmail.com to add your name to one of the categories.

LWVSNM BOOK CLUB



The book club meetings are the 1st Thursday of each month at 3:00 p.m.
If you want to participate, contact Erika at grafwebster@icloud.com.

MARCH 5:

The Arrogant Ape: The Myth of Human Exceptionalism and Why It Matters by [Christine Webb](#)

Darwin considered humans one part of the web of life, not the apex of a natural hierarchy. Yet today many maintain that we are the most intelligent, virtuous, successful species that ever lived. This flawed thinking enables us to exploit the earth towards our own exclusive ends, throwing us into a perilous planetary imbalance. But is this view and way of life inevitable? *The Arrogant Ape* shows that human exceptionalism is an ideology that relies more on human culture than our biology, more on delusion and faith than on evidence. It exposes the ways that many scientific studies are biased against other species and reveals underappreciated complexities of nonhuman life—from the language of songbirds and prairie dogs to the cultures of chimpanzees and reef fishes, to the acumen of plants and fungi. With compelling stories and fresh research, she gives us a paradigm-shifting way of looking at organisms on their own terms.

Treasurer's Report: Jan. 23 – Feb. 24, 2026

By Kathy Brook, Treasurer

Beginning Balance, January 23, 2026	\$12,314.66
New Income	\$2,055.26
Dues	\$55.26
Donations	\$2,000.00
New Expenses	\$3,091.31
Final Per Member Payment to LWVUS, chk 1244	\$2,832.00
Printing for Legislative Conversation, Jo Nash, chk 1245	\$210.19
Poster Supplies for Rallies, Rebecca Courtney, chk 1246	\$198.00
Ending Balance, February 24, 2026	\$11,278.61

Designated Funds (included in bank balance above)	\$3,015.00
Diversity Fund (reduced by dues for K. Blanchard)	\$1,904.00
Otero/LWVSNM	\$736.00
Youth Engagement	\$375.00
Election/voter materials	
Balance on Target e-card as of 11/30/2025	\$0

Outstanding checks/commitments

Reimbursement of Kathy Brook for Zoom subscription (\$175) and for Storm Web charges (\$171.94)

NAACP Monthly Report

The NAACP Doña Ana Chapter meeting was held on Feb. 21, 2026. It was a joint meeting with the NMSU student chapter of the NAACP. The guest speakers were City Councilor Johana Bencomo and School Board member Patrick Nolan. There was discussion among the guest speakers and audience about current local and national issues.

- *Jennifer Kreie, member of NAACP and LWVSNM*

WORTH SEEING!

If you've never seen this film, it's worth heading to Branigan Library to watch it on Thursday, March 5 at 5:15 p.m. This film depicts an important part of New Mexico's history.

— **JOIN US FOR A SCREENING OF** —



SALT OF THE EARTH
A NEW MEXICO LABOR FILM

THURSDAY **MARCH 5** **DOORS @ 5:15**

BRANIGAN LIBRARY, ROADRUNNER ROOM
200 E. Picacho Ave, Las Cruces, NM

Salt of the Earth (1954) is a New Mexico-based labor film inspired by the 1951 Empire Zinc miners' strike in Grant County. It follows Mexican American miners who walk out over unsafe conditions and racist pay, and the women who step forward to lead when the state tries to break the strike. This film reminds us that working-class power has always come from collective action, courage, and unity. Our history here in New Mexico shows what becomes possible when workers and families organize together.

UPCOMING GOVERNMENT MTGS.

LC City Council:

March 9 (work session); March 16; March 23 (work session); all at 1:00 pm., City Hall

County Commission: March 10; March 24; all meetings at 9:00 am; DAC Govt. Center

LCPS School Board: March 3 (work session), 4 p.m.; March 24, 6:00 p.m.; both at Dr. Trujillo Admin. Bldg. Board Rm., Loretto Towne Center

2025/2026 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO BOARD:

OPEN – President/Co-President
OPEN – 1st Vice-President
Liz Rodriguez-Johnson – 2nd Vice President
Edwina Jaramillo – Secretary
Kathy Brook – Treasurer
Kate Mangelsdorf – Membership Director
Jo Galván Nash – Past President
OPEN - PR Director
OPEN – Youth Engagement Director

Off-Board Volunteers

Social Media – Rebecca Courtney & Kathy Brook
Voter Services Activities Coordinators - David Rice & Rebecca Courtney
Publicity Coordinator – Lynda St. Clair
Healthcare Committee Chair – Joanne Turnbull
Education Committee Chair – Patti Wojahn (Open in April)
Nominating Committee: Kate Mangelsdorf, Chair, and Rebecca Courtney & Ruth Jaure, Members
Observer Corps: Kathy Brook and Jennifer Kreie
Historian - Ruth Jaure
Voter Editor & Webmaster - Jo Galván Nash (both open in May)