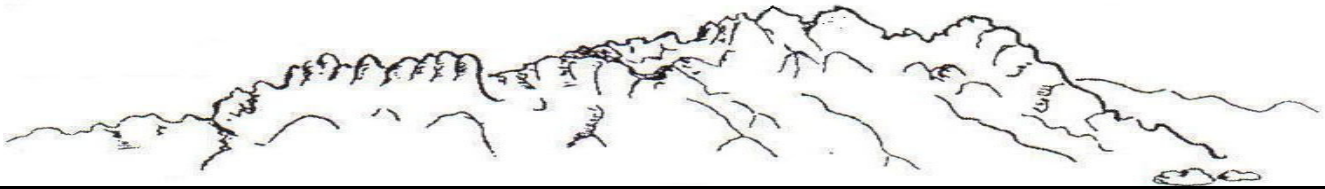


The VOTER

League of Women Voters
of Greater Las Cruces
(575) 524-VOTE (8683)
Web Site: www.lwvglc.org
March 2011



Lunch with a Leader: The Probate Process *Probate Judge Alice M. Salcido*

**Creative Arts Room, Good Samaritan Social Center, 3011 Buena Vida Circle
Monday, March 14, 2011, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

The Third District Court has supervisory responsibility for the Probate Court in Doña Ana County. Probate Judge Alice Salcido, recently re-elected for a second term, serves as a part-time judge. She will make a presentation about the entire probate process. She will cover the terminology used in probate, the requirements for probate filing and a description of the jurisdiction of the County Probate Court. The presentation also will cover what constitutes a valid will, and examples of when probate is not required. Accompanying Judge Salcido is Attorney Katherine Blackett, who will be available to answer questions about probate law.

Judge Salcido was appointed as a Doña Ana County Probate Judge in 2005, elected in 2006, and reelected in 2010. Prior to serving on the bench, Judge Salcido served as Doña Ana County Manager and County Treasurer. At the state level, she worked for Governor Jerry Apodaca. At the federal level she worked for U.S. Senator Joseph Montoya, and was district coordinator in the Southwest District Office of U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman. She also was employed by the NM Department of Health and was appointed as Interim Director of the NM Office of Border Health for one year. Judge Salcido received her education at New Mexico State University earning a BBA with high honors and a Master's Degree in Public Health.

Katherine Blackett's law practice is limited to estate planning, estate administration and elder law matters. She has served on a number of non-profit boards over the years and is currently a member of the End of Life Planning Advisory Committee at Tresco and the Third Judicial District Court Pro Bono Committee. Kathy received an award in October, 2009, from the New Mexico Bar Association in recognition of her Pro Bono (volunteer) work in the areas of estate planning and elder law. She believes that estate planning is important for everyone because it is about much more than money and where it goes after death.

March is Women's History Month



In February 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued the first Presidential Proclamation declaring the Week of March 8, 1980, as National Women's History Week. In 1981, U.S. Representative Barbara Mikulski and Senator Orrin Hatch co-sponsored a Congressional Resolution for National Women's History Week. In 1987, the U.S. Congress declared March as National Women's History Month in perpetuity. As President Carter wrote, "Too often the women were unsung and sometimes their contributions went unnoticed. But the achievements, leadership, courage, strength and love of the women who built America was as vital as that of the men whose names we know so well."

[Source: National Women's History Project, Santa Rosa, California]

The VOTER

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The League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces

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STUDY GROUPS

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Christina Little - 373-1882

Education
Bonnie Burn - 526-0013

**Mental Illness Services
in Doña Ana County**
Becky Beckett - 522-8171
Mickey Curtis - 532-5655

**Election Procedures and
Voter Turnout**
Marnie Leverett—522-0347

Metropolitan Court
Marjorie Burr - 522-2528

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CALENDAR

March 2 (Wednesday) - 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., **Board Meeting**, Branigan Library, Board Room.

March 7 (Monday) - **Deadline for Reservations for Lunch with a Leader: Topic: The Probate Process.** RSVP Sharon Burbano (526-2860 or Email: sburbano@aol.com). **Reservations are required. If you don't cancel your reservation, you will be charged for lunch.**


March 14 (Monday) - 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m., **Lunch with a Leader, Topic: The Probate Process.** Creative Arts Room, Good Samaritan Social Center. **Lunch is \$10.**

Notable Dates: March is Women's History Month
March 8 - International Women's Day
March 13-19 - Sunshine Week (focus on open government)

Mark Your Calendar:

April 16 - Annual Meeting
May 14-15 - LWVNM State Convention, Los Alamos

Board Highlights - February 16, 1-3:30 p.m., Branigan Library

- Approved an increase in lunch price of \$10 from \$8. 
- Treasurer's Report showed Income (\$463.50) and Expenses (\$720.97) leaving a checkbook balance of \$4,413.58. Balance in Education Fund is \$860. CD current balance is \$1,076.27.
- Approved recommendations for program for study and action for the LWVNM consideration at convention in May.
- Held preliminary discussion about annual meeting Nominating and Budget Committees (see President's Report).
- Membership Director reported on a successful new member orientation held in January.
- Voter Services Director reported on progress of updated Who's Who that is expected to be distributed in early March.
- President reported on success of the recent immigration forum sponsored by the Ad Hoc Immigration Committee and noted that committee members are advocating on issues related to immigration that have been introduced during the current NM Legislative session.
- Discussed Go See Tour to Friedman Recycling Center in El Paso and March Lunch with a Leader presentation by Probate Judge Alice Salcido.
- President reported on a meeting concerning the development of the Children's Reading Foundation for Doña Ana County that is being supported by NM Senator Steve Fischmann, School Board member Maria Torres, and Terry Miller, community activist.



President's Message

My message this month is a discussion of organizational issues.

First, in the calendar you noticed the large red arrow pointing to the increase in our price for lunch. Management of Good Samaritan Village notified all organizations using its facilities that they are increasing lunch prices to \$8.25. As you may know, in appreciation

for their presentations, lunch for our presenters is on us. To cover the increase in cost and the speakers' lunches, the Board approved an increase in our lunch **price to \$10**, effective **March 14**.

Second, at its convention in 2010, the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) approved an increase in per member payment, which is the amount of money local Leagues are obligated to send to LWVUS in support of the national organization. The new amount for 2011-2012 is \$30 per individual member and \$15 for a second household member. Our per member payment obligation to LWVNM is \$12 per individual and \$6 per second household. From your individual \$50 dues only \$8 is left for our treasury (e.g., \$50 minus \$30 minus \$12 = \$8). Our local League's net income from dues is a total of \$756. We have determined that we take in \$27.17 per member in actual income from member dues plus donations to our operations fund and expend \$36.74 per member in actual operational expenses. That leaves a gap of \$9.57 per member in the budget. This deficit will eventually cause us to totally spend down our checking account balance. As a result, to keep the organization financially healthy, a dues increase to \$60 is under consideration by the Board to be proposed to members during budget adoption at the Annual Meeting. Second household dues will increase to \$30 under this proposal. Dues have not been increased since the late 1990s.

Third, the Nominating Committee has been soliciting leaders from among our membership to fill a slate of officers for 2011-2013. The positions of President, Treasurer, and Director for two-year terms, and Vice President for a one-year term, 2011-2012, are up for election. There is concern among the members of the Nominating Committee and the Board that to fill these positions, we are calling on our newer or very new members who have not had much League experience. Among our 100 members it would seem like an easy matter to find volunteers for leadership of the organization. Although there is provision in our League's Bylaws to govern by committee, anecdotal information from other League's throughout the nation who face the same problem indicates that defined leadership roles make the organization most effective. If you are willing to serve, please contact Donna Tate, Chair, Nominating Committee, 524-9303, draytate@earthlink.net.

The Annual Meeting VOTER will be printed and mailed to all members by March 16.

Bonnie Burn



**Membership Directory
ADDENDUM**

Changes to the Membership Directory since it was published are noted in the attached Addendum.

Please notify **Susan Schmugge**, Membership Director, of any changes in your information published in the Directory or the Addendum.

522-4546 or sschmugge@aol.com

**LUNCH
WITH A
LEADER**



\$10

**New price for Lunch with a
Leader at Good Samaritan
Village**

Effective March 14, 2011

**ANNUAL MEETING
VOTER DEADLINE**

March 2, 2011

**Submit to
Bonnie Burn
Email**

burnb@comcast.net

GO SEE TOUR

Immigration Detainee Hearing—Part III

Sue Cain and Bonnie Burn

On January 26, nine League members accepted the invitation of U.S. District Judge Robert C. Brack to observe the immigrant detainee sentencing hearings presided over by him. This is the final part of the detainee court process: (1) presentments, the detainees first appearance before the court where rights and charges are explained; (2) General Docket where the preliminary and change of plea hearings are conducted; (3) a jury trial for those pleading not guilty and (4) final sentencing.

Six cases were heard. Each defendant had a lawyer present who stood with him at the podium facing the judge. A court interpreter was present, and family were given ear phones to listen to translation of the proceedings. The Judge stressed the philosophical change in border law enforcement. In the past it was easy to cross the border numerous times without penalty other than deportation. Operation Streamline, however, makes crossing more than once a felony and creates a criminal history.

Several of the cases substantiated the anecdotal stories we have been hearing. The first case illustrated how families are being disrupted. Since age one month, this defendant lived in the U.S. his entire life, graduated from high school, was working and had a wife and family. Picked up for a traffic violation, he is being deported to Mexico, will live with a distant uncle, will have to learn Spanish and find some kind of work. Passage of The Dream Act by the U.S. Congress would have helped him find a pathway to citizenship.

Another defendant lived in the U.S. since 1996, was married to a U.S. citizen and had two children. He re-entered the U.S. for a second time, is being deported, and now has a criminal history. If he attempts re-entry in the future to rejoin his family in the U.S. and is caught, he faces a long prison sentence.

In another case, a man came to work in the U.S. He paid his “coyote” fee by carrying marijuana in a backpack across the border—a case illustrating how undocumented immigrants are forced to assist the drug industry. He was deported back to Chihuahua with a warning that his current charge was an aggravated felony that would mean at least a three year sentence in prison if he returned. The court proceedings lasted about an hour, and

then Judge Brack answered our questions. He is an Article 3 Judge who is appointed by the U.S. President and after confirmation by the U.S. Senate has a lifetime appointment. The U.S. Federal Magistrate Judges are attorneys, are appointed by the District Judges for eight-year terms, and seek re-appointment based on performance. In Judge Brack’s opinion, passing comprehensive immigration law reform is of primary importance. The arguments against such reform are not based on the reality of circumstances faced by undocumented immigrants. The debate should involve actual facts and not rancor.

League members found these observations very informative and educational and would encourage members to attend. Immigrant detainee hearings are scheduled every week. All court proceedings in all courts in the U.S. are open to the public.

Redistricting of District Boundaries for City and County

Bonnie Burn, Reporting

At its February 14 work session, members of the City Council reviewed a preliminary report from Research & Polling, Inc., the consultants who were awarded a contract in November 2010 to review the redistricting project for the City of Las Cruces. The final work product will be based on the verified results of the 2010 U.S. Census.

Common Cause is supporting redistricting for the city and Doña Ana County. Phil Banks and Bill McCamley made a presentation at this city work session. Also, Bill McCamley made a presentation at a County Commission meeting on February 8. Common Cause supports creating a citizens advisory committee that presents at least three proposals from which each governing body will choose one. Criteria for deciding on new boundaries is also given. LWVGLC has accepted the invitation of Common Cause to join in supporting this effort. We are using the League of Women Voters of New Mexico position on apportionment and redistricting adopted in April 2009.

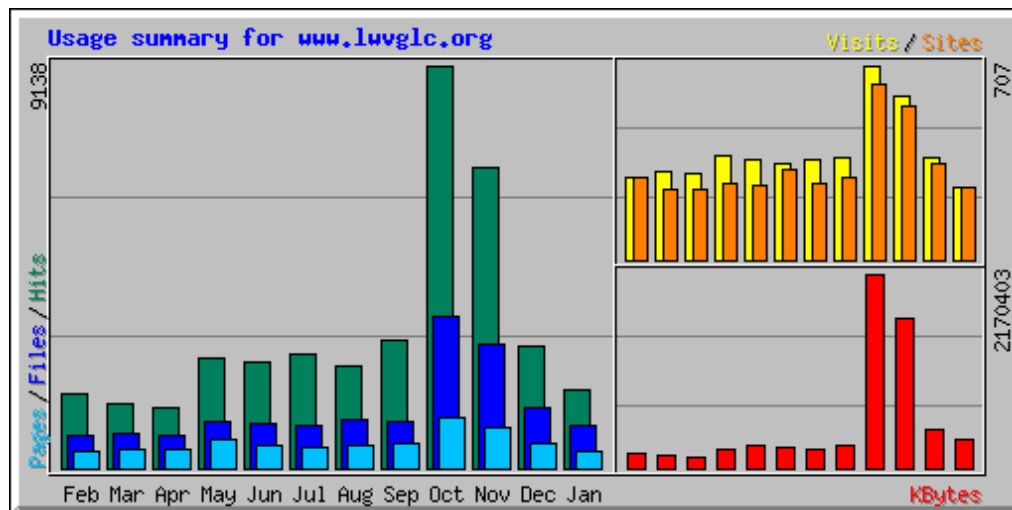
The City plans two other work sessions in April and May devoted to this issue with a final redistricting plan adopted at a regular city council meeting in June. The next municipal election for Las Cruces is November, 2011.

Voters' Guide Online: Did anyone look?

Dale E. Yeo, Webmaster

According to the website usage statistics, the answer is **YES**. The graph of all 2010 website visits shows definite peaks for the time period when the *Voters' Guide* was on the site before the election. Interest in the site had also increased starting in May as the political season heated up.

Website Usage Summary by the Month for February, 2010 through January, 2011



Definitions of Terms

- Hits:** Any requests for a web page or file within the web page.
Files: Any requests for separately named web pages.
Pages: The total number of web page requests made on the web site for a particular time period.
Visits: **The number of individual visits made to the website in a given period of time. This is the best way to judge how many different people are visiting the site.**
Sites: **The number of web sites from which visitors have come.**
Kbytes: A measure of the total movement of pages, images, and files.

Conclusions: Before October and November, between 300 and 400 people a month were visiting the LWVGLC website. In October, the number rose to a high of 707 people and in November was still 596 people. This is when the *Voters Guide* link was posted on the main page of our site. If something of interest and importance to people is posted (and they know it is there), they will come, look and probably look around the site at other things, too.

NMSU Model UN Team

The third annual dinner to raise funds to send members of the team to participate in the national college/university competition at the UN was held on February 17 at the new Las Cruces Convention Center. Over 200 people came to enjoy the food and silent auction and listen to former Ambassador Edward Perkins speak.

Ashley McMillan, President and Head Delegate introduced the team. Barbara Couture, President, NMSU, welcomed everyone and acknowledged the

accomplishments of the team. Among his remarks, Ambassador Perkins noted the important role the UN plays in U.S. foreign policy. He thought the UN Security Council should be enlarged by at least two more countries. If there was any failure in the UN program, it was that the position of women had not been advanced as hoped, and women continue to suffer in member states.

The team is representing the country of Lithuania at the competition at the United Nations in New York City.

League Day at the Legislature

Johnnie Aldrich, Representative

League Day experienced an inclement weather day. Snow and ice forced rescheduling from February 2 to the 15th. Kudos to Dick Mason and his committee who rearranged the arrangements.

The day was beautifully organized so that we participants could work efficiently on our individual projects (distributing fact sheets about LWVNM priorities to our legislators) as well as attend committee meetings of interest to us.

At least a dozen Leaguers from all four NM local Leagues attended the meeting of the House Voters and Election Committee Hearing that began at 8:30 a.m., on the schedule. Here, too, reorganization was the order of the day because of standing room only in the small committee room designated on the original schedule. Committee Chair, our very own Doña Ana County Representative Mary Helen Garcia, took time to arrange for a much larger meeting space so that all citizens interested in voter identification requirements could be seated. Jody Larsen, League member from Albuquerque, presented the League's position during the time devoted to audience participation.

At 11:00 a.m., many of us attended what was announced as a press conference in the capitol rotunda. No press presence was detected, but several speakers briefly addressed various health care reform initiatives being discussed in committee that day and during the rest of the week.

There were, of course, other committee meetings of interest, but most of the 35-40 League members left the Round House at 11:30 a.m. for the short walk to the First Christian Church where we consumed a catered sack lunch while listening to two presentations explaining League support for health care reform and budget modifications.

By 1:00 p.m., we were again at the Round House. This time, for me at least, to focus on the distribution of our position statements (a one-page explanation of reasons that we are supporting or opposing specific legislation) to our four representatives from DAC. In the process, I discovered a previously unknown area of the Capitol, the North Building. The tunnel access corridor is a truly stunning gallery of artwork from every corner of the state.

Las Cruces Public School Board

Meeting, February 15, 2011, 6:30 –9:05 p.m.

Roberta Gran, Observer

Dr. Connie Phillips called the board meeting to order. Chuck Davis participated on speaker phone.

A closed session was held to cover one disciplinary action and Superintendent Rounds' employment contract that was extended for one additional year to June 30, 2013.

There will be a \$27.8 million reduction in funding for all NM schools and possibly a \$27.5 million reduction in Earned Retirement Board (ERB) funding. LCPS alone will likely see a \$9 million reduction. There will be 600 new students this year, with state funding of \$2.4 million, but only \$3.0 million will be funded to all the school districts next year. Additionally, the districts will be responsible for a greater employer percentage of the ERB, and employees will pay 1.5 to 1.75 % more out of their individual earnings. All teacher contracts will be reduced by one day. They are already experiencing a 2.25% reduction in take-home pay.

The 2009-2010 Annual Financial Report was given. The audit showed that there were concerns in Las Cruces Public Schools (2 findings), La Academia Dolores Huerta (4 findings), and Las Montañas (5 findings), all of which are correctible and not overly serious. In spite of this, improvement over last year has been shown.

A presentation was given by LCPS Head Start, which has 13 centers. Head Start is funded for 393 students but serves 413. There are 47 staff for Las Cruces and seven for Hatch's 68 students that Las Cruces serves. There is both structured and non-structured time when social and healthful skills like name recognition, reading/writing, self organization, and tooth brushing are taught. There is a parent involvement and program governance structure, and staff work very closely with parents to meet goals. Information is provided for parents who want to complete ESL and/or GED programs. A MENS (Males Encouraging Niños) Program invites fathers to an activity with their children and gives them a meal. There is an in-house counselor who keeps a social attributes checklist for each child and works with children to acquire social competence. Health and nutrition are monitored all year where children participate in nutrition, dental, and meal serving and clean-up tasks. There is an annual self-assessment and a federal review.

LEAGUE OBSERVER REPORTS

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

South Central Recycling Partnership, (SCRaP) - February 8, 2011 *Al McBrayer, Observer*

The committee met on the second floor of the City Hall. Friedman Recycling submitted a four-color sample label that will be molded into the lid of the new blue recycling containers. Part of the "Recycle Right" program, the label shows, through words and pictures, materials to put into the container, and gives a list of what is not allowed. Recent reports show that as much as 20% of recycled material is contaminated with food waste. The labels are part of a new educational effort to correct the problem. Friedman considered the motto, "If in Doubt, Throw it Out," believing that it is better to have a recyclable item end up in the land fill than to contaminate a container full of good recyclables with food waste. SCRaP thinks that education is the key. People do want to recycle correctly but don't understand the separation process completely. The blue cans are scheduled for delivery to curbside customers March 27-April 2.

Planning for this year's Earth Day in April has started. The ideas being considered are to use Earth Day as a lead-in for the Curbside launch, to tie both together and to tie into events in other locations. The main events at Young Park are still a month or so away.

The successful Get Caught Recycling program ended on January 31 after three busy months. There were more than 130 winners overall.

Grant funding for recycling in Las Cruces and Doña Ana County is of concern because of the current state budget deficit affecting the New Mexico Environment Department. The New Mexico Recycling Coalition announced that the Coca Cola Bottling Company is partnering with Keep America Beautiful to offer containers to local recycling groups for plastic bottles.

Thank you for recycling.

South Central Solid Waste Authority January 27, 2011, 9 a.m., Government Center, *Johnnie Aldrich, Observer*

Newly elected Doña Ana County Commissioner Billy Garrett joined the committee. Las Cruces City Councilor Miguel Silva was elected chair and County Commissioner Dolores Saldana-Caviness was elected vice chair.

In closed session Director Patrick Peck's performance evaluation was discussed, and his contract was renewed.

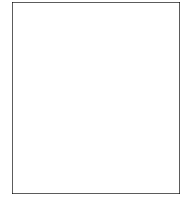
Other business discussed:

- April 4 is the projected date for launch of curbside recycling in Las Cruces. Projections note that over 29,000 households will be served, a number that should cover the costs of the project.
- A permit for dumping at transfer stations soon may be made by debit card. Hand-held computers and cell phones will be used to record the payment.
- The southern portion of DAC (Sunland Park-Anthony) is the most populous and most underserved part of the county in terms of solid waste collection.
- Some residents of Chaparral are protesting the presence of a new transfer facility planned for that area of the county.
- The Solid Waste Master Plan is still a work-in-progress, with ongoing needs assessment and plans for new and/or upgraded facilities being evaluated.
- The Camino Real Landfill in Sunland Park is a point of contention. Many residents there protest its presence, but nothing can be done until the results of a federal lawsuit are known. (Most of the solid waste in that landfill comes in from El Paso, where the case is being heard.) Plans for the near future also include a public education campaign about illegal dumping. Readers seeking further information or details should call SCSWA, 528-3800.



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FIRST CLASS

March 2011
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JOIN THE LEAGUE TODAY

Bring a friend with you!

Membership: Individual (\$50), 2nd Household Member (\$25)
 Join after November 1 pay half dues. Dues renew on May 1.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____ **Phone:** _____

Email: _____

\$ _____ Contributions to the League
 Make Check payable to LWV of Greater Las Cruces

\$ _____ Contribution to the Education Fund (Tax Deductible)
 Make check payable to League of Women Voters

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