The VOTER

League of Women Voters
of Greater Las Cruces
(575) 524-VOTE (8683)
Web Site: www.lwvglc.org
December 2015/January 2016

Legislative Breakfast

Saturday, December 5, 2015
9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Good Samaritan Social Center
Creative Arts Room
3011 Buena Vida Circle

Please join us for our Annual Legislative Breakfast. League members and guests will have an opportunity to discuss legislative issues with our locally elected New Mexico Senators and Representatives.

Please RSVP Ardyth Norem by November 29th.
an.lwv.reservations@icloud.com or call Gwen Hanson at 556-9251

*** Please remember to bring your donations for the Las Cruces Gospel Rescue Mission.**

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

December 17– ***I Feel Bad About My Neck*** by Nora Ephron
At the home of Gwen Hanson. Please call 556-9251for directions.

New Members are Welcome!

CALENDAR

December 2015 – January 2016*

***Due to the holidays, both December and January major events are listed.**

December 3 –December Board Meeting, 2:00 p.m., home of Gwen Hanson

December 5 -Legislative Breakfast, Good Sam's, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. **RSVP required.**

December 17-Third Thursday Book Club, I Feel Bad About My Neck, by Nora Efron, 2:00 p.m., at the home of Gwen Hanson

January 7- January Board Meeting, 2:00 p.m., TBD

January 11 –January Lunch with a Leader: Randy Shaw, Manager, Brackish Groundwater National Desalination Research Facility (BGNDRF), 11:30 - 1:00 p.m., Good Sam's, **RSVP required.**

January 14 - Third Thursday Book Club, Six Amendments: How and Why We Should Change the Constitution by Justice John Paul Stevens

January 16 -LWVNM Board Meeting - Immigration Committee LWVGLC presentation, 11:00 a.m. -2:30 p.m., Socorro, NM

January 19 -Opening Day - NM State Legislative Session

January 21-Unit Meeting #1, LWVUS Study Proposal:"Money in Politics", 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m., Good Sam's Conference Room, **RSVP required.**

January 28 -Unit Meeting #2, LWVUS Study Proposal: "Money in Politics", 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m., Good Sam's Conference Room, **RSVP required.**

All RSVP's to Ardyth Norem: an.lwv.reservations@icloud.com or call Gwen Hanson at 556-9251

The VOTER
Volume 47, Issue 7– December 2015/January 2016
Usually Published Monthly

The League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces
P.O. Box 8322
Las Cruces, NM 88006-8322
(575) 524-VOTE (8683)
Web Site: www.lwvglc.org

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Vice President & Events and Speakers
Ardyth Norem

Secretary - Sadie Valverde

Treasurer - Ruth Benjamins

Director, Membership
Yvonne-Magdalena Flores

Co-Directors, Voter Services
Marcia Anderson &
Dale Yeo

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Elected Member: Johnnie Aldrich

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Barbara Goedecke - 522-0323

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Immigration
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Yvonne-Magdalena Flores 521-3980

Metropolitan Court
Marjorie Burr - 522-2528

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

Water Issues
Win Jacobs - 521-9331

Action Committee

President's Message

Gwendolyn (Gwen) Hanson

December 2015

December is the "holiday" month, when we gather with friends and family to eat, attend special events, and take a deep breath of appreciation for all that has gone well in the last twelve months. We ask forgiveness for our shortcomings, and gratitude for the possibility of a do-over, a "Mulligan". This is a time to reflect on the blessings of being an American citizen - with its inherent rights and responsibilities. At a time of global crisis and fear, it is especially important to support humanitarian actions on behalf of all the vulnerable populations who are so needy.

Our League has been very busy in 2015, and will continue to be in 2016. The calendar this month includes activities for both December and January for planning reasons. Please mark your calendars now in order to participate in everything of interest. It is increasingly challenging to find meeting venues for our various activities. Thank you for your patience and flexibility with changes - we are subject to decision-making over which we have no control, and try our best to accommodate. The City of Las Cruces is currently in the process of reviewing and making decisions about its municipal facility use, while Good Sam's responds to a multitude of requests for its' facility use, directly impacting availability. We truly appreciate the generosity of both entities.

We are always pleased to host the Annual Legislative Breakfast - a unique opportunity to interact with our locally elected New Mexico Senators and Representatives. This is an opportunity to advocate for our League priorities, as well as listen to the issues confronted by our elected representatives.

January 2016 will usher in important opportunities to "build your capacity" by participating in the following activities:

Lunch with a Leader - Randy Shaw, Manager, Brackish Groundwater Desalination National Research Facility, Alamogordo, NM
TWO "Money in Politics" Unit Meetings - the LWVUS Study Proposal discussion led by Peter Ossorio

In addition our local League's Immigration Committee has been invited to present at the LWVNM State Board Meeting, to describe a proposal to update the language of the LWVUS Position Statement on Immigration for the purpose of State Concurrence.

As we bid 2015 farewell, we do so with heartfelt gratitude for the hard work and passion of our members; appreciation to our community for its support; and, recognition of the City of Las Cruces and the Good Samaritan Society for their generosity.

We look forward to 2016 with great expectations and excitement for new challenges!

May your holiday season be everythiing you want it to be. **Happy 2016.**

Board Meeting Highlights, *Gwen Hanson Reporting*

November 5, 2015
2:00 – 4:30 p.m.
City Hall Conference Room 2007A

Present: Marcia Anderson, Gwen Hanson, Dale Yeo, Sadie Valverde, Ruth Benjamins, Ardyth Norem, & Yvonne Flores
Absent: Jennifer Coppolo & Erika Graf-Webster

Ongoing Administrative & Operational Activities:

Financial & Membership report – Yvonne reported no new members this month.

Voters Services:

Marcia & Dale reported on the distribution of the 2015 Voters Guide and reviewed the Candidate Forum for candidates for the Las Cruces Municipal Election. Thanks to Marjorie Burr for coordinating voter registration this election cycle.

Events:

Ardyth reported 40 reservations for the November 9, 2015 Lunch with the Leader. Marcia reported the Annual Legislative Breakfast is scheduled for December 12, 2015, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m., Good Sam's. **Date was changed to Decmber 5th.** Invitations will be mailed to our locally elected State Senators and Representatives, as well as advocacy packets.

Studies & Committees:

Outreach activities by Rosemarie Sanchez and Bonnie Votaw to NMSU and LCPS, respectively, were updated by Yvonne.
The activities of the Immigration Committee, co-chaired by Sue Cain & Yvonne Flores were described by Yvonne, including a tour of the Otero County Detention Center.
Summaries of the October and November reports of Membership-Leadership Development (MLD) to the State MLD Liaison, Linda Moscarella, were shared by Gwen.

New Business & Activities:

LWVUS Study Proposal- "Money in Politics" Unit Meeting – The Board approved the plan to invite Peter Ossorio to be the discussion leader for the upcoming consensus meeting. Suggested dates were January 14 or January 21, 2016, 12:00 – 3:00 p.m., Good Sam's, based on the favorable response to the previous unit meeting in October.

Education Committee proposal by Bonnie Votaw to roll back the previous change to the NM Constitution placing education under the governor.

Nominating Committee: Dale Yeo was selected as the Board Member representative.

Proposals (3) by Roberta Gran: The proposal to participate by offering voter registration at the NGAGE activity was approved. The two additional proposals were delayed for further research.

Discussion of a fundraiser: Additional research and report to be given in the future.

Holiday philanthropy: The board approved a plan to gather donations from members for the Las Cruces Gospel Rescue Mission at the December meeting.

Speaker for January Lunch with a Leader: Randy Shaw, Manager of the Brackish Groundwater Desalination National Research Facility in Alamogordo, NM will be invited to speak about water issues.

League News

IMMIGRATION REPORT

SUE CAIN AND YVONNE-MAGDALENA FLORES, Reporting

The Immigration Committee was recognized in June 2015 by the LWVGLC Board and meets on a monthly basis. At the September 24, 2015 meeting, we discussed our goals in advocating for humane treatment of migrants in the United States and focused entirely on the LWVUS Immigration Position-2008. We discussed incongruities and recognized that the Position in 2008 did not foresee the ultra militarization of the border and the funding of the U.S. Customs Border Patrol, which is the largest law enforcement agency in the U.S. with the majority of its agents placed along the U.S.-Mexico border.

The immediate focus is gathering information on immigration law practices/enforcement, impact and effect of same and how it affects border communities along the U.S.-Mexico border. The long term focus is to effect change in LWVUS Position-2008 posited in its "Administration and Enforcement" and review for clarity of terms and language usage.
We have engaged in the following:

- Held a round table discussion led by United States District Court Judge Carmen Garza I August, 2015 regarding the application of strict letter law to unlawful re-entry detainees.
- Invited Brian Erickson from the ACLU to our September 24, 2015 meeting to address U.S. Customs and Border Patrol issues, the criminalization of behavior and racial profiling.
- Attended a meeting held by Community Initiatives for Visiting of Immigrants in Confinement (CIVIC) on October 17, 2016.
- Participated in a tour of the Otero County Detention Center, owned and operated by Management Training Corporation (MTC) on October 20, 2015.
- The November 20, 2015 meeting featured Las Cruces attorney Nancy Oretskin of the Southwest Asylum & Migration Institute (SAMI) who specializes in asylum cases.

We have discussed the language in the LWVUS Immigration Position-2008 and find that there is a need to revise the section on Administration and Enforcement which begs revision. For those of us who live in a border community where traveling, for example, west from Las Cruces to Deming (60 miles) or north to Socorro (about 150 miles) entails a "border check", the journey is a "chilling" reminder that the enforcement laws are subjective and that anyone who is perceived to be undocumented can and will be held and subjected to indeterminate detention, whether it be a an hour or a year. Racial profiling is acceptable "probable cause" by county sheriff and city police departments as well. There are no constitutional rights such as due process or right to counsel. Yet, these practices are carried out with impunity.

If we, the LWV, believe in the opening paragraph of the LWVUS Immigration Position-2008, we must then be able to advocate and lobby consistent with the principles and values set forth therein. As it reads now, it is not possible to carry out our mission of being a non-partisan political advocacy organization. Is it necessary at all to have an "Administration and Enforcement" clause in our Position? Is it truly our place to posit such a policy on behalf of our organization?

League News

"Building Your Capacity"

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

"Risk Evaluation of the Protection of Private Personal Information Collected by the Dona Ana County Clerk's Office"

donaanacounty.org/sites/default/filespagesExternal_Review_Committee_Report_Final.pdf

LWVUS Consensus Studies:

1. **Constitutional Amendment**

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

2. **Money in Politics**

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

3. **"Money in Politics" Review**

   http://forum.lwv.org/category/ HYPERLINK "http://forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/our-work/money-politics-review"m HYPERLINK "http://forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/our-work/money-politics-review"ember-resources/our-work/money-politics-review

4. **Study Guide for the "Money in Politics" Consensus (includes consensus questions)**

   http://forum.l HYPERLINK "http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/study-guide-money-politics-consensus"wv.o HYPERLINK "http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/study-guide-money-politics-consensus"r HYPERLINK "http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/study-guide-money-politics-consensus"g HYPERLINK "http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/study-guide-money-politics-consensus"/ HYPERLINK "http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/study-guide-money-politics-consensus"member-resources/a HYPERLINK "http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/study-guide-money-politics-consensus"r HYPERLINK "http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/study-guide-money-politics-consensus"ticle/study-guide-money-politics-consensus

5. **Voter Registration in a Digital Age: 2015 Update**

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

(Continued on Page 6)

League News

Building Capacity *(Continued from page 5)*

Immigration

Strengthening Communities by Welcoming All Residents: A Federal Strategic Action Plan on Immigrant & Refugee Integration. The White House Task Force on New Americans, April 2015.
www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/final_tf_newamericans_report_4-14-15_clean.pdf

– Impact on Issues. 2014-2016. A Guide to Public Policy Positions, League of Women Voters of the United States pp.73-74, Immigration.
www.lwv.org/content/impact-issues

The League's Position - Immigration - April 2008

The League of Women Voters believes that immigration policies should promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; and be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises. Provision should also be made for qualified persons to enter the United States on student visas. All persons should receive fair treatment under the law.

The League supports federal immigration law that provides an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry of immigrants into the United States.

To complement these goals the League supports federal policies to improve economies, education, job opportunities and living conditions in nations with large emigrating populations.

In transition to a reformed system, the League supports provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status.

The League supports federal payments to impacted communities to address the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.

*Please read (1) Criteria for Legal Admission to the United States; (2) Administration and Enforcement; and (3) Unauthorized Immigrants Already in the United States for complete understanding of the Position Statement.

League News

VETERANS' HOUSING REPORT

CHRISTINA LITTLE, Reporting

Early in 2015, First Lady Michelle Obama challenged the nation to end homelessness for Veterans. A number of mayors (including Ken Miyagishima), took on this challenge for their communities. The goal was to reach Functional Zero by the end of 2015. The formal definition of Functional Zero is - "At any point in time, the number of Veterans experiencing sheltered or unsheltered homelessness will be no greater than the current monthly housing placement rate for all people experiencing homelessness."

Prior to the Mayor's challenge, there were collaborations and initiatives in place in Las Cruces that helped make this challenge achievable.

Oak Street Apartments
The Oak Street Apartments already housed veterans. This apartment complex is a collaboration between the Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority (MVPHA) and the Mesilla Valley Community of Hope. MVPHA owns the buildings and has dedicated the units for the use of veterans. They have also received state funding to create ADA units, a laundry room, two office spaces and a multi-purpose resource room, including a restroom and kitchen. The apartments are now permanent housing. The Community of Hope provides supportive services at Oak Street. There is a staff member dedicated to meeting the needs of veterans. The staff person assists the vets with learning about and obtaining all kinds of resources. In addition, staff are working on an Employment Initiative.

VASH Vouchers
In addition, 55 Veterans Administration Supportive Housing (VASH) Vouchers have been awarded to MVPHA within the last several years. These allow Veterans and their families to live in market rate rental housing while the Veterans Administration (VA) provides funding for case management services. A housing subsidy is paid to the landlord directly by the local public housing authority on behalf of the participating Veteran. The Veteran then pays the difference between the actual rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the program. As part of the program, veterans are provided with case management and clinical services.

Meeting the Challenge
So, when the Mayor accepted the challenge, there were systems in place to help make the goal a reality. The Mayor and Nicole Martinez, Executive Director of the Community of Hope, convened a stakeholders' meeting, which included staff from the Mayor's office, the Community of Hope, the Community Development Department, and the VASH Representative. At this meeting, Mayor Miyagishima was able to pledge $49,024 to the effort.

As the agency in Las Cruces responsible for supportive services involving veterans, the Community of Hope took the lead role. Staff started compiling a list of homeless veterans, and also included information about what the housing plan was for each individual. About 30 individuals were identified. Then the challenge was to get them into housing. Many opted to go to Oak Street. In addition, the Community of Hope operates a number of housing programs, and these were utilized when appropriate. Housing veterans became a priority.

The Community of Hope serves ALL veterans. To be eligible for some programs, such as VASH Vouchers, veterans do need to have an honorable discharge. The agency mixes, matches, and combines programs to accomplish the goal. For instance, the Community of Hope VA Program can only pay rent for five months per year. So, this is used in combination with other programs.

On July 13, 2015, Las Cruces (The Mayor's office and Community of Hope) announced that the City had reached Functional Zero. The Community of Hope has enough resources to continue doing this, so it is a sustainable plan. Both the Veteran's Administration and the NM Coalition to End Homelessness have validated the plan. It would be very difficult to get to actual zero. There are always veterans who do not want to participate in such programs. Community of Hope also realizes that there will be homeless Veterans in the future and that there must be a strong commitment to continue housing the Veterans as quickly as possible.

League News

Save the Dates
League Day at the Legislature 2016
February 3 & 4

Legislative Reception, Wednesday, February 3, 5:30-7:30 PM
Garrett's Desert Inn, 311 Old Santa Fe Trail*
Budget Issues

Richard Anklam,
President/Executive Director of the New Mexico Tax Research Institute,
Former Assistant Secretary/Director of Tax Policy for the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue

****

League Day, Thursday, February 4, 10:30 AM to Noon
Garrett's Desert Inn

Ethics Commission
Paul Biderman, Former Director of the Institute of Public Law; Santa Fe Ethics and Campaign Review BoardMember; ethics trainer, and legislative staffer.

Budget and Tax Policies
Bill Jordan, Senior Policy Advisor/Government Relations, NM Voices for Children

*** Garrett's Desert Inn, located down the street from the capitol, is offering us a special group rate of $60 plus $10 per each additional person (not including tax) for any size room based on availability. Call 1-800-888-2145 or 505-982-1851 to reserve a room. You must reserve your room by January 12 with the code "Swing Vote" to get this discounted rate.**

LEAGUE OBSERVER REPORT

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

WRRI Workshop on Water Banking November 12, 2015

WATER BANKING 101

Win Jacobs, Reporting

Water banking is a term coming ever more frequently into common parlance as communities begin to face the ramifications of drought, global warming, and development. Concisely defined, water banking is based on the fallowing of some agricultural fields and their wet water becoming available to other fields. Arrangements may be initiated by individuals or groups, or by brokers who match compatible buyers and sellers. Most typically, holders of senior water rights sell the right of use to junior holders; the term of use varies from seasonal to permanent. Crop diversification makes the system possible, with acreage fallowing typically limited to 20% of the selling farmer's total. Benefits of banking accrue to the individuals and the community: business and economic vitality, land values, tax base for public services all can thrive.

The Water Resources Research Institute of NMSU served as lead sponsor for a workshop on the concept and practice of water banking at the Las Cruces Conference Center November 12. Presentations by academics and system managers from Colorado, Nebraska, and Kansas proved both enlightening and (dare I say it) inspiring: cooperation rather than conflict is occurring in real time, real places. These presentations will soon be on WRRI's website: **http://wrri.nmsu.edu**

Of particular interest to our Lower Rio Grande region was the offset plan just approved by the Elephant Butte Irrigation District's Board of Directors. Named Depletion Reduction Offset Policy (DROP). Of course, if the Supreme Court invalidates the LRG operating agreement of 2008, between Texas and southern New Mexico, all bets are off!

Depletion of ground water is, unlike scarcity of surface water, susceptible to human management and cooperation; such management must be the common currency in the LRG, inasmuch as some "fields can be fallowed but [no] subdivisions can be" and municipal and industrial development must be accommodated. Evolution of the policy has taken over three years; implementation will probably take at least another two. The takeaway, for me, is that cooperation continues to evolve in our region. I would suggest that it is in the whole community's interest to keep that spirit going.

Help Grow Our Numbers

Invite a friend, colleague, or relative to the Legislative Breakfast on December 5th.

Membership:
$60 - INDIVIDUAL
$30 - 2nd Household

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

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Las Cruces City

FIRST CLASS

December 2015/January 2016
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Membership Application

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

Date: _____

Name: _____

2nd Household: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email:_____

Telephone: _____

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

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

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

Information Links

LWV - Greater Las Cruces
www.lwvglc.org
LWV - GLC Who's Who
www.lwvglc.org
LWV - New Mexico
www.lwvnm.org
LWV - United States
www.lwv.org

City of Las Cruces
www.las-cruces.org
Las Cruces Public Schools
www.lcps.ks12.nm.us
New Mexico State University
www.nmsu.edu
Dona Ana Community College
http://dacc.nmsu.edu

Dona Ana County
http://donaanacounty.org

State of New Mexico
www.newmexico.gov
New Mexico Secretary of State
www.sos.state.nm.us
New Mexico Legislature
www.nmlegis.gov/lcs

U.S. Senate
www.senate.gov
U.S. House of Representatives
www.house.gov
U.S. White House
www.whitehouse.gov