

LWV

the
VOTER

*League of Women Voters of
Greater Las Cruces*

JULY 2017

JULY 10 DINNER TOPIC: DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

In response to expressions of interest in varying the format of LWVGLC meetings, this year four meetings will feature interaction around a topic. The July 10 dinner meeting at 5:10 p.m., Good Samaritan, will offer all of us an opportunity to learn about and discuss issues introduced at the NM State Convention in May.



The items to be discussed include *Judicial Reform, Reproductive Rights, Nuclear Waste Storage, Effective Strategies LWVUS is Taking to Accomplish the League's Vision, and Promoting the League's Work for Impact, Relevance, and Visibility.*

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Each delegate will have five minutes to summarize items for us to consider, or an important piece of information we need to be aware of, followed by member reactions and suggestions on how we might implement those ideas into our local's work. The meeting will conclude with a process that will identify priorities for our local to pursue.

MORE ABOUT LWVNM 2017 CONVENTION

Delegates from Las Cruces who traveled to Santa Fe May 19-21 for the 2017 Convention were (l-r) Connie Lee, Kim Sorenson, Gwen Hanson and Bonnie Votaw.

LWVNM Delegates enjoyed hearing from two speakers: Henrietta Saunders, Treasurer of the League of Women Voters of the United States, and Valerie Plame, the featured speaker at the banquet. Saunders brought word of efforts at the national level to become more solvent,

better managed and to reinvigorate the League's central missions. The announcement of the 2017 LWVUS Council highlights this topic. Valerie Plame spoke on the topic of nuclear proliferation.

Clarification of LWVUS positions and by-laws included the requirement of concurrence by state and local Leagues.

Three studies were approved, with invitations to all League members to join. The studies are: Public Lands, Nuclear Waste Storage Issues and Health Care Position Clarification. Be alert for more information as the studies progress. Concurrence positions and changes to by-laws will be announced in an upcoming *La Palabra*, so be alert for these to appear.

Newly installed LWVNM President Judy Williams spoke about the need for strong reaffirmation of the League's non-partisan BUT political status: The League does NOT endorse candidates. The League DOES ENDORSE positions.

June 2017 Voter Message from The President

Greetings Members of LWVGLC,

I am pleased to tell you that we had a very productive three- hour board meeting May 4th. Besides taking care of general business, we spent half the time discussing our vision for the League, what should be our focus, what we do well, and what we could do better. We will be inviting your input during The Program Fiesta in September. Your Directions to the Board from the Annual Meeting helped us to frame the discussion. Thank you. I will be reporting on the Board's response to the Directions at each meeting as we address them. So far, these are the directions we have addressed:

1. We developed and passed a policy on responding to requests from outside entities for publicly endorsing a position. "Requests for LWVGLC to make public statements/positions may be approved by the board via email by a minimum of 4 members, except if any members object, a complete discussion will be conducted and the request will be voted on at the next board meeting."
2. Request for a strategy to go digital on voter services publications: The board decided to make Voter Services a priority for the next two years. We will focus our efforts on 3 areas: voter registration, voter information, and voter turnout. Plans are to engage the membership in discussion and planning and increase member participation in these efforts. We need to figure out a strategy to get voter information to the public transitioning to more use of digital media.

3. The board concurred with the direction for the need to appoint a Public Relations Director. We will discuss this at the next board meeting as well as discuss the appointment of an Observer Corp Coordinator.
4. Request for more lunch meetings during winter months. So far, breakfast or lunch meetings are planned for November, December, January and February.
5. Request for replacing some Dinner with a Leader sessions to a Discussion of Issues. The board concurred. We will have a discussion on issues addressed at the state convention during the July meeting.

2018 marks the 50th anniversary of the LWVGLC! We need to start planning for a BIG CELEBRATION!!! Marjorie Burr is chairing the committee. Contact her if you want to help.

The board approved the reimbursement of the registration fee for the state convention for delegate members up to the amount budgeted.

My Best to you All,

Kim Sorensen, President



Calendar of Upcoming Events

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| July 1 | LWVNM Board Meeting in Santa Fe |
| July 7 | LWVGLC Board Meeting 2 pm Brannigan Library Roadrunner Boardroom |
| July 10 | Dinner with Discussion 5:30 -7:00 pm Good Samaritan Activity Room |
| July 13 | Affordable Housing Committee meeting (time and place TBA) |
| July 20 | Youth Engagement Committee and Study Committee meetings (time and place TBA) |
| July 27 | Book Club at Vicki Simon's, 2 pm - The Populist Explosion: How the Great Recession Transformed American and European Politics |
| July 26 | 50 th Anniversary Committee, 12:00 noon, 695 Stone Canyon Dr. Marjorie Burr's house. Lunch provided. |
| August 25 | Book Club, 2 pm Location TBA – This Fight Is Our Fight by Elizabeth Warren |

CELEBRATE! 50 YEARS in 2018 for LWVGLC

Submitted by Marjorie Burr

LWVGLC Will Celebrate 50 Years in 2018.

Fifty years is a long time. For a person it's middle age, when life begins--up from age 40 a generation ago. For organizations it's a sign of maturity and stability. So, for the local League in Las Cruces, 50 years is a milestone we can celebrate.

A year of activities is being scheduled for 2018. There are three objectives for the celebration: LWV visibility in the community; appreciation of our members, current and past, who have worked hard for the organization; and providing an opportunity for people to show their appreciation of what LWV does by contributing to the effort.

A committee is forming to make all of this happen. The events will be on top of all the ongoing activities, voter services, study and action, advocacy for our positions. There are tasks of all kinds involved.

One area that has surfaced as people begin to think about our history is a need for getting documents organized. Most of the words generated over a half century are gathered in the Rio Grande Archives in Branson Library on the NMSU campus. But the papers are not organized in a useful form. Here's a job that can be done in small segments, and can be informative to the person who makes order out of chaos. On the fourth floor of Branson you will be issued a pair of white gloves, and the cart of LWV documents will be rolled out for you to work on. A few hours or many days of work will enlighten you about the organization and contribute to an important project. Consider it.

Many more jobs are part of an important and fun time. If you would like to be part of it, contact Marjorie Burr, 522-2528 or burrmb@aol.com.

LEAGUE OBSERVER CORPS – CALL FOR HELP!

Submitted by Susan Schmugge

Co-coordinator, League Observer Corps

The Board is interested in organizing members to attend local regularly scheduled civic meetings on behalf of the League. Vickie Simons and I have agreed to organize and coordinate this outreach program.

We have priority commission meetings we would like to focus on first. They are

- Las Cruces City Council meetings - Meets 1st and 3rd Mondays/month at 1 p.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall

- Dona Ana County Commission meetings - Meets 2nd and 4th Tuesdays/month at 9 a.m. in Commission Chambers in the County Building
- Las Cruces Public Schools Board meetings - Meets 3rd Tuesday/month at 6:30 p.m. in LC School Administration Office
- Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority - Meets 3rd Tuesday/month at 9 a.m. in MVPHA Building on San Pablo
- Southwest Solid Waste Authority - Meets 3rd Thursday at 9 a.m. at Transfer Station on Amador

Some member may already be attending in person or by watching video rebroadcast of the regularly scheduled meetings. If so, **please let Vickie or me know (vrsimons@comcast.net or sschmugge@aol.com)**. We would like to speak with you about this.

To those of you who expressed interest at the June League meeting, Vickie or I will contact you.

If you are not already going to any of these meetings and would like to know more--again, please let Vickie, me, or any Board member know. There are other commissions and board meetings not mentioned here.

This is a great way to be involved in your community in a manner that is not time consuming. If you share attendance with another League member, it's even easier. You'll be trained if necessary. Welcome Aboard!

OBSERVERS' POST

Las Cruces City Council Meeting, Monday, June 19, 2017: Organ Mountain Desert Peaks Resolution Submitted by Dale Yeo

The City Council Chambers was quite full, mostly for discussion and vote on Resolution 17-205 in support of the Organ Mountains Desert Peaks National Monument.

The succinct form of the resolution was presented as the following:

1. Support the Monument
2. Oppose any efforts to rescind, reduce or otherwise harm the Monument
3. Oppose any changes to the Antiquities Act

For everyone's information, the Resolution was read aloud in its totality and then public testimony began. Each person was allowed three minutes that was later changed to two as the Mayor saw how many people wished to speak. From my notes the breakdown of the number of speakers pro and con was the following (not counting the questioning period by the Councilors):

Pro: 27

Con: 5

The Con speakers could be divided into two categories: three ranchers with concerns about grazing and their private lands and two speakers who objected to the wording of the Resolution. The ranchers' concerns were presented sensibly, but their concerns about grazing and private lands had already been resolved in the original Monument plans. No ranchers or anyone else appeared to say they had been hurt in any tangible way by the Monument.

Pro speakers represented wide-ranging interests in the community: Teachers, Archaeologist, NMSU Wildlife Ecologist, Photographer, Religious Leaders, A Home Builder, A Mother, NMSU Wildlife Federation Representative, HTC (High Tech Consortium) Representative, Heritage Tour Owner, Volunteer at Dripping Springs, Restaurant Owners and well-know monument backers, Jeff Steinborn, Nathan Small, Bill Soules, David Soules.

Several who spoke were especially enthusiastic as most said their businesses were doing much better now and since they routinely talk to their customers they could attribute a significant portion of it to visitors attracted by the Monument.

Councilor Levatino interjected at another time that she had polled businesses in her district and all but one said they had benefited from the Monument in one way or another.

Each Councilor was then allowed to comment and question people from the public who had spoken and who might be there and had not yet spoken.

A discussion occurred about the third point of the Resolution- the Antiquities Act of 1906 < <https://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/anti1906.htm> >

After reading this law aloud and some discussion, it was moved and approved to strike Part 3 from the resolution. Its proponents agreed and are planning to bring it up again later. This had not been part of the original Resolution, either.

The City Council voted unanimously for approval of Resolution 17_205.

Treasurer's Talk

Submitted by Stephen Litts

My first two Treasurer's Talk columns of the new League year covered the four funding streams that support the work of our local, how your dues are divided up between local, state and national operations, the importance that donations play in the local operation and education funds and the steps you need to take to make those donations.

So, how do our local efforts stand?

To date, 41% of members are PAID UP for their 2017-18 dues. Thanks to those who have done so. To meet the financial requirements of our local – pay the bills and create materials to

educate our eligible voters – we encourage members to send in your dues soon. The League's address is LWVGLC, PO Box 8322, Las Cruces, NM 88006. I'll thank you in advance.

Also, to date we have received an average of \$120 per donor to the operation fund and \$73 per donor to the education fund. It's a good start. We encourage you to consider joining other members who have already supported our local's work through your own generous donation. Look back at the May edition of *The Voter* to review the steps on how to make a donation, or contact me, s.litts2011@gmail.com. I'll be happy to send you the information.