

The VOTER

League of Women Voters
of Greater Las Cruces
(575) 524-VOTE (8683)
Web Site: www.lwvglc.org
March 2014



Lunch with a Leader

New Mexico Santa Teresa Port of Entry for Commerce and Tourism

William Mattiace, Executive Director, NM Port Authority and
former Mayor of the City of Las Cruces,

Monday, March 10, 2014, 11:30 a.m.
Good Samaritan Social Center, Creative Arts Room, 3011 Buena Vida Circle



New Mexico Border Authority (NMBA) is a state agency with oversight for infrastructure and planning for International Ports of Entry. NMBA is the lead agency for the Binational Borderplex Master plan for the areas of Chihuahua, El Paso and Santa Teresa. Realizing the impact of Union Pacific Intermodal starting

(Continued on page 3)

CALENDAR

March 3 (Monday) - Board Meeting, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m., City Hall, Room 2007

March 3 (Monday) - Deadline for making reservations Lunch with a Leader, RSVP: Roberta Gran, Tel: 373-8490, Email: robertagran@q.com.

March 10 (Monday) - Deadline for submission of reports and other Annual Meeting information to Bonnie Burn, for publication in 2014 Annual Meeting Voter, Email: burnb@comcast.net.

March 10 (Monday) - New Member Orientation, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m., Good Samaritan Social Center Conference Room (near Main Auditorium), 3011 Buena Vida Circle.

March 10 (Monday) - Lunch with a Leader, Mayor William Mattiace, New Mexico Santa Teresa Port of Entry for Commerce and Tourism. Good Samaritan Social Center Creative Arts Room, 3011 Buena Vida Circle. \$10. Reservations Required: Roberta Gran, Tel: 373-8490, Email: robertagran@q.com. If reservations are not cancelled, you will be charged for lunch.

March 20 (Thursday) - Third Thursday Book Club, "The Cleveland Clinic Way: Lessons in Excellence from One of the World's Leading Health Care Organizations" by Dr. Toby Cosgrove, Gwen Hanson's home, Tel: 556-9251.

March 22 (Saturday) - Exploring Equity, Community & Hope in New Mexico, Part 2: Junto! Working Together, Working as One presentation by Dr. Enrique Aleman, Assistant Vice President for Student Equity & Diversity, University of Utah and Co-Founder & Co-Director, Adelante Partnership, DACC Auditorium, East Mesa Campus (see ad on p.9)

Notable dates

8 - International Women's Day
16-22 - Open Meeting Sunshine Week

Mark Your Calendar

April 26 - LWVGLC Annual Meeting
May 17 - LWVNM Council, Santa Fe
June 6-10 - LWVUS Convention, Dallas, TX



The VOTER

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The League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces

P.O. Box 8322
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President - Erika Graf-Webster

Vice President & Program
Roberta Gran

Secretary - Christina Little

Treasurer - Ruth Benjamins

Director, Membership
Johnnie Aldrich

Co-Director, Voter Services
Gracia Class
Gwen Hanson

Nominating Committee
Chair: Marjorie Burr
Elected Member: Sue Cain

Program for Study and Action Committees

Voting Impediments
Roberta Gran - 373-8490
Johnnie Aldrich - 522-1544

Quality of Life (Happiness)
Joy Goldbaum - 527-8620

Affordable Housing
Vicki Simons -522-4813
Christina Little-373-1882

Education
Jane Asche - 532-8087
Sue Cain - 647-8250

**Mental Health Services
in Doña Ana County**
Becky Beckett - 522-8171

Metropolitan Court
Marjorie Burr - 522-2528

ACTION COMMITTEE
Barbara Goedecke - 522-0323

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*President's Message*

It has been a busy month. We ended January with League Day at the Legislature, had our Board meeting on February 3, the Membership and Leadership Development conference call on February 4, our joint meeting with AAUW on February 8, our League Birthday celebration on February 15, and Book Club on February 20.

The League Day activities were organized by our State League and included several presentations by legislators and other experts about ongoing issues (see full report on pp. 4-6). The most striking thing that I came away with was understanding how very badly New Mexico compares to other states. We were told that New Mexico ranked last (worst; i.e., 50th) among the states in a number of areas, including: poverty, child wellbeing, tax structure (that's why the state has to rely so heavily on "incentives" to attract new business), income inequality, mental illness, and 49th in education (at least we weren't the very worst in this category)

These figures are very disheartening—and I can't help but ask WHY this is the case. Is there some strong relationship among these factors? It doesn't seem to me that all of these factors should correlate. For example, does having the worst tax structure somehow influence the population so that we also have the most mental illness? At the Board meeting, we discussed and decided to pursue the possibility of pulling together a group of experts and having a community round-table to explore the relationships among these factors.

At the February Board meeting, we also activated our Annual Committees of Budget, Bylaws and Nominations. If you get a call to provide input to these committees, please do so. We also decided to move our **Annual Meeting date to April 26**—originally, it had been scheduled for April 19, Easter Saturday. We figured our members would probably rather spend that day with their families.

The joint AAUW and League meeting on February 8 was very informative. Our Affordable Housing Committee gave an excellent presentation on our League study and our findings. Bonnie Eisenberg, AAUW President, said that it was the best-attended AAUW meeting she had experienced.

We held our League's 94th Birthday celebration on February 15. Our treasurer, Ruth Benjamins, was able to arrange for us to have this event at the Picacho Hills Country Club. If you missed this, you missed out on a really good time. The food was outstanding, and the conversations lively and lots of fun. Everyone got a box of chocolates to take home as a door prize, with a giant box of chocolates being awarded to the most recent League member who

(Continued on page 4)

Board Highlights - February 3, 2014 - Christina Little, Secretary

The next board meeting will be held on March 3, 2014, 1:30 pm, Room 2007 of City Hall. All League members are invited to attend.

The date of the Annual Meeting has been changed to Saturday, April 26 from 9 am to 12 noon at Good Samaritan Social Center, Creative Arts Room. Breakfast will be served. This is the meeting where the year's business is conducted, officers are elected, and a budget and program are adopted. There may be Bylaws changes to consider. Mark your calendars.

The LWVGLC has been going through a Strategic Planning process. After identification at the Retreat, consideration by all members present at the Program for Study and Action Planning meeting, and discussion by the Board of Directors, the following portions of the Short Term Strategic Plan were adopted by consensus of the Board of Directors:

- Rethinking the luncheon approach
- Establishing a new member "buddy" system
- Revising the New Member Orientation strategy
- Initiating "Talk Abouts"
- Conducting a one-on-one telephone poll of members, and
- Posting the Yearly Events Calendar on website.

All League members will see these implemented as rapidly as possible.

Lunch with a Leader *(Continued from page 1)*

operations in Santa Teresa, it is imperative that NM border plans are designed for growth and all the impacts associated with growth. On March 10 former Mayor Mattiace will describe the planning projects and efforts being made at all three ports of entry that promote commerce, provide safe crossings and maintain a binational relationship with Mexico. Also, the plan promotes tourism in New Mexico.

We know Mr. Mattiace because he served as Mayor of the City of Las Cruces (2003-2007), and City Councilor, District 2 (1999-2003). He sold cars at Wallace Chevrolet and Sisbarro dealerships. He and his wife, Wanda Mattiace, own Adventure Travel. Arriving from Long Island, NY, forty years ago, he has been committed to community service. Currently he volunteers his time on community organizations and boards. He and his wife are members of LWVGLC.

We invite you to join us for lunch!



Connie Lee

Randy Harris

Jose Montelongo

Anita Hernandez

J.T. Perez

For contact information,
please consult
Membership Directory Addendum

Friends of the League

John Ameriks, M.D.

Anonymous

Robert Buggert

Sharon Burbano

Reed R. Burn

Joseph P. Camunez, D.D.S.

David Sudimack, D.D.S.

Donald Dresp

Edward Jones - Connie Lee

Roberta Gran

Nancy & Ken Hall

Win Jacobs

Keller Williams Realty, Laura Szalay

Al Kissling

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Lilley & O'Connell Law Offices

Louise P. Lockhart

Barbara Myers

Jean Ossorio

Clifford Pelton

Nancy Phillips

Kathryn Schultz

Shirley Soules

Marie Sutter-Sinden

Sunspot Solar Energy

Donna Tate

Williams Design Group, Inc.

Zia Engineering & Environment

Consultants

Thank You

President's Message *(Continued from page 2)*

attended, Cynthia Pelak. We held a silent auction with many donations from the attendees, and made \$122 for the League.

The book discussed at the February book club meeting was Nate Silver's "The Signal and the Noise: Why So Many Predictions Fail but Some Don't." Contrary to what you might think based on that title, it is actually quite an entertaining book, with the author's sense of humor well displayed. If you're not a book club member, try it once – it's a great group that engages in lots of enlightening and fun discussions. The next meeting is on March 20.

Erika

League of Women Voters of New Mexico 2014 League Day at the NM Legislature

January 27 and 28, 2014

Reported by Erika Graf-Webster and Sue Cain

League Day activities started with a Legislative Reception hosted by League of Women Voters of New Mexico on Monday, January 27, 2014, at 5:30 p.m. at Garret's Desert Inn in Santa Fe. Ray Powell, State Land Commissioner, as well as a number of our legislators attended including Bill Soules, Nate Cote, Mary Helen Garcia, Linda Lopez, Cisco McSorley, Gail Chasey and Peter Wirth.

The evening was devoted to a panel discussion entitled "Tax Fairness in New Mexico – 2014 Legislative Budget Priorities/ Initiatives." The discussion was started by **Richard Anklam, Executive Director of the NM Tax Research Institute**. He said that the tax code should be fair, simple, comprehensive, efficient, and subject to accountability. New Mexico does not stack up particularly well against our neighbors in the Southwest. The corporate tax rate is the highest (actually among all 50 states and the DC, New Mexico has the highest corporate tax rate), and is especially onerous to the manufacturing sector. Another example of burdensome taxing is that New Mexico taxes federal contractors, which most states do not tax at all. The state relies on tax incentives to attract new business.

According to Mr. Anklam, the whole New Mexico tax structure should be redone. The

overall corporate rate should be lowered, and there should be much less reliance on tax incentives. For this fiscal year, New Mexico's budget is approximately \$6.2B. The total dollars collected as revenue is much higher, but a large portion of it, about \$11B, goes back to local governments. The bottom line, according to Mr. Anklam, is that New Mexico simply does not have enough revenue income, and something will have to be done about that sooner or later.

Bill Jordan, policy director for New Mexico Voices for Children, was the next speaker. His organization analyzes the state budget to determine if a large enough share of taxes is spent for children. Unfortunately, New Mexico ranks as the WORST state for child wellbeing. It is also dead last in job growth among the states.

Of all states, New Mexico has cut education spending the most. The state is serving only a small fraction of the needed early education program. Mr. Jordan said "kids who start behind, stay behind," and that, unfortunately, is the case in NM. Because of this, a lot of money is spent on remedial education – that amount would be much more wisely spent on early childhood education.

(Continued on page 5)

League Day *(Continued from page 4)*

Mr. Jordan went on to say that New Mexico is first of all the states in income inequality, but this is not getting any attention in the legislature. The tax structure is grossly unfair – the poorest New Mexicans are paying the highest rate of state and local taxes. The state income tax needs to be revised to be much more progressive. Some of the capital gains tax breaks need to be removed, and additional revenue needs to be spent on education.

State Senator Peter Wirth closed out the evening. He said that the state needs to look at all tax policy in a bipartisan way. There simply has to be an increase in tax income. The Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) has to be fixed – get rid of exemptions and tax credits. Senator Wirth feels that a new commission is needed to study and revise the entire tax structure. Unfortunately, the political environment in the state is such that no legislation to increase taxes can be passed.

League Day activities continued the following morning, Tuesday, January 28. League members were encouraged to see their legislators in the morning, starting at 8:00 a.m., at the Roundhouse.

Sue Cain visited the Roundhouse, and was able to attend a meeting of the Senate Conservation Committee, which was ongoing when she arrived there at 9:00 a.m. The focus of the Conservation Committee's agenda was the proposed project by Governor Martinez to divert part of the Gila River to meet the water needs of other areas of New Mexico. Senator Peter Wirth, Chair of the Senate Conservation Committee, was just concluding his opening remarks on the diversion of the Gila River. Comments and testimony were given by Senators Howie Morales (D, Silver City), Nancy Rodriguez (D, Santa Fe), and Benny J. Shendo, Jr. (D, Jemez Pueblo) who all opposed the diversion of the Gila River. The main reasons for opposing this legislation were that it diverts essential water resources from the Indian reservation areas; that it would

damage some really important environmental areas that are a part of and dependent on the Gila River; and would negatively affect tourism in the area and the outdoor recreational use of the Gila River by Silver City and other surrounding communities that are dependent on the Gila River.

Another issue raised by Senator Joseph Cervantes (D, Las Cruces) during the testimonies and discussion was the fact that last year the NM Legislators submitted a counter proposal that NM use federal funds for at least eight non-diversion alternatives that were researched and would meet regional water supply needs in southwestern New Mexico (SB 89). Remarks were made that this was "Day 8" of the current 2014 Legislative Session and there was no evidence that the Governor had taken advantage of these alternatives.

A member of the SW New Mexico Green Chamber spoke to the Committee and shared that the Gila River Diversion Plan would cost New Mexico taxpayers between \$300 to \$500 million. The point was made that using Federal Funds that are available to New Mexico would fund most of the eight non-diversion alternatives, that these non-diversion approaches would make diverting the Gila River unnecessary and that they would provide even more water resources without damaging the Gila River system.

The rest of the League events took place at the Land Office. At 8:30 a.m., the film "Inequity for All" was shown. League Friend Al Kissling attended the showing and gave high praise to the film. It is available through Netflix and Amazon.

The state League scheduled two speakers for the "League Educational Event" that started at 10:30 a.m.. **Viki Harrison of Common Cause New Mexico** spoke about the bills that Common Cause is supporting and about other political issues. She said that their "Good Government" bill is being carried in the Senate by Bill O'Neill, and they are hoping for passage in this session.

(Continued on page 6)

League Day *(Continued from page 5)*

Common Cause is also supporting a constitutional amendment to establish an Independent Redistricting Commission for the state.

Common Cause also is pushing a bill to establish an Independent Ethics Commission via a constitutional amendment. According to a recent poll, 87% of the population supports this. Ms. Harrison stressed the importance of passing this bill; she said that under current rules, whistleblowers, instead of being rewarded, actually face fines and jail time.

Ms. Harrison then turned to discussing money in politics and the lack of interest by most voters in elections. She said that PAC spending in the state has doubled in the last eight years, and the sources of these moneys are generally unknowable. PACs get about 80% of their money from other PACs and from businesses, and there are no disclosure requirements. Common Cause is pushing for increased public financing of elections.

Finally, Ms. Harrison said that voters need to be better educated, and the importance of voting needs to be emphasized to them. In a survey about the 2012 elections, it was found that the average American spent five minutes thinking about the election. Senator Ortiz y Pino is working on voter education .

The final session of the event was a talk about the recent behavioral health turmoil in the state. **Linda Siegle of the National Association of Social Workers** was the scheduled speaker. However, before she started her talk, **Patrick Tyrell, Executive Director of the New Mexico chapter**, addressed the audience. He started by summarizing what had occurred: in June of 2013, funding was cut off for most of the New Mexico facilities that provide mental health services, mostly provided by social workers. This affected 90% of all NM patients. An auditing company, hired by the Governor, had claimed that they had uncovered

fraudulent billing issues. The Governor hired an Arizona corporation to take over mental health services.

Mr. Tyrell said that New Mexico has the highest rate of mental illness in the US and spends the least on such services. The cutting of funds for the NM service providers was a total violation of the notion of "community services" (e.g., know the community and provide tailored services), and was done without due process. To date, none of the cancelled NM service providers has been told what it was it had done wrong. Legislation has been submitted by Senator Mary Kay Papen to address the issues raised by this event. The bill calls for evidence of clear fraud, transparency of the process, and the involvement of the Attorney General to review and verify allegations before funding can be cut from a service organization.

Ms. Siegle then completed the discussion by stating that New Mexico is sorely lacking in adequate health care services, especially in the area of behavioral health. This action of firing the NM health care providers and bringing in an out-of-state company to take over has only aggravated the situation. Severely ill patients spent weeks without access to any treatment.

LWVNM President Meredith Machen closed the League Day activities by thanking all for coming and urging members to keep up with the tracking of bills through this legislative session via the online LWVNMAction list.

*Ruth Benjamins
Terry Sleight Memorial
Award Recipient*



This award is given by AAUW in recognition of efforts in advancing women's issues. Ruth is a member of the League of Women Voters and currently serves as Treasurer of LWVGLC.

Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument Town Hall

By Erika Graf-Webster

The attempt to get recognition for the Organ Mountains and associated lands as a national park or monument has been ongoing for several years, having been started by former US Senator Jeff Bingaman. In recent years, the interest in achieving such a designation has greatly increased. This interest has been spurred by the many recently discovered native American artifacts, such as petroglyphs and cave paintings, as well as other interesting landmarks, such as the remnants of the old Butterfield Stage Coach trail and World War II bombing practice areas. Our League held a public town hall on September 13, 2012, led by David Soules who showed photos of many of these items. The League also sent a letter to President Obama and the Secretary of the Interior in support of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument.

The monument designation can be achieved via two paths, either by presidential executive action or by congressional legislation. At this point, there are two competing bills addressing the legislative alternative. Representative Steven Pearce (R) proposed a bill (HR 995) that would give the national monument designation only to the Organ Mountains and would encompass approximately 55,000 acres. US Senators Tom Udall (D) and Martin Heinrich (D) have proposed the *Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks Conservation Act* (S 1805) that includes not only the Organ Mountains but also a large wilderness area totaling about 500,000 acres.

US Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell was invited by the two Senators to tour the area and get acquainted with its beauty, uniqueness and diverse history. The visit took place on January 23-24, culminating in a public town hall on January 24, 2014. About 750 people, including several LWVGLC League members, attended the town hall. The meeting started with introductions of the Secretary of the Interior,

the two US Senators, and a number of stakeholders including environmentalists and conservationists (David Soules spoke), ranchers, developers, and a Native American representative, who had been identified in advance to speak on the subject. Approximately 2/3 of the stakeholders were in favor of the Senators' proposal, and about 1/3 spoke against it.

Following this introductory session, audience members were given the opportunity to speak. Tickets were handed out ahead of time to anyone who was interested in speaking – there was a drawing of ticket numbers, and those individuals were called up to speak. (As with every other raffle I have ever participated in, my number was not called, but I did leave a letter, attached, in the comment box at the end of the meeting.) Among the individuals who spoke in favor of the proposals were former NM Senator Stephen Fischmann, current NM Senator Bill Soules, and many conservationists. Quite a few developers and ranchers spoke against the measure.

By the end of the presentations, a number of attendees left, leaving about 500 individuals. Secretary Jewell then asked for a show of hands in response to her three questions: (1) Who is not in favor of any designation or set-aside? Approximately 15 people raised their hands; (2) Who is in favor of only designating the Organ Mountains (i.e., the Representative Pearce proposal involving 55,000 acres) as a National Monument? Approximately 35-40 people raised their hands; (3) Who is in favor of the full 500,000 acre proposal (i.e., the Senators' bill)? The vast majority of the attendees raised their hands in support of this option. The Secretary thanked the audience for the information presented to her, and the meeting was closed.

Don't wait. The time will never be just right. –Napoleon Hill



League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces

STATEMENT – Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks Conservation Act

Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell Public Meeting, January 24, 2014

I am speaking on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces.

The League of Women Voters is in strong support of designating the sites identified in Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich's bill, the "Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks Conservation Act," as a National Monument to be preserved now and for the future for the purpose of protecting the unique natural vistas and cultural characteristics of this area.

We, the League, have sponsored a well-received community forum, with presentations by David Soules of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance, that explained the uniqueness of these lands and the benefits of having them declared to be a National Monument. These areas include breathtaking natural scenery, important watersheds, numerous wildlife species, as well as evidence of the very long history of human occupation. There are remnants of ancient Native American settlements including cave paintings and petroglyphs, structures from the original Spanish settlements, parts of the old Butterfield trail, as well as the use of an extensive area as bombing target practice sites during World War II. A lot of things have happened in this area, and it deserves being preserved for future generations.

The extraordinary history, charm and beauty of this part of Southern New Mexico is not well known outside this region. The designation as a National Monument would change this. Many positive benefits would be gained, including national visibility leading to significantly increased tourism with great economic benefits for the region, and the maintenance of the traditional recreational uses of the land, while limiting commercial developments.

We, the League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces, urge the designation of the geographic area identified in the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks Conservation bill as a National Monument.

Respectfully submitted by
Erika Graf-Webster, President

VIVA Doña Ana Community Planning Academy was held on Saturday, February 22, 2014. The academy gave residents an opportunity to learn about the planning process that is guiding Doña Ana County into a sustainable future. The program was interactive and moved participants from table to table where they learned about the Doña Ana regional project, skills for assessing community issues, budgeting to meet needs, and identifying community issues that were important to each of them.

In fall 2011, the Camino Real Consortium (web site: vivadoñaana.org) was awarded a \$2 million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant funded by The Partnership for Sustainable Communities, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Transportation, and the Environmental Protection Agency. The project seeks to integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation and infrastructure development. The League has been represented at meetings since the project began.



Voter Services - *Prepared by Gwen Hanson*

The Town of Mesilla Municipal Election for Mayor and two at-large Trustee positions will be held March 4, 2014. Early voting extends from February 12-28 at Mesilla Town Hall. The League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces was invited to host the Town of Mesilla Candidates Forum.

The Candidate Forum was held Wednesday, February 12, 2014, 6:30– 8:00 p.m., at the Mesilla Community Center. The two candidates for Mayor and the five candidates to fill the two at-large Trustee positions participated. Questions for the candidates were generated by members of the Mesilla community and were numerous. The event was well-attended by approximately fifty people.

Erika Graf-Webster, President, served as the moderator. Reviewers were Bonnie Burn, Roberta Gran, and Dale Yeo; Bob Burn was the timer; Johnnie Aldridge and Judy LaPointe were runners; and Gracia Class and Gwen Hanson were greeters. Thank you to all the volunteers who made this event so successful.

Exploring Equity, Community, & Hope in New Mexico

Part 2: Juntos! Working Together Working as One

Saturday, March 22, 2014
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Doña Ana Community College
East Mesa Campus, Auditorium

Light lunch and snacks provided.

Exploring Equity, Community & Hope in New Mexico - *Reported by Bonnie Burn*

In 1963, Paul Saltzman, a Canadian, joined the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). He traveled to Greenwood, Mississippi to register voters during the Civil Rights Movement. There he encountered Delay De La Beckwith, son of Bryon De La Beckwith, a white supremacist and Ku Klux Klansman. Delay welcomed Paul to Greenwood with a punch in the jaw, attempted further violence but Paul was able to get away.

“The Last Knight Standing: Is Reconciliation Possible?” is a film documentary about the reconciliation of the two men some fifty years later. Interspersed with face-to-face conversations are depictions of events that occurred in Greenwood. Morgan Freeman and Harry Belafonte are featured. Bryon De La Beckwith was ultimately convicted of the assassination of the civil rights activist, Medger Evers, in Greenwood.

A very interesting question-and-answer session followed the showing of the film. It was particularly poignant to hear events about that historical period from someone who experienced it first-hand.

This event focused on racism, oppression, and activism. It was the first in a series of three community-based events that was organized by Azadeh F. Osanloo, Ph.D., Stan Fulton Endowed Chair for the Improvement of Border and Rural Schools, in collaboration with the League, NMSU’s College of Educations and Borderlands Center for Educational Studies.

The goal of the series is to develop relationships and networks in southern NM, particularly between educators and the community. Part 2 will be concerned with creating community, university, and educational agency partnerships and will include a film, “Stolen Education,” followed by discussion with Dr. Enrique Aleman. (see ad, left column)

LEAGUE OBSERVER REPORTS

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.

Las Cruces Public Schools (LCPS)

Board Meeting, February 18, 2014, 6:30-8:30 p.m. - *Bonnie Burn, Observer*

All Board members except Maria Flores were present. Steven Sanchez, Deputy Superintendent, and Dane Kennon, Associate Superintendent for Operations, were excused midway through the meeting to return to the NM Legislative Session in Santa Fe.

Superintendent Rounds reported that the legislators continue to work on the final State Budget. It appears that as much as a 6.2% increase for education may be included. Also, legislation was proposed so that entering high school freshmen will keep the same physical education requirements through graduation.

TEACH: Tim Hand, LCPS Statistician, introduced School Board members to the Value Added Model (VAM) that will be used to evaluate teachers. VAM is a model that measures the teacher's contribution to student achievement in a given year by comparing current test scores of students to those same students in previous schools years. In addition to student achievement, classroom observations, and multiple other measures will be included in the evaluation. Mr. Hand's presentation is available at <http://vimeo.com/82327278>.

LCPS Audit for FY 2013 was completed by Moss Adams, LLP, a CPA firm located in Albuquerque. The school district received a very good report. LCPS was the only NM school district that complied with new language and other small changes made by the NM Auditor. There were seven non-compliant findings. Information technology issues were concerned with incorporating an

incident response plan, security logs and passwords. Procurement involved following regular procedures for bid process, late fees, and unallowable cost that did not involve large amounts of money. Los Montañños Charter High School's financial reports have improved and passed the audit with one non-compliance notation related to its Activities Fund. This citation will be remedied by having cash accounts reconciled on a monthly basis by a person who is not involved in check disbursement. La Academia Dolores Huerta was included in this report and completed a satisfactory audit.

There was a first reading of three proposed policies:

- Operational Cash Balance, which is helpful for bond rating discussions.
- Admission Procedures will facilitate transferring students among schools at the request of their parent(s) or guardian.
- After School Program will develop procedures for the programs held after school at numerous public district schools.

Mesilla Valley Public Housing

Authority (MVPHA), February 18, 2014, Noon - 1:30 p.m. - *Vicki Simons, Observer*

Chairman Felix Cordero brought the meeting to order at noon. Four commissioners were present: Commissioners Cordero and Theresa Olguin-Fisher, and the two newly appointed Commissioners, Shelley Sanders and Beth Bardwell.

Shelley Sanders was appointed by Mayor Miyagishima on January 21, 2014, and her appointment became official on February 3,

(Continued on page 11)

League Observer Reports (Continued)

MVPHA (Continued from page 10)

2014. Commissioner Sanders is the Assistant Vice President (mortgage lending) at First American Bank. Her prior employment includes Bank of America and Matric Capital Bank. She has completed courses in mortgage processing and origination with the American Banker's Institute. She is the only two-time recipient of the Las Cruces Association of Realtors' Realtor Choice Award.

Beth Bardwell was appointed by the Doña Ana Board of County Commissions on January 28, 2014. Ms. Bardwell is an attorney who has spent the last 18 years in Las Cruces representing environmental organizations specializing in water policy and freshwater conservation. In her career in public policy law she also served as a prosecutor for the City of Flagstaff and has represented the Navajo Nation. She is a member of the League of Women Voters in Las Cruces and is running for Doña Ana County Commissioner in District 3 in the November 2014 election.

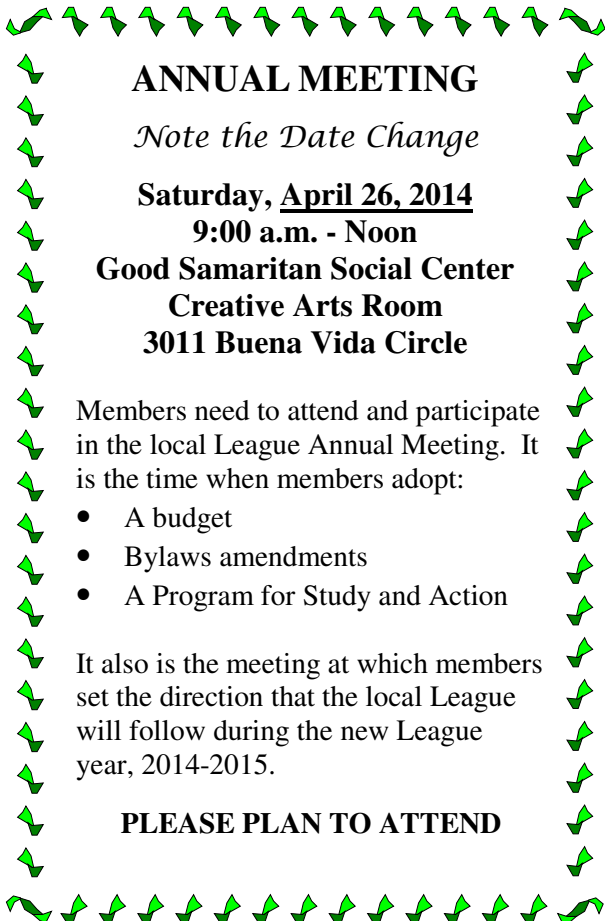
There were three resolutions on the agenda for passage.

- The first involved minor changes to the MVPHA Employee Manual.
- The second revised the payment standard for manufactured home space rental. Under rental assistance provided through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the owner of a manufactured home can apply for rental assistance through Section 8 for the space his home will sit on. There were questions on how this amount is determined, and HUD has a formula for how much it will pay.
- The third resolution requested approval of the Board for an agreement with the Eastern New Mexico Housing Authority (ENMHA) to temporarily manage the HUD Section 8 Rental Voucher Program. In October, 2013, MVPHA terminated the contract with Annetti Manchuca

Consultants for management of this program. At the time Annetti Manchuca was being paid \$31,000/month to perform management of the complex program. The ENMHA will charge \$6,000. After several suggestions from Board members regarding the language of the agreement, scope of work and schedule of deliverables, the agreement was approved.

The last portion of the meeting was devoted to routine reports from MVPHA staff: Sharon Hansen, Accountant; Christine Gonzales, Office Manager; Lee Montague, Modernization/Maintenance Manager; Jessie Padilla, Housing Programs Manager/Deputy Director; and Robbie Levey, Executive Director.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m. to go into Executive Session.



ANNUAL MEETING

Note the Date Change

Saturday, April 26, 2014

9:00 a.m. - Noon

Good Samaritan Social Center

Creative Arts Room

3011 Buena Vida Circle

Members need to attend and participate in the local League Annual Meeting. It is the time when members adopt:

- A budget
- Bylaws amendments
- A Program for Study and Action

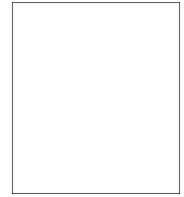
It also is the meeting at which members set the direction that the local League will follow during the new League year, 2014-2015.

PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND



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



FIRST CLASS

EXTRA
NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION
 followed by
LUNCH WITH A LEADER
 Monday, March 10, 11:30 a.m.
 Good Samaritan—Social Center

March 2014
In This Issue

Lunch with a Leader 1
 President’s Message 2
 Board Meeting Highlights 3
 League Day at the Legislature. 4-6
 Ruth Benajmins Awardee 6
 Organ Mountain-Desert Peaks 7
 President’s Statement About Monument . . 8
 Viva Doña Ana Academy 8
 League News 9
 Observer Reports
 • Las Cruces Public Schools 10
 • Mesilla Valley Public Housing 10
 • Annual Meeting Schedule Change . . . 11

WE  OUR MEMBERS

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

Monday, March 10, 10:30 a.m.
 (Just before Lunch with a Leader)

**Good Samaritan Social Center
 Conference Room**
 (Near Main Auditorium, Ground Floor)

Contact: Johnnie Aldrich, 522-1544
Email: jaldrich@earthlink.net

Membership Application

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

Name: _____
2nd Household: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Email: _____
Telephone: _____

Contributions:
 _____ **League of Women Voters Education
 Fund (Tax Deductible)**
 _____ **Contribute to 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.