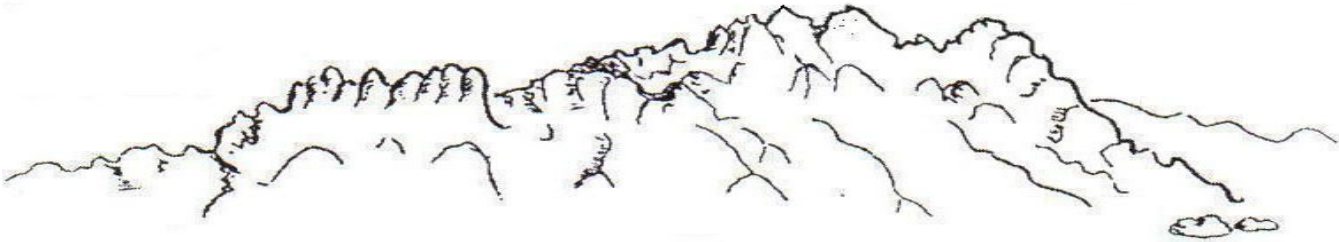


The VOTER

League of Women Voters
of Greater Las Cruces
Las Cruces NM
524-VOTE (8683)
www.lwvglc.org
April 2010



2010 ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, April 17, 2010, 9 a.m.

*Good Samaritan Social Center, Creative Arts Room
3011 Buena Vida Circle, Las Cruces*

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions Bonnie Burn
2. Adoption of Business Meeting Rules Bonnie Burn
3. Parliamentarian Bonnie Burn
4. Changes to the Agenda All
5. Approval of the 2009 Annual Meeting Minutes Nancy Phillips
6. Treasurer's Report (Handouts at Meeting) Louise Tracey-Hosa
7. Report from the President Bonnie Burn

Annual Meeting Business

- Adoption of the Nonpartisan Policy Bonnie Burn
- Adoption of the Bylaw Changes Christina Little
- Adoption of the 2010-2011 Proposed Budget Connie Lee
- Report of the Nominating Committee and Election Johnnie Aldrich
- Proposed Program for Study and Action Marjorie Burr
 - Adoption of current Statement of Positions
 - Adoption of Recommended/Non-Recommended Program for Study and Action
 - Prioritizing Ongoing Program for Study and Action

Other Annual Meeting Business

- Identification of LWVUS Convention Delegates (June 11-15, Atlanta Marriott Hotel, Atlanta, GA)
- Identification of LWVNM Council Delegates (May 15, Hilton of Santa Fe, Santa Fe, NM)
- Direction to the Board from Members

Program Conclusion

**This meeting will start with a buffet breakfast at 9 a.m.
Cost: \$8 - RSVP: Tuesday (April 6, 2010)
Sharon Burbano: 526-2860 or email: sburbano@aol.com**

The VOTER

Volume 40, Issue 12 - April 2010
Published Monthly

**The League of Women Voters
of Greater Las Cruces**

P.O. Box 8322
Las Cruces, NM 88006-8322
(505) 524-VOTE (8683)
www.lwvglc.org

President—Bonnie Burn

**Vice President & Voter
Services**—Vicki Simons

Secretary—Nancy Phillips

Treasurer—Louise Tracey-Hosa

Director, Membership
Pat Pederson

Director, Program
Sharon Burbano

Nominating Committee
Johnnie Aldrich, Chair
Marjorie Burr, Elected Member

STUDY GROUPS

**Mental Illness Services
in Doña Ana County**
Becky Beckett—522-8171
Mickey Curtis—532-5656

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

Metropolitan Court
Marjorie Burr—522-2528

ACTION COMMITTEE
Vicki Simons—522-4813

Archivist—Barbara Myers

Newsletter Editor
Bonnie Burn—526-0013
burnb@comcast.net

Web Master—Dale Yeo
405-7530
daleyeo@comcast.net

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

Business Meeting Rules:

- Only members will have the privilege of the floor.
- No person may speak twice until all members who wish to speak have spoken.
- Motions with wording important to the minutes will be submitted in writing to the secretary.
- Adoption of recommended program items requires approval by majority of members present.
- Those members present at the Annual Meeting shall constitute a quorum.

**League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
April 18, 2009, 9:00 a.m.– 12 Noon
Unitarian Universalist Church, Las Cruces NM**

Attendees: (List on file): 30 members, 1 guest. All Board Members.

Call to Order: 9:17 a.m.

Welcome and Introductions:
President Cathy Mathews welcomed all and introduced the Board members.

Appointment of Parliamentarians:
Marjorie Burr and Marnie Leverett

Approval of 2008 Meeting Minutes: Approved with correction of meeting date.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Pat Kratz distributed the annual bank statement through March 31, 2009 and a summary of 2008-2009 income and expenses. The per member payment (PMP) for the national league has increased (\$29.20), while local membership dues remained the same (\$50). Thus, member donations for the coming year will be greatly appreciated and community donations will be solicited. Members were reminded to submit reimbursement vouchers and receipts when they incur out-of-pocket expenses when doing official League work, so in-kind contributions can be tracked accurately.

The Treasurer's Report was given and will be filed.

President's Report: President Mathews thanked Pat Kratz for her work during the past two years. She also acknowledged the work of all members who worked on publications and committees throughout the year on the great number of issues at all levels of League. Aldrich suggested that Diane Greenholdt, editor, *Who's Who*, be recognized for her work and that *The Bulletin* be recognized for sponsorship of printing *Who's Who*.

Cathy Mathews requested reports from each Study Group.

Action Committee, Vicki Simons: Vicki reported that during the recent state legislative session the State Action Committee, composed of members from the local Leagues, has been meeting weekly via conference call. Successful lobbying efforts included: abolition of the death penalty in New Mexico and defeat of the SunCal TIDD request that would have created urban sprawl in Albuquerque. Although health care issues were introduced during the legislative session, none were passed. Vicki thanked members who participated in the local action alert broadcast email system used during the

legislative session that alerted members to telephone or email legislators as legislation came up for vote. It was an effective method.

The Local Action Committee membership needs to be expanded, and Vicki asked members to volunteer. If a special Legislative session is called by the Governor, the local action alert broadcast email system will be reactivated.

Behavioral Health Study Committee, Becky

Beckett: Becky thanked the Board for its support during the past year when she has been overwhelmed with many responsibilities. She reported that Mickey Curtis will be serving as co-chair of the committee and will bring more structure to the group.

The group began working in May 2007 to identify resources in Doña Ana County. Members established a working mission: to identify existing and needed behavioral health resources and services in Doña Ana County. Later, education of members and consensus will take place. During the past year, members toured Southwest Counseling Center, Mesilla Valley Hospital, Memorial Medical Health Center and Families and Youth, Inc. and met with staff. The committee is looking forward to the coming year when it will complete phase 1, set timelines for phase 2 to educate League members and develop proposed consensus position during phase 3.

Becky reported that the state legislature had reviewed a seven-page list of new legislation regarding behavioral health; 13 bills passed. There were two pocket vetoes, and the Governor vetoed several others. Unused pharmaceuticals may now be donated to other non-profits, whereas before they had to be thrown away. Guardianships have been improved as has housing law. There is a proposed Crisis Triage Center for the county that will be located next to the Detention Center and Tresco Mental Health Services. When completed, instead of incarceration, police would drop off individuals with mental health problems at the center for evaluation. Half of the \$4 million cost of the center has been funded by NM State. Money from the federal "Stimulus Bill" may be able to provide the remainder.

Finance Committee Report, Marjorie Burr:

Marjorie reported that the committee's efforts to raise donations from the community were not as

successful as hoped, especially during this economic downturn. The fund-raiser showing of "Iron Jawed Angels" did raise \$1,265, and kudos were extended to Shirley Armstrong and Susan Joanis for their hard work. She reminded members who are donating to the League to write a check **separate from their dues check** to make a donation to the League's treasury. To obtain a tax deduction, members were asked to make their checks payable to League of Women Voters Education Fund.

Metro Court Committee, Marjorie Burr: The LWVGLC position on a Metropolitan Court was adopted at the 2008 Annual Meeting. The committee concentrated on advocacy this year. The Committee testified before the House Judiciary Committee when it heard a bill proposed by State Representative Joni Gutierrez. Although the bill received a DO PASS, the legislation did not go farther because of the appropriation attached to the legislation. State Representative Andrew Nuñez from Hatch introduced a bill that would raise the population requirement to 300,000 (instead of 200,000) before it was necessary to implement a Metropolitan Court in Doña Ana County. Members of the Government Affairs Committee voted TO TABLE the bill which killed it.

Recycling Committee, Marjorie Burr: Marjorie reported that the citizen committee for recycling is moving forward despite a downturn in recycled materials. Las Cruces is still selling recyclables but not realizing a profit. The director of the South Central Solid Waste Authority is a prime player and will not give up the fight for recycling. Marjorie urged members to continue recycling and feels that curbside recycling in Las Cruces will happen eventually. Barbara Myers said that some states are using the prison system to recycle glass that is used to build roads, park facilities and construction. She said the state must be involved in such efforts in order to be successful.

Election Procedures/Voter Turnout Committee Report, Marnie Leverett:

Marnie reported that the voter satisfaction survey conducted in collaboration with the AAUW was successful in the June Primary Election. 368 voters in 41 precincts were surveyed. Conclusions were as follows: finding the correct voting place is still a problem and lack of privacy at the voting kiosks is also of concern. During the November election, a phone answering service was implemented to assist the Bureau of

(Continued on page 4)

Annual Meeting Minutes *(Continued from page 3)*

Elections. The service was hooked up to the statewide database showing polling places. There were approximately 100 calls and at least 75 voters were directed to their polling places. Others were directed to fill out a provisional ballot. Lynn Ellins of the County Election Bureau praised the program for its help and would like to continue using it in the future.

Voter Services Report, Donna Tate: Donna thanked everyone who helped with the candidates' forums, *Voters' Guide*, *Who's Who* and voter registration during her tenure as director of Voter Services. She has resigned and the Nominating Committee was unable to identify any candidates for the position. However, at Johnnie Aldrich's suggestion, the Board adopted position descriptions for the various portfolios in the League. Donna divided the responsibilities for voter services among several chairs.

Donna encouraged someone to volunteer to take on this directorship that will be handled on an interim basis by Vicki Simons, current vice president. To ease the director's responsibilities, Donna wrote a job description not only for the director, who retains oversight responsibilities for the entire function, but also chairs for candidates' forums (Pat Pedersen) and voter registration (Pat Kratz), and editor of the *Voter's Guide* (Dale Yeo).

Budget Committee Report, Pat Pedersen: Pat referred members to the *Annual Meeting VOTER*, pages 6 and 7, that show the budget allocations, and page 8 for the footnotes. Discussion revolved around:

1. The Education Fund budget that needs to be shown as a budget separate from the operating budget.
2. The Actual Expense Column that needs to show a date so that members will know the figures are not year-end.
3. The Scholarship CD is not a revenue income category. Only the interest should be shown as Income.
4. The Quilt Revenue shown as \$500 will go to the Operating Budget.

Motion: Cliff Pelton moved and Johnnie Aldrich seconded that the budget for 2009-2010 be approved as amended (showing the Education Fund as a separate budget, and removing the total amount of the Scholarship certificate of deposit from

the Revenue section of the budget). The budget was passed: 29 yes, 1 no.

Nonpartisan Policy:

There was discussion about the third paragraph under Board of Directors in the Nonpartisan Policy:

The President and the Voter Service Director may not take an active, visible role in a campaign for a political candidate.

The question was raised about the participation and visibility of the newly created chairs under the voter services director: candidates' forum, voter registration, and *Voters Guide* editor. The outcome of the discussion was that the three positions listed above are restricted in the same manner as the director of voter services. The editor of *Who's Who* was excluded from the restriction because that function takes place after an election.

Discussion arose around the issue of Board members' participation and visibility in political activities. Those present believed that paragraph 2 under the Board of Directors section of the current nonpartisan policy spoke clearly about this issue

Motion: Bonnie Burn moved and Johnnie Aldrich seconded the motion to approve the Nonpartisan Policy as amended. Motion passed.

The paragraph now reads:

The President, the Voter Service Director, the chair of candidates' forum, chair of voter registration, and editor of the *Voters Guide* may not take an active, visible role in a campaign for a political candidate. In consistently campaigning for or against non-League issues Board members must identify their interest as personal and not League sponsored.

Nominating Committee Report, LaJune Smith.

LaJune presented the proposed slate of officers for 2009-2011 and moved adoption:

- President Olga S. (Bonnie) Burn
- Treasurer Roberta Gran
- Director (Membership) . . Pat Pedersen
- Director (Program). . . . Sharon Burbano
- Nominating Committee (2009-2010):
 - Johnnie Aldrich, Chair
 - Marjorie Burr, Elected Member

Motion: LaJune Smith moved and Nancy Phillips seconded that the slate of officers be approved. The motion was approved unanimously.

Current Board members will complete the final year of their two year term (2008-2010)

- Vice President. Vicki Simons
- Secretary Nancy Phillips

Adoption of Current Position Statements:

Members were referred to pages 10-12 of the *Annual Meeting VOTER*.

Motion: Becky Beckett moved and Vicki Simons seconded the motion to adopt the current position statements. Motion approved unanimously.

Adoption of Proposed Program Items: Members discussed the

- Recommended programs for study: Behavioral Health Services and Election Procedures/Voter Turnout;
- Recommended programs for action: Branigan Library, Metropolitan Court, and Solid Waste Recycling; and
- Non-Recommended Program Item: Land Use and Development.

Motion: Becky Beckett moved and Ellen Young seconded the motion that the recommended program for study and the recommended programs for action be approved and that the non-recommend program item be dropped. The motion was approved unanimously.

LWVNM State Convention Delegates (2009):

Bonnie Burn stated that she and Johnnie Aldrich will be attending the Convention as State League Board members. LWVGLC has been allocated five delegates based on a formula that takes into account the number of members in each local League. Cathy Mathews volunteered to attend as a delegate; four more volunteers are needed. The 2009-2010 Budget allocates \$500 for Convention registration and some additional expenses.

Marnie Leverett announced that a nominee is needed for the State Director of Membership. Johnnie Aldrich, current director, spoke about the responsibilities. Bonnie Burn encouraged nomination by mentioning that State Board meetings occur quarterly. At least one meeting per year is held online, and another is held in Socorro, which makes traveling for Las Cruces State Board Members a bit easier.

LWVUS National Council (2009): Bonnie Burn reported that in light of the current economic

situation, LWVUS will hold an online virtual Council Meeting in lieu of having delegates travel to Washington, D.C. State Leagues are allocated two delegates. The LWVNM attendees will gather at the LWV of Central New Mexico office in Albuquerque. There is a \$150 charge per computer for connecting to the meeting.

The National Convention (2010) will be held in Atlanta in June.

Directions to the Board

- Investigate the restrictive scholarship fund donated by Jean Culbertson by contacting Connie Lee and asking for documentation. In future proposed budgets, clearly note the intent for the use of this certificate of deposit. Also, show only the interest earned as revenue in proposed budgets.
- Barbara Myers, the League’s archivist, requested that anyone who has portfolio League records that belong in the archives give them to her.
- Annual Meeting VOTER: Bonnie Burn asked that the size of the Annual Meeting Voter be reduced by referring to the Membership Directory’s resource section for the nonpartisan policy, bylaws, and position. This would reduce printing and postage cost.
- Marjorie Burr suggested that the League sponsor public forums on various issues, (e.g., Metropolitan Court and the recent Fund for Peace Dialogue on International Relations).
- Agenda: Add “Approval of Additions to the Agenda” to the Annual Meeting agenda
- Budget:
 - o Add a Balance Sheet to the Annual Budget Report
 - o Add a date to the “Actual Column” of the proposed budget so that members understand that the amounts do not represent year-end figures.
 - o Add representative from Finance Committee to the Budget Committee to reconcile fund raising to meet operating budgets needs.
 - o Ensure that in-kind contributions that capture out-of-pocket expenses made by members be included in the Budget or final Treasurer’s Report at the Annual Meeting
 - o Recycling: work with local agency to identify grants and possible state and “stimulus money” to fund a continuing Program.

(Continued on page 6)

Meeting Minutes, April 18, 2009 (Continued from page 5)

Before adjourning, members gave a round of applause to Cathy Mathews for serving as president.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

After lunch, Cathy Mathews introduced the keynote speaker, Judge Lisa Schultz, Third Judicial District Court, who spoke about the Children’s Court: Helping to Heal the Community.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Phillips

ANNUAL MEETING BUSINESS

- 1. Nonpartisan Policy Adoption:** (Membership Directory, pp. 20-21)
- 2. Bylaws Adoption:** (Membership Directory, pp. 22-29)

The Committee met on February 4 and reviewed the Bylaws. In particular we focused on articles involving membership, terms of office, and provisions for alternative forms of governance when a president cannot be identified. We found the Bylaws to be clear, complete, and useful. They are in conformance with the State and National Bylaws. We do not recommend any changes.

If the local board wishes to more clearly specify the status of student members, we recommend it do so by using Board Policies and the budget process, as has been done with Household Members.

Respectfully submitted,
Bylaws Committee
Christina Little, Chair; Kathy Brook; Ruth Brown; and Bonnie Burn



- 3. Nominating Committee Report:** The following nominees are proposed for election:

For Two-Year Terms (2010-2012)

Vice President/Program Sharon Burbano
 Secretary Martha Duran
 Director, Voters Services Erika Graf-Webster
 Nominating Committee Donna Tate, Chair
 Jane Carter, Elected Member

To Complete One-Year Term (2010-2011)

Treasurer Louise Tracey-Hosa
 Director, Membership Susan Schmutge

Respectfully submitted,

Johnnie Aldrich, chair, Marjorie Burr, elected member, and Pat Pedersen, Board appointed member

Program for Study and Action

- 4. Current Positions:** (Membership Directory, pp. 30-34). In addition, the position on **Mental Health Services in Doña Ana County**, not included in the Membership Directory, is recommended for approval by members. It reads as follows:

***Position in brief:** Support for an adequately funded mental health care system that provides comprehensive services to the acutely, chronically and seriously mentally ill of all ages; maintains optimal mental health services for all clients; offers mental health services for the homeless; seeks additional funds for preventive services; implements a master plan to integrate services; raises awareness of critical unmet needs; and emphasizes case management. (Note: See handout for additional information.)*

- 5. Recommended Program:** Marjorie Burr reported on the results of the February lunch meeting and Board members approved the following program items for study and action for 2010-2011 at its meeting on March 1. These are presented for member adoption. The number of members who indicated an interest in the issue and volunteered to work was taken into

Program for Study and Action (Continued from page 6)

- consideration when determining the recommended items.
 - **Education Position** (Membership Directory, p. 34). Proposed review and update of current position last amended in 1999 to include looking at the system, the dropout problem, and the status of civics education in the public schools.
 - **Affordable Housing:** No current position. Look at quantifying the need and ways of achieving a balance of all kinds of housing stock in the community. Also, it was recommended that public transportation component seemed to go along with affordable housing and should be included in the study.
6. **Not Recommended Items for study and action:** Again the number of members indicating an interest and volunteering to work was taken into consideration. These items received the fewest number of interest and

volunteer votes in the February Planning Meeting.

- Citizens police review board.
 - Gray water for use in landscaping as a method of water conservation.
 - Redistricting of local government bodies — advocacy on this issue can be pursued under the LWVNM Fair Representation position.
 - Children’s services, particularly autism, to be studied and made part of the Mental Illness Services in Doña Ana County position.
 - Public Transportation study (included in affordable housing study).
 - Emergency preparedness.
7. **Priorities for further study and advocacy:** Among our ongoing program study and committee activities need to be prioritized. These include:
- Branigan Library
 - Election Procedures/Voter Turnout
 - Mental Illness Services in Doña Ana County
 - Metropolitan Court for Doña Ana County
 - Solid Waste Recycling.

Fund Drive 2009-2010 - Bonnie Burn

The Finance Committee was composed of Board members. The August Board meeting was devoted to the issue of raising money. Members reviewed workshop documents about fund raising prepared by LWVUS and brainstormed ideas for raising funds. Solicitation letters were developed and a mailing to community supporters and to members who had not yet contributed went out at the end of September. Our goal was to raise \$4,000, the amount needed to publish the 2010 General Election *Voters’ Guide*. A special thank you to Connie Lee who again donated a quilt for a raffle. Here are the results of the drive:

	<u>Donations</u>	<u>Education Fund</u>	<u>Total</u>
Members	\$1,384	\$1,035	\$2,419
Community Supporters	\$235	\$375	\$610
Grand Total			\$3,029



Our members deserve a round of applause for the significant contributions they made in addition to renewing their dues. This additional money supported our operating fund as well as allowed us to earn half of the goal set for publishing our *Voters’ Guide*. As the budget (p. 8) shows, of a \$50 dues payment, after paying per member payments (PMP) to LWVUS and LWVNM, we retain only \$8.80 for our treasury. Local League’s have already been alerted that at its convention, the LWVUS is proposing a \$0.60 increase in PMP for 2010 and an additional \$0.40 increase for 2011. We doubly appreciate your financial support beyond dues payments.

The amount of donations received from our community supporters remained about the same as in 2009. The quilt raffle netted \$547. This year we did not sponsor a major event like the 2009 League birthday celebration where we showed the film, “Iron Jawed Angels,” at the Fountain theater.

Thank you

PROPOSED 2010-2011 ANNUAL BUDGET

Category	Budget 2009-2010	Actual as of 3/1/2010	Budget 2010-2011	Budget Notes
Income				
Members Dues	\$3,950	\$4,550	\$4,425	Member Dues: \$4,200 = 84 Individual \$ 225 = 9 2nd Household \$4,425
Contributions				
Members	\$1,000	\$1,370	\$1,000	
Community	\$500	\$610	\$500	
Quilt Raffle	\$500	\$547	\$0	
Member Scholarship		\$50	\$0	
Total Income	\$5,950	\$7,127	\$5,925	Per Member Payment (US) \$2,453 = 84 Ind. @\$29.20 \$ 131 = 9 2nd Household @ \$14.60 Total = \$2,584
Expenses				
Per Member Payment				
LWVUS	\$2,292	\$2,262	\$2,584	Per Member Payment (NM) \$1008 = 84 Ind. @\$12
LWVNM	\$942	\$942	\$1,062	\$ 54 = 9 2nd Household @ \$6 Total = \$1,062
Meeting & Conventions				
LWVUS Convention	\$650	\$0	\$1,300	
LWVUS Council	\$100	\$0	\$200	
LWVNM Convention(09)	\$500	\$255	\$0	
LWVNM Council (10)	\$0	\$0	\$500	
Legislative Day	\$100	\$0	\$100	
Local Annual Meeting	\$100	\$0	\$0	LWVNM Council - May 15 in Santa Fe: Registration Fee \$20 and Room Rate \$88 at Hilton
Voter's Services				
Candidates Night	\$100	\$161	\$500	LWVUS Convention
Legislative Breakfast	\$300	\$384	\$300	\$ 295 - Registration
Voters' Guide	\$1,500	\$0	\$2,500	\$ 823 - Hotel: \$205.85 x 4
Who's Who	\$1,500	\$49	\$1,500	\$ 568 - Air Fare \$1,686 - Total - Approx. Cost - Only budgeting
Study Group Expenses	\$400		\$500	\$1,300
Health Care Forum		\$245		
Metro Court		\$19		
Office Expense				
Telephone	\$300	\$374	\$500	Other Major Expenses:
P.O. Box	\$75	\$0	\$75	\$4,000 - Voters Guide
Office Supplies (Incl. Postage)	\$300	\$362	\$450	Budget \$2,500; Ed Fund \$2,000
Historical Album	\$100	\$0	\$100	\$1,500 - Who's Who
Membership Expense	\$200	\$263	\$300	
Fund Drive Expense	\$200	\$45	\$200	
Web Site Domain	\$25	\$24	\$0	Web Site Domain Name and Hosting expenses paid for period 9/10/2009 - 9/9/2011.
Web Software	\$50	\$0	\$0	
Web Site Annual Fee	\$300	\$70	\$0	
Publications				
VOTER Printing	\$900	\$993	\$500	The VOTER Printing reduced in cost because it is now sent electronically.
VOTER Postage	\$700	\$647	\$350	

(Continued on page 9)

Category	Budget 2009-2010	Actual as of 3/1/2010	Budget 2010-2011
Publications <i>(Continued from page 8)</i>			
Brochure - We Care ...Government	\$150	\$115	\$200
Membership Directory	\$200	\$212	\$275
Membership Directory Postage	\$125	\$49	\$150
Total Expense	\$12,109	\$7,471	\$14,146
Deficit	(\$6,159)	(\$344)	(\$8,221)

PROPOSED 2010-2011 EDUCATION FUND BUDGET

Category	Budget 2009-2010	Actual as of 3/1/2010	Budget 2010-2011
Balance 5/1/2009	\$1,286	\$2,301	\$4,301
Total Revenue	\$1,286	\$2,301	\$4,301
Expenses			
Voters Guide	\$0	\$0	\$4,000
Total Expense	\$0	\$0	\$4,000
Increase or Deficit	\$1,286	\$2,301	\$301

Education Fund Notes:

\$2,300.50 - Education Fund Balance as of March 1, 2010.

\$1,286.00 - Education Fund Balance as of April 15, 2009.

\$1,014.50 - Net Gain

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

May 1, 2010

\$50 - Individual
\$75 - Household

Payable at Annual
Meeting

OR

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

To make a **tax-
deductible donation**,
please make your check
payable to the League of
Women Voters Education
Fund

To make a contribution to
our **operating budget**,
please make your check
payable to the
League of Women Voters
of Greater Las Cruces.

Thank you

NOTES



President's Message - Reflections on the Past Year

The Las Cruces League is visible and active! As I reviewed our *VOTERS* and board meeting minutes, I was reminded of all that was accomplished this year. Kudos to our active members who helped with events when called

upon and to our members who so generously supported us financially.

We were involved in three major events this year. The Health Care Reform panel discussion on July 15, 2009, introduced the issue that soon developed into a prolonged debate where legislation remains pending as we attend our Annual Meeting. In March 2010, the League collaborated with the Academy of Learning in Retirement to bring a government course, Know Your State and Local Government, to the public. Throughout the year, local Leagues are celebrating the 90th anniversary of the establishment of the League of Women Voters. To date, the New Mexico and our local League have received proclamations recognizing this milestone from the NM State Legislature, City of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County.

Among our ongoing study groups, the members of the Branigan Library Committee were especially active. Under the leadership of Marnie Leverett, the group sought solutions to the financial challenges associated with building renovations already in progress that ran into a roadblock when the State experienced budget deficits. Marjorie Burr was appointed to the City Search Committee that was organized to seek an administrative replacement for Kathleen Teaze who resigned to take a position in Maryland. Johnnie Aldrich presented a statement about the League's support for a good library system.

The Metropolitan Court and Election Process/Voter Turnout study groups moved into "watch dog" mode, during the 30-day state legislative session, and a year of municipal rather than general elections.

The Behavioral Mental Health study group completed its work with two co-chairs, Becky Beckett and Mickey Curtis, sharing responsibility. The name of the group was changed to Mental Illness Services in Doña Ana County to better reflect the focus for the group. In November, members

approved a concurrence position, that is up for adoption when members adopt all positions at the Annual Meeting (p. 6).

Operationally, we changed our telephone service to a voice mail system so those who answer the League phone can do so from any location. The web site was updated and now is hosted by a private provider. All of our policies and procedures were reviewed and adopted by the board and are published on the web site.

Lots of advocacy was undertaken this year.

- We supported the Organ Mountain – Desert Peak Wilderness legislation co-sponsored by Senators Bingaman and Udall, and attended several meetings, including the Senate Field Hearing that was held in Las Cruces.
- Several of us have been following the progress of the Vision 2040 regional plan, and have sent comment statements from League or as individuals, when appropriate, to the city and county elected officials.
- Health care reform occupied us throughout the year and continues on. Some of us have spent hours with congressional leaders for our district or their staffs. Our League was invited to the AARP forum held at the Hotel Encanto in August where Senator Bingaman was the keynote speaker.
- A three-person committee was organized to work on issues related to climate change. Articles to help us obtain a basic education about the issue were published in *The VOTER*. Our local League members attended the Climate Change Symposium sponsored by several groups, including LWVNM, that was held in Albuquerque on August 21. Re-energizing America, a two-day conference sponsored by Congressman Teague at NMSU's Corbett Center on August 31 and September 1 was well attended by League members. On January 9th, members of the business community involved with renewable energy attended a round table discussion organized by Clean Energy Works, and League was represented.
- During the 2010 New Mexico legislative session, we responded to action alerts originating from LWVNM regarding priorities established by the LWVNM Action Committee.

Our Lunch with a Leader program included presenters on the local transportation plan, tax incremental development districts (TIDDs), 2010 census, algae bio fuels and local water issues. Two meetings were devoted to (1) concurrence on the mental illness services position, and (2) consensus on the LWVNM statewide water study. Our members generate lively discussion among themselves during United Nations month in October and our program planning meeting in February.

Some of our members volunteered for our Observer Corps. The Las Cruces Public School Board, the South Central Solid Waste Authority, and South Central Recycling Partnership (SCRaP) meetings were observed regularly and reports were published in *The VOTER*. Some of us attended other government meetings, and again reports were published in *The VOTER*.

During the past year, special outreach was made to some of the other professional groups in Las Cruces. I was an invited speaker at the Certified Public Accountants and the Soroptimist monthly luncheons. The League continued its relationship with NMSU's International Relations Institute and attended the annual Model UN Team fund-raising dinner (January 20) and its recent conference, Immigration Reform and Human Rights (March 3-4).

I would be remiss if I didn't mention our Annual Meeting Bylaws, Budget, and Nominating committees, who did an outstanding job in organizing the business that we must take care of to continue operating our League. We appreciate those who said, "Yes," when asked to serve on these committees and to our nominees who make up our slate of officers and directors.

Membership is raised in this particular part of my report because I wanted to give special recognition to each of you. We must be doing something right. Our Lunch with a Leader is averaging 30 members, who very generously often bring a guest. Our Legislative Breakfast attracted 53 people this time, even though only 5 legislators attended. Our membership is increasing (see Membership Report, p. 12), and as mentioned at the beginning of my report, members have been generous with their financial support (p. 7). Thank you for all you do for us, and I apologize for using a cliché, but the League would not be here without you.

In closing, the League still faces some challenges. Although League priorities for attention will be discussed by the Board during its planning meeting, mentoring membership and developing League leaders are two areas that arose during the year as we pursued League work. Of course, fund development to ensure that we have enough money to carry out voter education is a continuing challenge.

Please remember to make your reservation for the Annual Meeting by April 6, and I look forward to having you join us.

Bonnie Burn

The League is the place where
hands on work to safeguard democracy
leads to civic improvement

Voter Services 2009

Vicki Simons, Chair

Although it was an odd, off-election year, there were several municipal elections in which the League Voter Services Committee took part. Our biggest effort was for the Las Cruces city elections in November. Three city council positions were up for vote with multiple candidates, as well as a municipal judge position (unopposed). The LWV/GLC published a *Voters' Guide* in October and sponsored a candidates forum with all candidates represented.

The Town of Mesilla had its municipal election in March, and, at the request of several residents, the League sponsored a candidates forum in Mesilla in February. There was an especially good turnout for this forum.

Many thanks to League members: Bonnie Burn for her excellent moderation of the forums; Dale Yeo for her excellent work on the *Voters' Guide* for the City of Las Cruces election; Pat Kratz for heading up the voter registration effort; Marnie Leverett, Donna Tate and Diane Lilley for public relations; and many other League members too numerous to mention for helping work the forums and aiding with publication of the *Voters' Guide*.

Membership - Pat Pedersen, Director

From May 2009 until the end of February 2010, our membership increased to 98 members. Four of these were recruited from the national membership list, and the rest came from the community through referrals from members or other community activities where people learned about the League. The best source of membership growth has been our current members. For your information here are some membership figures.

Category	2007	2008	2009
Individual	53	59	75
1st Household	7	7	9
2nd Household	7	7	9
National	10	5	5
Total	77	78	98

During the current year, we had orientations for new members in October 2009 and February 2010. A total of 12 new members attended. We plan to continue to hold member orientations at regular intervals throughout the year.

In October 2009, we undertook a survey of our membership. Of 95 mailed surveys, a total of 79 were completed. The survey enabled us to identify members who were willing to participate regularly in current activities of the League, to assist us occasionally, and to take on leadership roles. We hope to continue to survey our members to find out where their interests and talents lie. If you were mailed a survey and did not complete it, you may return it at any time.

We appreciate all of our members and hope we are meeting your needs. Please feel free to offer suggestions and comments.

Metropolitan Court - Marjorie Burr, Chair

When the Metropolitan Court Committee was invited to and introduced at the opening ceremonies for the new Magistrate Court building in June 2009, we believed someone was paying attention to us. When the administrator of the Administrative Office of the Courts told us that Doña Ana County would indeed have a Metropolitan Court, we believed that we had made progress. When the chief judge of the District Court met with us to discuss how to

implement what he thought was the inevitable Metropolitan Court in Doña Ana County, we were sure we were on our way.

Then the signs turned less positive. The chief justice of the New Mexico Supreme Court sent a message that the District Court Judges were not to spend resources planning for a Metropolitan Court. The final blow came when a representative from the Doña Ana County legislative delegation introduced a bill in the 2010 session to increase the population requirement for a Class A County Metropolitan Court from 200,000 to 350,000. This number was reduced to 250,000 in committee, but the measure passed both houses. We made an effort to persuade the Governor to veto the bill but were unsuccessful. The population requirement is now 250,000. The 2010 Census will most likely confirm that Doña Ana County has more than 200,000 but fewer than 250,000.

As of the date of this report, the Metropolitan Court Committee has not yet decided how to deal with this setback. A ten-year delay (until the next census) seems too long to wait for the benefits we believe ensue from a Metropolitan Court system. We're exploring options.

Branigan Library: An Exercise for Action

Marnie Leverett, Chair

Quite suddenly, early this spring, the Branigan Public Library was faced with the end of a building project with the goals unfinished and money still available for the finishing. The state requested that all money remaining in the sequestered funds be returned to the state to cover an unexpected shortfall. Members of the League of Women Voters were alarmed about this, and were joined in their concern by members of the Friends of the Library board and the president of the local chapter of American Association of University Women. As we looked further into it, we realized that other, cooler heads were prevailing, and we were relieved when it was pointed out that the funding remained safe and that building was scheduled to be finished during this fiscal year. No action was required by our members, but it was nice to know that, if the occasion arises, there are many sources of support in the community that can be called into action.

An Update on the Election Procedures/Voter Turnout Study Group

Marnie Leverett, Chair

Seven or eight years ago, a group of members of the League of Women Voters was concerned that registered voters in Doña Ana County were not turning up at the polls in very large numbers and were simply not bothering to vote. We formed a committee to look into this problem and enlisted the help of a group of students and professors at the university to run a telephone survey to question those voters who failed to exercise their voting rights about their reasons for failing to do so.

The outcome of the survey showed plainly that the largest reason for this is that the voters were unsure of their proper voting location. This occurred because voting laws in the state of New Mexico permit each level of elected government to determine its own election rules. This permits the county, the city and the school system to each determine its own polling places as well as setting the dates for elections. Many voters were then given as many as three voting sites to try to keep straight from year to year. This system simply does not work very effectively on election days.

The League tried a number of ways to simplify this pattern. We tried to get the three political bodies to band together and use the same voting sites, but without much success. We tried to make it easier for voters to learn the correct place to vote in each election, with varying degrees of success. Many voters wait until the last minute to identify their voting site and sometimes that does not allow enough time to get to the polls. For several years we staffed special telephone sites where voters could find out their correct polling place. On such occasions, we were able to help at least a hundred confused voters, but we knew that we were not really reaching all those who needed help.

Along the way, our members have become skilled voter registrars and spent a lot of hours working at polling sites as election judges. We have worked closely with the County Election Bureau to make the elections move smoothly. What started as a small study group has become a general interest in our entire League.

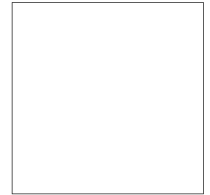
The committee itself has become less utilized. As chair, I believe that it is time to take a break and see what new problems might be addressed in the future. Please let us know what election and voter turnout trends you think might be addressed in the future. Meanwhile, our committee will stay on standby.

NOTES



(575) 524 VOTE (8683)
 Web Address: www.lwvglc.org

League of Women Voters
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 P.O. Box 8322
 Las Cruces, NM 88006-8322



FIRST CLASS



**PLEASE BRING THIS VOTER AND THE
 MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY
 WITH YOU
 TO THIS MEETING**

CALENDAR

April 5 (Monday) - 5:00-6:30 p.m. - **Board Meeting**,
 Branigan Library Board Room

April 6 (Tuesday) - **Deadline for Reservations for
 Annual Meeting.** RSVP Sharon Burbano (526-
 2860 or sburbano@aol.com)

April 15 (Thursday) - Noon - **Deadline for The
 VOTER**, May issue.

New LOCATION April 17 (Saturday) - 9:00 a.m. -
ANNUAL MEETING, Good Samaritan
 Social Center, Creative Arts Room, 3011
 Buena Vida Circle. **BREAKFAST** is \$8.
Reservations required.

MARK Your Calendar

May 15 - LWVNM State Council, Hilton of Santa
 Fe, Santa Fe, NM.
 June 11-15 - LWVUS Convention, Atlanta Marriott
 Hotel, Atlanta, GA

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