

The VOTER

League of Women Voters
of Greater Las Cruces
(575) 524-VOTE (8683)
Web Site: www.lwvglc.org
November 2009



Lunch Unit Meeting - November 9, 2009

Presentation: Concurrence Position by Study Group on Needed Resources and Services for the Mentally Ill in Doña Ana County

Becky Beckett and Mickey Curtis, Co-Chairs

At this luncheon unit meeting, members of the study group will present the findings of its study and seek concurrence on a position that will enable the League to take legislative action.

Study group members will review activities undertaken during the study. They will summarize the results of their visits to facilities that provide services for the mentally ill in Doña Ana County. They will present a concurrence position for adoption.

As part of the study activities, positions adopted by other Leagues throughout the U.S. were reviewed. One position from the League of Women Voters of California seemed appropriate for our study. As a result, with Board approval, we are presenting it for **concurrence** approval by members. In League lingo **concurrence** is agreement by League members with a position on an issue reached by members or by another League.

Before the meeting, please review the history of the study, p. 5, and the concurrence position, p. 6. **Bring these pages with you to the meeting.** Summaries of the site visits will be distributed at the meeting.

CALENDAR

November 2 (Monday) - 5:00 p.m. **Board Meeting**, Branigan Library Board Room.

November 2 (Monday) - **Deadline for Reservations for Lunch with a Leader.** RSVP Vicki Simons (522-4813) (Note change) **Reservations are required.**



November 3 (Tuesday) - **City of Las Cruces Election.** Vote for District 3, 5, & 6 City Councilors, and Municipal Judge.

November 9 (Monday) - 11:30 a.m., **Lunch Unit Meeting** at Good Samaritan Village, Social Center, Creative Arts Room, 3011 Buena Vida Circle. **Topic: Presentation and Concurrence by Study Group on Needed Resources and Services for Mentally Ill in Doña Ana County**, Becky Beckett and Mickey Curtis, Co-Chairs. Lunch is \$8. **Reservation required.**

November 14 (Saturday) - 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., **Electronic Recycling**, County Government Bldg, 845 Motel Blvd. , (see p. 8)

November 26 (Thursday) - Thanksgiving



Notable Dates: November 12 - Elizabeth Cady Stanton's Birthday (1815)

Save This Date: December 5 - 9 a.m. - Legislative Breakfast, Good Samaritan Village, Dining Room

The VOTER

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The League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces

P.O. Box 8322
Las Cruces, NM 88006-8322
(575) 524-VOTE (8683)

President—Bonnie Burn

Vice President & Voter Services
Vicki Simons

Secretary—Nancy Phillips

Treasurer—Roberta Gran

Director, Membership
Pat Pedersen

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—532-5655

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

Metropolitan Court
Marjorie Burr—522-2528

ACTION COMMITTEE
Vicki Simons—522-4813

Archivist—Barbara Myers
Web Master—Dale Yeo

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

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

President's Message

While driving around town, I noticed that the leaves on the deciduous trees are turning yellow, a sure sign that fall is here, and the holidays are soon to follow. But no matter the season, League work goes on.



First, I encourage you to attend the **November Lunch Unit Meeting** that involves reaching **concurrence on a position** about resources and services for the mentally ill in Doña Ana County. This action will conclude the work of the study group and will enable the League to take legislative action.

Second, in this issue you may miss an article that summarizes our **October Lunch with a Leader**. Because of a respiratory infection our speaker, Professor Yosef Lapid, had to cancel his engagement, and we had several cancellations from League members who suffered from the same illness. We will reschedule Professor Lapid for a future meeting. We observed **United Nations Month** by hearing a report about the LWVUS observers at the United Nations, Doris Shapiro, Patty Day and Margery Cohen, who work in coalitions with others on a number of issues. LWVUS has applied to be accredited at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, December 7-18, 2009. We learned about opportunities to visit and observe the UN if we visit New York. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to a lively open discussion about various issues—an opportunity to be social.

Two major activities took up the remainder of the month: implementation of the League's **web site** and **voter services** activities.

As our **advertisement on p. 3** notes, please check out the **League's web site**. The League has its own domain name, lwvglc, and the address will not be affected by the location of the site. The information on it at present may be sparse, but that will change as you, our members, let us know what you would like to see on it. We want to thank Jim Leverett, our one and only web master, for developing the web site and for maintaining it for many years. We also thank Dale Yeo for taking on the web master responsibilities.

Voter Services activities for the upcoming City of Las Cruces Municipal Election have taken up most of the month. Vicki Simons organized the activities that were carried out by committee and League members: Marnie Leverett, Fran Clark, Nancy Anderson, Dale Yeo, Win Jacobs, Johnnie Aldrich, Roberta Gran, and Marjorie Burr.

The **Candidates' Forum** held on October 13 at Munson Center brought together all the candidates running for city councilor positions in Districts 3, 5 and 6 and Judge Locatelli who is running unopposed for reelection to the Municipal Court. There were about 75 people in the audience, and the questions dealt with important issues (e.g., city finance, impact fees, and decision-making). Although many questions were not directed to

(Continued on page 3)

Judge Locatelli, he made some interesting comments about the efficiencies achieved by the city's Municipal Court.

Those running for election responded to our questions for the **Voters' Guide**. The Board reached a decision to go ahead with a two-page *Guide*, and it was published in the October 16 edition of *The Bulletin*. **Dale Yeo also published the Guide on the League's web site, front page, www.lwvglc.org**. Please remember that it is there if you were unable to obtain a copy of *The Bulletin* or misplaced your copy. We appreciate the cooperation we received from the staff of *The Bulletin*. The production process was made easy by their helpfulness.

The League is following other issues on the state and national level.

LWVNM is following the **Special Legislative Session** called by Governor Richardson. The League is not supporting cuts to education or Medicaid, and would support eliminating tax cuts to wealthy New Mexicans instituted by Governor Richardson during his first term in office, if the issue could be brought to the table.

In **health care**, the U.S. Senate Finance Committee passed its bill on health care, and the next step is to have the two senate bills reconciled into one that will be voted on by the whole Senate. **LWVUS** continues to press for a **public plan**, and it is important that we contact our senators and representative to keep this option in their purview.

Climate change has taken a back seat for the moment; however, as the Copenhagen conference nears that will change. In our effort to continue to educate ourselves about climate change, please read the **latest article by Kate Schultz, p. 4**. Remember **Tom Schmugge's** presentation to the public (ad in next column).

Some of us will be attending the scheduled public presentation on the proposed regional plan for our area, **Vision 2040**. Our observations will be reported in the next issue of The VOTER.

The New Mexico State Library awarded \$240,309 to the **Branigan Library for** interior items like books and software.. At the City Council meeting on October 19, **Johnnie Aldrich** spoke on behalf of the League in support of developing branch libraries.

To expand League recognition in the community, I spoke at the monthly meeting of the Certified Public Accountants Society on October 15.

On that final note, I wish all of you a Happy Halloween!

Bonnie Burn



Welcome 

New Members

Mary Ellen (Mimi) Roddy
4845 Tobosa Rd.
Las Cruces, NM 88011
Tel: 522-1204
mroddy@gmail.com

Email Address Changes

Roberta Gran - rgran@nmsu.edu

Wanda Skowlund
vbani@yahoo.com



**IT OUT!
What?**

the web site for
Greater Las Cruces
League

www.lwvglc.org

Public Lecture

**The Discovery of
and Physical Basis for
Global Warming**

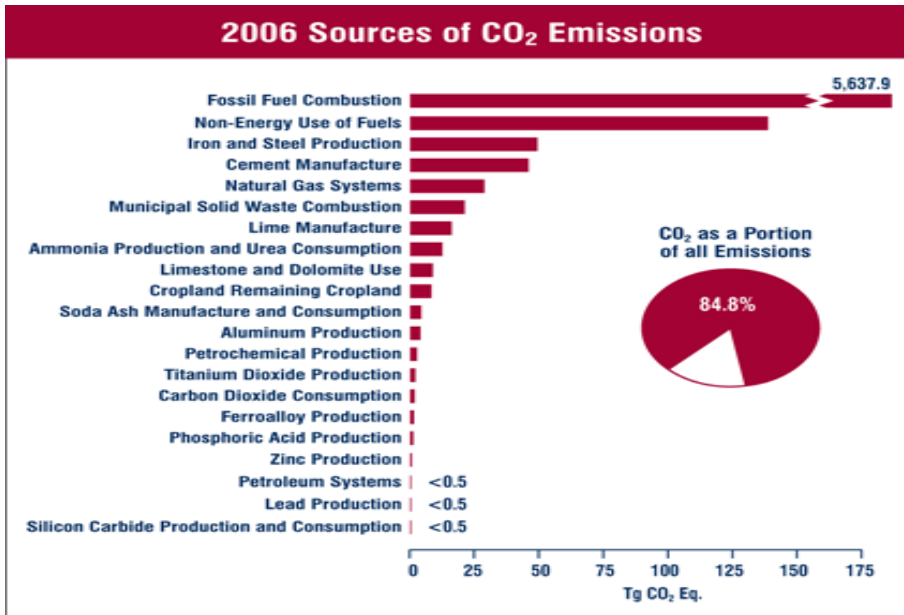
Guest Speaker:
Thomas Schmugge, Ph.D.

November 11, 2009, 7 p.m.

PSL Auditorium, Lower Level
Anderson Hall, NMSU
Corner of Espina and Stewart
Sponsored by:
NMSU Physics Department

Climate and Carbon Dioxide

Kate Schultz, member, Climate Change Committee



Source: U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory (y-axis units are teragrams of CO₂ equivalent). Note: a teragram is one trillion grams (1,000 billion) which equals about 110,000 U.S. Tons.

since 1950. Observations since 1961 show that the average temperature of the global ocean has increased to depths of at least 9,843 feet, almost 2 miles. This indicates that the ocean has been taking up over 80% of the heat being added to the earth.²

Green house gas emissions have grown by 70% between 1970 and 2004. Human-related emissions of nitrous oxide (N₂O) now far exceed pre-industrial values spanning many thousands of years. Levels of methane (CH₄) and CO₂ now far exceed the natural range over the last 650 years.³

¹www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/CO2.html.

Natural processes that release CO₂ into the atmosphere include the decomposition of plants and animals, thawing of permafrost that exposes more organic matter to microbial decomposition, forest fires and volcanic eruptions. The movement of CO₂ in the biosphere is often called the carbon cycle. Carbon eventually ends up in rock formations, soil, fresh and salt water, and the air. The global ocean and the atmosphere contain the most CO₂. When in balance, the total carbon dioxide emissions and removals from the entire carbon cycle are roughly equal. CO₂ diffuses from the air into bodies of water and also can be released from water into the air. The amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere changes over geologic time, increasing during warm periods. Measurements of CO₂ use only the weight of the carbon molecules.

Since the Industrial Revolution in the 1700's, human activities, such as the burning of oil, coal and gas, and deforestation, have increased CO₂ concentrations in the atmosphere. In 2005, global atmospheric concentrations of CO₂ were 35% higher than they were before the Industrial Revolution.¹

Eleven of the last twelve years (1995-2008) rank among the warmest years on the global surface

²www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/CO2.html Intergovernmental Panel on Climate change, Climate Change 2007 Synthesis, p. 30.

³*Ibid*, p. 50

Kate Schultz received her BA in Geology from Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, IA, and studied soils and forest management in the graduate program at Iowa State University, Ames, IA. She worked in seismic exploration for Gulf Research and Development Company in Harmarville, PA, and on exploratory oil and gas wells in the Rocky Mountains. At Fort Stewart, GA, she was Air Specialist for the Environmental Section of the Directorate of Public Works.

The world's forests need to be seen for what they are . . . Giant global utilities, providing services to humanity on a vast scale.

Prince Charles of the United Kingdom

Study Group on Needed Resources and Services for the Mentally Ill in Doña Ana County

HISTORY OF ACTIVITIES

Mission:	“To identify existing and needed resources and services for the mentally ill in Doña Ana County, and develop consensus statement for presentation to the Board and membership.” (rev 7/09)
March 6, 2007	2006-2007 Proposal to adopt a study of behavioral health services
May 15, 2007	Meeting to establish study group
July 19, 2007	First meeting – established working mission:
September 18, 2007	Revised working mission and brainstormed next steps
October 16, 2007	Reviewed list of known providers and services
April 17, 2008	Site visit: Southwest Counseling Center
May 1, 2008	Site visit: Mesilla Valley Hospital
June 5, 2008	Site visits: Memorial Medical Center and Families & Youth, Inc.
February 2, 2009	LWVGLC Board accepted Mickey Curtis as co-chair of study group
April 18, 2009	Annual meeting of LWVGLC: League voted to continue the Behavioral Health Study Group
June, 2009	LWVGLC Board approved change of study group name to “Study on Needed Resources and Services for the Mentally Ill in Doña Ana County.”
June 23, 2009	Site visit: Milagro Community Health Care
June 30, 2009	Site visits: Health and Human Services Department, Doña Ana County Crisis Intervention Training/Jail Diversion/Crisis Triage Center
July 21, 2009	Site visit: Tresco, Inc.
July 28, 2009	Site visits: The ARC Southern New Mexico Human Development
	Site visits: The Peak and The Ability Center, requested but received no response
August 4, 2009	Focus group for Family Members and Consumers
Study Group:	Becky Beckett and Mickey Curtis, co-chairs. Sharon Burbano, Christina Little, Marilyn Lowe, and Bonnie Burn

Please bring this page with you!

**Study Group on Needed Resources and Services for the
Mentally Ill in Doña Ana County**

PROPOSED CONCURRENCE POSITION

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 critically unmet needs; and emphasizes case management.*

This position offers support for:

1. An adequately funded county mental health care system that:
 - provides comprehensive services to the acutely, chronically, and seriously mentally ill of all ages;
 - seeks additional funds to provide preventive services;
 - offers mental health services for the homeless; and
 - maintains optimum mental health services for all clients.
2. Implementation of a master plan that:
 - ensures that there will be a network of integrated services clearly defined and consistent with a community support model;
 - advocates an awareness of and concern about the critical unmet needs within the county; and
 - emphasizes case management that includes assistance with housing, financial entitlements, and rehabilitative and vocational programs.
3. Centers for the seriously and chronically mentally ill, apart from the county system.
4. Regulations that provide an adequate length of time for evaluation and treatment of involuntary holds.
5. Model mandatory outpatient care programs with adequate supervisory staff.

Source: *League of Women Voters of California - Mental Health Care, Position adopted 1998.*

NOTES

Please bring this page with you!

SunZia Southwest Transmission Project

Bonnie Burn, Reporting

The League has received two newsletters from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) New Mexico State Office giving information about the proposed SunZia Southwest Transmission Project Area and announcing dates for public input about the project.

In its latest newsletter, BLM announced additional scoping meetings to discuss with the public the proposed study area expansion of the project. **One is scheduled for October 26, at Court Youth Center, 402 West Court Avenue, Las Cruces, 5-8 p.m.**

The SunZia Project proposed to construct a high-capacity transmission project between Arizona and New Mexico. Two 500 kilovolt (kV) lines and new intermediary substations within a 460-mile or greater corridor are planned for construction and operation. The goal is to deliver renewable energy resources to the western United States by providing an expected 3,000 megawatts or more of new transmission capacity. The BLM is considering a right-of-way application submitted by SunZia Transmission, LLC, and is preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) in accordance with the National Environment Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The line extends from Pinal, AZ between Tucson and Phoenix and passes through Lordsburg and Deming, NM, where it turns north to Truth or Consequences and San Antonio, NM. A mid-point substation is proposed for location in Deming, and an eastern substation is proposed for Lincoln County north of route 380.

Comments on the NM study area reflect concern about the proposed route crossing the Rio Grande in the vicinity of the San Antonio community, north of the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge. Two suggested corridors are being considered:

- A route along the western boundary and in the northwest corner of the White Sands Missile Range (WSMR), and
- A route south of the WSMR in Dona Ana County and along the eastern boundary of the WSMR in Otero and Lincoln Counties.

Upgrading and building new transmission grids is an important issue for participation in wind and solar renewable energy. If you can, please attend the above scheduled meeting.

2009 Domenici Public Policy Conference

New Mexico State University

September 16-17, 2009

Ellen Haltom, Reporting

The second annual Domenici Public Policy Conference's stated purposes were to share and bring facts forward regarding four areas of interest:

1. Issues important to New Mexico;
2. Challenge of the national debt and deficit;
3. National security on our borders; and
4. Energy policies.

In summary, those who represented nuclear energy institutions and political persons present supported increased use of nuclear energy. Oil and gas expansion, especially offshore, was emphasized by Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA).

Speakers involved in national security, specifically keynote speaker Secretary of Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, and Lt. General Paul Selva, liaison between the Department of Defense and the State Department, indicated we have increased levels of enforcement north and south of the border. The general also said structural changes would have to take place in our national security apparatus. Secretary Napolitano said that immigration reform will have to wait. The delegate from the Mexican Foreign Ministry spoke of the need for mutual cooperation between our countries.

Health care dominated the rest of the sessions with focus on cost of change vs. the social responsibility of a democratic society.

Former Senator Hank Brown (CO) depicted government subsidy programs as fiscally unsustainable. David Walker, formerly of the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) stated that the largest national security risk in the U.S. is our own financial risks and the government should not promise more than we can deliver.

Donald Marron from the Georgetown Public Policy Institute emphasized that health care is about coverage, quality and cost. He encouraged finding a way to make insurance less expensive, cover pre-existing conditions, and consider a public plan to close the gap between availability and practice.

Students and public participants asked questions at the end of each session, and Senator Domenici weighed in on each issue.

LEAGUE OBSERVER REPORTS

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

South Central Recycling Partnership, (SCRaP) - October 7, 2009 Al McBrayer, Observer

Our meeting this month focused primarily on the upcoming E-Cycle Event scheduled for November 14, 2009. Having already selected and approved the collection site, County Government Building, at 845 Motel Blvd, (North side), we finalized the time of the event as 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Volunteers will help direct traffic and assist drop-off participants with unloading E-Cycle material. Flyers were handed out to those present and a rough schedule of volunteer reporting times was laid out.

The term "Responsible Recycling" was adopted. This refers to the way the E-Cycle material will be handled safely and not end up in a foreign country, destroying the environment and the people. UNICOR is a responsible company and contracts with the federal government. They request, however, that we don't give them hazardous materials like acids and radioactive material. They take just about anything else, as long as it has a cord or a plug—hand-held devices and camera equipment, too. Look for advertisements in local newspapers. I will see you there.

For those who may not be able to deliver items to the County Government Building on the 14th, the Transfer Station on Amador will start accepting E-Cycle material continuously after November 1.

In other news, the number of recycle drop-off locations in Las Cruces has increased to 33. A new brochure will be out soon. It also will be printed in Spanish. Ten Deming schools will go to single stream recycling after January 1. New Mexico State Parks has given out over 7,000 recycle bags to campers. The new Las Cruces Convention Center will have a solar recycle compacter.

Waste is a terrible thing to mind — Recycle
U.S. Bumper Sticker

ELECTRONICS RECYCLING

**Doña Ana County Government Center
845 N. Motel Blvd, Las Cruces, NM**

UNICOR ELECTRONICS RECYCLING

*Accepts the following electronic equipment
(working or not)*

- Computers
- Computer parts (boards, memory, chips, etc.)
- Monitors
- Printers
- Laptops
- Cables (wire)
- Copiers
- Fax machines
- Networking equipment
- Audio equipment (stereos, CB's, 2-way radios, etc.)
- Electronic Test equipment
- Video equipment (VCR, DVD, camcorders, projects, etc.)
- Photographic equipment (cameras, lenses, accessories, etc.)
- Conferencing equipment
- Night vision equipment
- Binoculars
- Scopes
- Audio sensors
- Motion sensors
- Alarm equipment
- Security equipment
- Cell phones
- Palm pilots
- Cable boxes
- Satellite equipment
- Televisions
- Medical equipment (no fluids)

**No Hazardous Materials Accepted, Includes:
Batteries * Acids * Paints/Liquids of Any Kind
Powdered Substances * Oils/PCBs
Refrigerants * Radioactive Materials**

For more information call: (575) 528-3800

Unicor South Central Solid Waste Authority
South Central Recycling Partnership

**New Mexico Recycling Coalition
Stakeholder's Meeting—September 16, 2009
Albuquerque - Al McBrayer, Observer**

The objective of this meeting was to build consensus about legislative priorities in order to vastly improve recycling in New Mexico.

We began with introductory presentations from recycling advocacy entities in New Mexico including, but not limited to, New Mexico Recycling Coalition, New Mexico Environment Department, and New Mexico Clean & Beautiful. Stakeholder input was also facilitated by an independent third party, Richard Freedman of Freedman Recycling in El Paso.

A history of legislative recycling initiatives in New Mexico was presented, giving those present the background needed to discuss the two recycling bills that failed to get out of committee during the last legislative session: Representative Jeff Steinborn's 2009 HB548, Recycling Development Act, and Senator Michael Sanchez's 2009 SB1, Beverage Container Act.

Breakout Groups were asked to review the bills and provide input and other ideas to change the landscape of recycling in New Mexico.

Groups found funding to be a consistent problem for both bills. Some suggestions for HB548 included adding a mandate to have a recycling plan in the state for all areas, offering two funding options: (1) change the wording on vehicle registration fees to read "\$.50 per year", eliminating the cost break for multi-year purchase, to add funding to the existing Recycling & Illegal Dumping Alliance Fund, or (2) legislate an additional local option Environmental Gross Receipts Tax of 1/16% that would be dedicated to recycling. (The fee increase was the most favored.)

SB1 also had problems. Most participants were against any reallocation of funds from existing programs as this bill suggests. Some movement of funds from Litter Abatement to Recycling would be okay, but everyone generally wants to retain funds for existing Tire/RAID (Recycling and Illegal Dumping) and NM Clean & Beautiful funds.

Other solutions discussed included support for a regional approach for recycling in rural areas to increase funds and volume of recyclable materials. The lack of funding and insufficient volume is a

special challenge in rural areas. Another solution is to develop local industry to support recycling, (e.g., glass crusher). It was determined that local options were important in New Mexico due to recycling markets not being as open to areas with limited volume and limited transportation. All recommendations included the need to further educate the public and increase recycling awareness.

The suggestions above are only a sample of the many options presented. Unfortunately, the meeting ended without a feeling of consensus supporting either bill. However, there is support for a future recycling bill. We must continue our efforts and contact our representatives to revive these bills with a focus on funding. Together, we can work out the details and try again.

**New Mexico Board of Regents Meeting –
September 25, 2009**

John Lazurak, Common Cause Observer

The New Mexico State University Board of Regents met on September 25, 2009. An executive session was started prior to the public meeting and finished afterwards. The Board of Regents approved a continuation of the university's mission and vision statements, exterior renovations to two buildings on the Grant campus at a cost of \$1.5 million; and changed the policy on searches for academic administrators to allow interim administrators to apply for the positions. Regent Gonzales requested a review of university's policies that have been approved by the Board, and the process used to change them. Plans for dealing with expected budget cuts were outlined. The university's administration acknowledged expected budget cuts between \$3.6 and \$8.8 million this year and is developing plans to use contingency funds to minimize the impact on programs directly affecting students. The number of undergraduate and graduate students continues to increase. The administration also identified six priority capital projects: 1) Jordan St. entrance and Bookstore on University Ave; 2) a 300-bed expansion of Chamisa Village housing; 3) the planned Arts Complex; 4) increase the capacity of the Auxiliary Chiller Plant; 5) addition to the Student Health Center; and 6) changes to the irrigation system for the Golf Course. The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Thursday, October 26, 2009 in the Regents Room on Campus.

