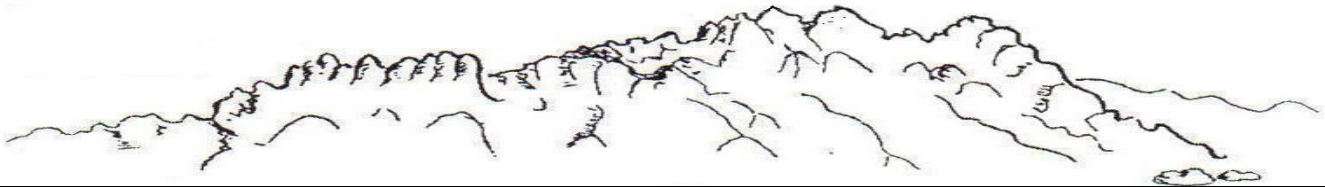
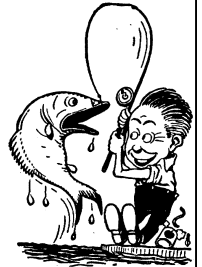


The VOTER

League of Women Voters
of Greater Las Cruces
(575) 524-VOTE (8683)
Web Site: www.lwvglc.org
June 2011



NO LUNCH WITH A LEADER IN JUNE



Mark Your Calendars - Education Study Kick-Off

July 11 (Monday) - Lunch with a Leader

Superintendent Stan Rounds, Las Cruces Public Schools
11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m., Good Samaritan's Social Center Creative Arts Room

DUES FORM

Membership: Individual (\$60), 2nd Household Member (\$30) Renewal Period (May 1-June 30)

Name: _____ 2nd Household: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____ Email: _____

\$ _____ Contribution to the League Make Check payable to LWV of Greater Las Cruces

\$ _____ Contribution to the Education Fund (Tax Deductible) Make check payable to
League of Women Voters Education Fund

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The VOTER

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

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Web Site: www.lwvglc.org

President - Bonnie Burn

Vice President & Program
Shannez Dudelczyk

Secretary - Martha Duran

Treasurer (Interim) - Bonnie Burn

Director, Membership
Roberta Gran

Director, Voter Services
Erika Graf-Webster

**Director, Public Relations
(Off Board)**
Sharon Burbano

Nominating Committee
Chair: Vicki Simons
Elected Member: Sadie Valerde

STUDY GROUPS

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

Education
Bonnie Burn - 526-0013

**Mental Illness Services
in Doña Ana County**
Becky Beckett - 522-8171
Mickey Curtis - 532-5655

Metropolitan Court
Marjorie Burr - 522-2528

ACTION COMMITTEE
Vicki Simons - 522-4813

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.

CALENDAR

June 1 (Wednesday) - 4:30 - 6 p.m., **Board Meeting**, Erika Graf-Webster's home.

Mark Your Calendar:

June 17-20 - LWVUS Council, Washington, DC.

Notable Dates:

June 14 - Flag Day

June 19 - Father's Day

Board Highlights

The first meeting of the new board was held on April 25, 4-7 p.m., Branigan Library Roadrunner Room.

Board Members: By accepting Barbara Goedecke's resignation, the treasurer's position is open. Bonnie Burn and Ellen Young have discussed implementing a Quicken accounting system. That option will be pursued upon Ellen's return in mid-July. In the interim, all treasury matters should be referred to Bonnie.

Sharon Burbano was appointed as Director of Public Relations for a one-year term.

Board Orientation: Shannez Dudelczyk was welcomed as the vice-president and a new board member. Martha Duran, Erika Graf-Webster and Robert Gran were welcomed back. The Board reviewed the LWVUS document, *League Basics*, and the roles and responsibilities of Board members.

Planning the League Year: The Board seeks an appointment to the Director of Special Projects position and was pleased to learn that the observers currently in place wish to continue.

Calendar: Board meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of the month from 4:30-6 p.m. at Branigan Library, if available, to accommodate work schedules. June 1 is the next scheduled meeting.

As suggested in Directions to the Board at the Annual Meeting, **the League will be on vacation during the month of June.**

Lunch with a Leader meeting on July 11 will kick-off the presentation of information about the Education Study. Superintendent Stan Rounds will be our guest speaker (11:30 a.m.-1 p.m., Good Samaritan's Social Center, Creative Arts Room).

Other topics discussed included alternative meeting sites, alternative social events, and how to fit two consensus studies, Affordable Housing and Education, into the calendar.

The Legislative Breakfast, as suggested by the Legislators, is scheduled for January 14, 2012, at Good Samaritan.

President's Message

"For these times they are a changin';" lyrics by Bob Dylan, reflect what is happening now for Leagues across the county.



After its June 2010 convention, the League of Women Voters U.S. (LWVUS) issued a document, "The ABCs of a Streamlined League." It was prescient of LWVUS to issue the document at a time when leadership roles were hard to fill. The model allows Leagues to streamline operations but maintain its good reputation. It allows busy people to have enough time to take leadership roles, and it retains our community grassroots organizations.

Lacking a nominee for the positions of president and vice president, the New Mexico League (LWVNM) is undertaking management by leadership team. Leaders self-identified at the first Board meeting held immediately following state convention on May 15, and the model will continue to evolve through the summer as Board meetings are convened.

A second change involves communication. LWVUS President Elisabeth McNamara's President's Corner in the May 5 *Leaders' Update* reflected a new way of getting the word out to the public. On April 29, the League launched a seven-figure television ad campaign calling public attention to the votes by Senators Scott Brown (R-MA) and Claire McCaskill (D-MO) to delay or eliminate the ability of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to enforce the Clean Air Act. Rather than write letters, send email messages, or telephone the senators' offices, the usual means for getting League messages out, the ads went directly to the public in Massachusetts and Missouri. You can view the ads on the League's home page, www.lwv.org, The Latest, scroll to Ads. The press release contains a link of the ads that call on both senators to "protect the people, not the polluters." The message sent is that votes in Congress have consequences. The League has been a strong and active supporter of the Clean Air Act since its enactment in 1970.

Because the ads are powerful, they have provoked a response, including accusations of partisanship. "The ads were not paid for by per member payment," said President McNamara in her President's Corner message. However, the funding was identified as "support of trusted partners in the environmental and public health community." At the LWVUS 2010 convention, Congressman John Lewis urged the delegates "Don't be afraid to get in trouble and to get in the way." During the suffrage movement, if women had not gotten in the way, women would not have achieved the vote. "Democracy cannot be safe if the voices of citizens telling the truth to elected officials can be silenced by mere accusation," continues President McNamara. "The media chosen makes that message disturbing to some. It does not make it less true."

And so we meet the future of YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and other social media. As Bob Dylan sang, "For these times they are a changin'."

Bonnie Burn

Welcome

New Member

Carrie Hamblen & Char Ullman
440 Linda Vista Rd.,
Las Cruces 88005
Tel: 522-5661
Email: charullman@gmail.com

Gwendolyn Hanson
1219 Dry Creek Place,
Las Cruces 88011
Tel: 566-9251
E-mail: gwenhanson10@gmail.com

Membership Renewals Due

Please complete the form on page 1
and return with your check by **June 30**

COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS

John Ameriks, M.D.
Biad Chile Ltd. Co.
Joseph P. Camunez, DDS
Citizens Bank
Dental Associates, PA
Doggie Dude Ranch and
Cat Farm
Donald and Winifred Dresp
Adrian and Jackie Edwards
Nancy & Ken Hall
Edward Jones - Connie Lee
First New Mexico Bank
Lilley Law Offices
Louise P. Lockhart
Francisco Mario Ortiz Law Firm
Tom Tate
Zia Engineering & Environmental
Consultants

Thank You

LWV Affordable Housing Committee Visits Tierra del Sol

Vicki Simons and Christina Little, Co-Chair

The League's Affordable Housing Committee interviewed several more agencies that provide affordable housing to low-income and disabled in Doña Ana County. In February we visited Habitat for Humanity and Ed Johnson, Executive Director, which was reported in *May Voter*. Also in February we visited with Tierra del Sol and Executive Director Rose Garcia. There were several other agency personnel present; Art Marrujo, Homeownership, and Sonia Jones, Intake Housing Rehab Specialist. Tierra del Sol has nearly 40 staff members, 26 in the two Las Cruces and Anthony offices and 14 personnel who work at the construction sites.

Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation (TDS) began operations in New Mexico and Texas in 1973. TDS is a regional housing and community development corporation whose purpose is to improve the quality of life for its clients through the construction of affordable housing and, through its housing construction activities, promotes the development of the community. The organization is authorized to do business in Arizona also and is recognized regionally and nationally. Most services are focused in southern New Mexico and West Texas counties. TDS was originally run by a group of volunteers; an interfaith group, a county commissioner, farm workers, and rural families. The original effort was directed at the area around Stahmann Farms, starting a self-help housing program to replace existing on-farm rental housing that was limited due to government regulations. These homes were built with funds from U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Through the years, TDS has created close to 7,000 units of housing, extensive infrastructure for utilities, land development and community service centers. TDS offers homebuyer education about lending support, credit counseling, and foreclosure mitigation. However, Director Garcia made an important point that the affordable housing market has not been hit as much by foreclosures as the speculative market that existed before the recession. TDS is now a multi-faceted organization that provides the following five lines of business:

1. Home Ownership Promotion - This focuses on new and existing single-family dwellings for first-time buyers and replacement housing for

homeowners. TDS provides homeownership orientation, financial literacy training, credit counseling, default prevention and intervention to assure minimal default or foreclosures. TDS matches the best source of financing and principal reduction resources to the potential mortgage holder. It uses the mutual self-help method of construction that organizes eligible homeowners into work groups to contribute up to 65% of the labor in building their homes guided by a TDS supervisor. They also deal with contractor-built homes. There were 41 houses completed in the 12-month period, July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010. These include 17 houses constructed through the self-help method and 24 contractor-built houses. The homes ranged in price from \$92,000 to \$115,000.

2. Housing Rehabilitation and Repair – This program improves the housing conditions of owner-occupied housing in isolated colonias. Under this program, eight houses were rehabilitated at an average cost of \$52,900 and 2 houses totally rebuilt at an average of \$93,000.
3. Multifamily Rental Housing – This construction has traditionally been directed at two special-needs populations, the elderly and people employed in agri-business to stabilize the work force. This program has expanded to include general families with children, persons with disabilities, low and market rate income and more mixed market type housing population. TDS uses creative and layer financing from private investment and public sources to leverage multifamily rental housing development including the IRS Low Income Housing Tax Credits, deferred loans, trust fund investments, and more to develop mixed units in both rural and urban neighborhoods. TDS has developed 35 scattered multifamily rental properties in New Mexico and west Texas.
4. Community and Economic Development – TDS implemented a community and economic development initiative that provides 35 unemployed residents with job training and placement with permanent jobs in construction, renewable energy technology and green

(Continued on page 5)

Tierra del Sol *(Continued from page 4)*

building. This effort is focused in the Berino to Anthony area of Southern Doña Ana County.

- 5 Real Estate Development – Undertakes the acquisition, planning and design of land development into major and infill subdivisions of land to include improving existing vacant building lots in existing neighborhoods.

Current TDS construction projects include the Paseo del Oro subdivision which is a 104-unit single-family housing subdivision with acreage zoned community commercial and multifamily rental housing that is located in Las Cruces, and the 79-lot Parque Homes Subdivision in Berino.

TDS uses a variety of loans and grants including:

- HOME loans for families below 50% of average median income (AMI)
- HOME loans for families below 80% of AMI

- Community Development Block Grant Loans (CDBG)
- HUD Rural Housing and Economic Development, USDA
- TDS Revolving Loan Fund
- Other types as they become available.

Committee members were then taken on a tour of projects in Las Cruces. The variety of projects was striking and the fact that affordable housing is often far more attractive than surrounding buildings was impressive. TDS and Rose Garcia operate a major provider of affordable housing in Doña Ana County supported by innovative development and financing.

Editor's Note: Since this study was approved at the 2010 Annual Meeting, articles about the committee's work have been published in The Voter September and November, 2010 and January and May, 2011 issues. Archived copies of The Voter are available on LWVGLC's web site: www.lwvglc.org.

Look Back: The Redistricting Process and Principles and Update on Redistricting in New Mexico

Michael Sharp, Vice President, Research & Polling, Inc. and Bonnie Burn, Reporting

On May 9th, League members listened to a very informative presentation by Mr. Sharp about redistricting, a process of redrawing the lines of representation of voters on the local, state and national level based on the decennial census results.

The principles of equal population, minority voting rights, compactness, contiguity, and communities of interest were represented in the charts of consensus data and maps presented by Mr. Sharp. Although this was not an exercise to determine changes in the City of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County, it did provide a basis for all of us to evaluate what is being proposed in each of these locations. Let's begin with a broader view.

An excellent resource is the NM Legislature that has a great deal of information under its "Redistrict Tab" on the main menu. Maps and census information by district are available.

The State of New Mexico has increased in population from 1,819,046 to 2,059,179, a gain of 240,133 residents.

- Based on this information, NM neither gained nor lost congressional districts. In fact, considering the ideal population of 686,393 people to form a congressional district, NM Congressional District 2 with 663,956 is short by 22,437 people.
- The ideal population for NM Senate Districts is 49,028.
- The ideal population for NM House of Representative Districts is 29,417.
- The district lines for Public Regulation Committee were reviewed. The ideal population is 411,836.
- For Doña Ana County (2010 census 209,233), the ideal population per county commission district is 41,847.
- For Las Cruces (2010 census 97,618), the ideal population per city council district is 16,270.

As you may already know both the City Council of Las Cruces and Doña Ana County Commission have appointed a citizen's committee to provide

(Continued on page 6)

Redistricting *(Continued from page 5)*

input to the councilors and commissioners before the final district lines are approved.

- The Las Cruces Committee, because councilors are elected in nonpartisan elections, includes: Jim Harbison, Molly Molloy, Allen McBrayer, Bill McCamley, chair, Jim Williams, Virginia Robertson, Janet Reed, Miguel Sosa, Jane Asche, Greg Groves, and Ruben Alvarado
- The Doña Ana County Committee, because commissioners are elected by party, includes: Republicans Philip A. Bank, chair, and Howard W. Forman; Democrats Jo Galvan Nash and Peter M. Ossorio; and John Smith, Other.

City Councilors have held two work sessions with the consultant, Research & Polling, Inc. The citizen's committee has met twice and a third meeting is scheduled for May 26. At the second council workshop, Mr. McCamley gave the committee's recommendation that favored Plan G, a reconfiguration that reflected the population requirement of 16,270 \pm 5%, with District 5 and 6 having a below average populations to allow for growth. The councilors favored Plan F that had small variations in district lines but left all councilors eligible for re-election in their own districts. The councilors will be making a final decision about the district lines at the June 6 meeting. The redistricting process was started early in anticipation of the upcoming municipal election in November.

(Note: On May 12, on behalf of the League, I addressed a letter to Mayor Miyagishima with copies to councilors and the city manager expressing concern about the transparency of the redistricting process. During the work session discussions, the Council did not acknowledge the citizen committee nor ask for their advice.)

The county citizens committee also is holding meetings, and has scheduled public comment meetings. One was held on May 19 at the County Government Building. Two others, May 23 and 24, in Hatch and Gadsden, respectively. The county web site, www.co.dona-ana.nm.us, features a tab, Redistricting 2011, that gives information about the process, maps, meetings, committee member list, and a contact message.

Names of members of the NM Legislature who will be serving on the Redistricting Committee were released on May 11. State Representative Mary

Helen Garcia (D Dist 34) and State Senator Linda M. Lopez (D Bernalillo 11) are serving as co-chairs. Senators William Burt (R Dist 40) and Mary Jane Garcia (D Dist 36) are among the 41 members of the committee. At its convention, the League of Women Voters of New Mexico adopted two resolutions:

1. To send a letter to Governor Martinez to restore funding to hold meetings throughout the state for public comment about NM Legislative redistricting.
2. To send a letter to the Legislative Council asking that the public hearings be streamed online.

Las Cruces Board of Education Regular Meeting - April 17, 2011, 6:30 – 8:40 p.m. Sue Cain and Roberta Gran, Observers

All board members were present. There was no public input.

Superintendent Rounds' Report: LCPS may be taking an additional 3.2% decrease in funding due to an auditing error in calculation of Special Education ancillary units. The district has already experienced a 1.4% decrease in funding, and this additional cut could affect teachers salaries. Enrollment of special education students has increased from 22,770 in 2005 to 24,000 in 2010. The auditing error seems to have been caused by different types of data bases used by LCPS and NM Public Education Department. Discovering this error flagged LCPS for further review.

Approval of 2011-2012 School Calendar: The Superintendent discussed an option for changing the class schedule at the secondary level that will accommodate the decrease in state school funding. Board Member Maria Flores shared her concerns that included the lack of input from staff, teachers and students and the effect of remodeling Las Cruces High School during the school year. Superintendent Rounds explained that he is committed to making sure that the remodeling work does not impede the normal running of the school, and he will consult with teachers and staff for long term fixes. The current secondary schedule is in place for only one year. The 2011-2012 school calendar was approved as presented. Professional development days have been reduced to two days,

(Continued on page 7)

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.

School Board *(Continued from page 6)*

student orientation is August 11, and state tests are April 13 and 14. The LCPS calendar is in line with the NMSU calendar.

Spotlight on Excellence Video "Taking a Stand Against Bullying:" The video was shown and is available online. Marcy Behrens of LCPS has initiated "Bully Proofing Our Schools," and used the video in several schools to help teach students to take a proactive role against bullying.

Other reports: All finance matters and instructional matters were approved.

Gifted Education Task Force Report: Dr. Sanchez reported that the task force met for a year and focused on three key areas: academic development, social/emotional development, and transitional/career development. Four recommendations resulted: (1) three gifted high school course electives will be offered that focus on dual credit, community service and Circle of Courage; (2) teachers will case manage up to 35 students and teach one of the courses or assist with the Career Resource Center; (3) teacher development will ensure highly qualified teachers possess a gifted endorsement—a statutory requirement by July 2012; and (4) summer academy that provides opportunity for extension activities for students.

Operations review and staffing changes: The Director of Human Services reported that 73 employees have submitted their retirement paperwork and an additional 73 individuals have inquired. This number is about the same as last year. Fifteen Construction projects were reviewed.

New Business: An annual board reorganization elected President – Dr. Connie Phillips; Vice President – Maria Flores; Secretary – Dr. Bonnie Votaw. A resolution in support of establishing the Children's Reading Foundation of Doña Ana County was approved. The goal is to promote literacy

among children throughout the county so that they are reading at or above grade level by the end of the third grade. A number of school policies were reviewed.

Old Business: The Waste Reduction and Recycling policy received a second reading. Discussion involved reduction of use of styrofoam and other non-biodegradable materials in the school system

Board Member Reports: Dr. Bonnie Votaw reported on the meeting of the LCPS Audit committee and Maria Flores reported on her recent school visits.

South Central Solid Waste Authority – April 21, 2011, 9 a.m., Doña Ana County Government Center – *Johnnie R. Aldrich, Observer*

SCSWA Director Patrick Peck reported that controversy surrounding the distribution of the distinctive blue bins for curbside recycling in Las Cruces has diminished. His office is now receiving approximately 10 calls per day as opposed to the 40-50 that came in during the first weeks of the program that officially began on April 4.

Certainly the program can, to this point, be considered a success. SCSWA and Friedman drivers are taking 30-50 **TONS** of recyclables a day to the distribution facilities in El Paso. At this time last year, approximately 10 tons were the maximum daily load. The public is still learning, though, about what can and cannot be recycled. At least one semi-truck a day is loaded with items that have been rejected at the distribution center and must be carted off to the landfill.

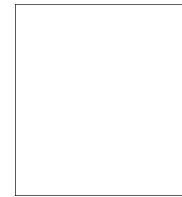
Nevertheless, recycling seems to be catching on. Every day the SCSWA office receives at least one request from apartment buildings and other commercial enterprises about joining the effort to clean up our corner of the world.

(Continued on page 8)



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FIRST CLASS



Membership Renewals Due

Please complete form on page 1 and return with your check by June 30

Solid Waste *(Continued from page 7)*

Director Peck is now focused on the future. Plans to build a permanent transfer station in Anthony are underway as is development of household hazardous waste collection events in both Anthony and Hatch.

Another major future project involves another kind of cleanup problem: illegal dumping. Much of this dumping happens in the Chaparral environs (partially in Otero County), where the city of El Paso is considering authorizing a company to develop a private landfill. That news led to extensive discussion of the possibility of forming one more Regional Authority to oversee solid waste collection.

A final action of the Board of Directors was to authorize the spending of almost \$85,000 for the construction of a baled-tire retaining wall in one of the large arroyos on the East Mesa south of Lohman Avenue.



Thank you for Recycling

June 2011 In This Issue

Renew Membership Dues	1
Calendar	2
Board Highlights	2
President's Message	3
Affordable Housing	4-5
Look Back: Redistricting	5-6
Observer Reports	6-8

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