

# the VOTER

OCTOBER 2023  
Volume 55, Issue 5



## INSIDE

Calendar & Events	2	Membership Drive Ends	4
Volunteering	2	Push Voter Turnout	5
Otero Hosts Forums	3	Naturalization	5
Legislative Webinar	3	Community Connection	6
Youth Engagement	4	Observer Reports	7-9

## Co-Presidents' Communiqué

Happy Fall everyone!

Volunteerism certainly is the strength of this organization. Over the past many weeks, the help given from our members has come in all shapes and sizes. Many people are volunteering in so many projects during this time of year, ranging from developing the two LWVSNM Voter Guides, to participating in televised candidate forums, to working with our members in Otero County in their first-time candidate forums, to registering new voters. We all should be proud of how our members are willing to give a few (and many) hours of their time to support the League in its goal of strengthening Democracy.



At the same time when citizens *are* active in supporting voting rights, it still appears as if many others are skeptical about the political process and are much more critical than ever before. I'm not pointing a finger at any of the major political parties. In fact, I've also found myself questioning why certain government leaders are choosing certain actions or decisions. But rather than standing on the sidelines and casting doubt, I need to ask myself how the League can instill greater

harmony for what I believe is the greatest governmental structure on this planet?

Maybe there's at least one solution — if we simply continue to volunteer and use our voices in a positive and uplifting tenor, we can empower others to follow suit and calm the tumultuous waters. And, our actions do speak as loud as our words. If we want to eradicate misinformation, then we have to be willing to provide positive, factual information about elections and the strengths of our Democracy.

—continued next page

## Oct. General Mtg: Election Time!

**"Today, New Mexico is leading the nation by example, declaring that we believe, unequivocally, in the fundamental right of every American to choose those who represent them."**

—Gov. Lujan Grisham, upon signing the New Mexico Voting Rights Act into law on March 30, 2023.

On Saturday, October 14, 2023, at 2:00 p.m., the general membership of the League of Women Voters of Southern New Mexico and the public at large are invited to hear a talk by Amanda López Askin, Doña Ana County Clerk, and Dale Yeo, LWVSNM Director of Voter Services, on the upcoming, non-partisan, regular local elections.

The meeting is once again a hybrid event, so please come in-person or via Zoom. If you want to join the Zoom, please log in by 1:50 p.m. with the link that will be emailed to you. If you attend in-person, we meet at the DACC Workforce Center, 2345 Nevada Ave. Light snacks will be provided. Please bring a beverage.



Beth Bardwell

The League will also be distributing its English version of the Voters' Guide for the 2023 local elections with reliable voting information and candidate answers to questions from the League.

Topics to be discussed include changes in the state's voting laws under the state's 2023 Voting Rights Protection Act, how does rank-choice voting work in the City of Las Cruces elections for Mayor and City Council, how to support the integrity of our democratic elections by volunteering to serve as a poll worker or poll watcher and poll worker security.

Please join us!

■ Beth Bardwell, Vice President

## Co-Presidents' Communiqué (cont.)

So, I hope you'll continue to volunteer in whatever way you choose. There are many ideas on how you can get involved with the League.

One idea is to attend a future hybrid General Meetings, typically held at 2:00 p.m. on the second Saturdays of the month. (See Beth Bardwell's information about the Oct. 14 meeting on page 1.) Or sign up to be a poll watcher. We'll be sending out information in the near future to get poll watchers placed at area precincts on November 7.

Please also consider joining your fellow League members at the Dec. 2, 2023, Legislative Conversation and Social. That's a great time to exchange ideas and to share your thoughts with our area lawmakers. And, if you have some time to work via Zoom on updating our League Positions, join one of the League committees completing that task: Kathy Brook (Libraries); Eileen VanWie (Education or Youth Engagement); Beth Bardwell (Housing).

You belong to a great group of women and men, and both Kathe and I are grateful to be a part of it.

▪ *Jo Galván Nash and Kathe Kanim, Co-Presidents*

### 2023/24 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO BOARD:

Jo Galván Nash & Kathe Kanim – Co-Presidents

Beth Bardwell – Vice-President

Edwina Jaramillo – Secretary

OPEN– Treasurer

Kathy Brook & Eileen VanWie – Past Presidents

Dale Yeo – Voter Services Co-Director and  
TBA, Co-Director

Kate Mangelsdorf – Membership Director

Eileen VanWie & Josie Miller – Youth Engagement  
Co-Directors

TBA – Public Relations Director

and

Nancy Stanton — Development Chair

Jo Galván Nash – The Voter Editor

Mary Flynn, Chair, and Johnnie Aldrich and Kate  
Mangelsdorf, Members – Nominating Committee

TBA — Historians

Claudia Powell & Cindy Broughton — Otero Unit  
Liaisons



### Observer Corps Needs Help

Consider attending in-person and/or watching online the County Commission meetings. Our positive, community watchdogs report to our members pertinent information that impacts our organization's programs and other information that has significance within our communities. If you're able to spend a few hours a month on this activity, please volunteer!

### LWVSNM Still Needs a Treasurer

This Board position takes care of occasional purchases, incoming dues, and watches over budget revenue and expenditures. Please contact a co-president if you can step into this important role. A position on the Board is not necessarily a permanent requirement, if you prefer.

## Upcoming Calendar Events

### OCTOBER 2023

*Breast Cancer Awareness Month; LGBTQ+ History Month; through Oct. 15 is the completion of [Nat'l Hispanic Heritage Month](#); National Bullying Prevention Month*

Oct. 2, Mon.: **Regular Board Mtg**, 5:30, Zoom, [contact Kathe if you want to attend.](#)

Oct. 3, Tues.: **LWV Housing Committee**, 3:30, Zoom, contact [Beth Bardwell](#) to join or attend.

Oct. 9, Mon.: **[Indigenous Peoples' Day](#)**

Oct. 9, Mon.: **Education Committee**, 4:30 pm, contact [Eileen VanWie](#) if you want to attend or join.

Oct. 14, Sat.: **General Meeting**, 2:00 pm, Hybrid, DACC Workforce Center, 2345 Nevada St.; light refreshments served.

Oct. 16, Mon.: **Short Board Mtg**, 5:30, Zoom, [contact Kathe if you want to attend.](#)

Oct. 31, Tues.: **Halloween**



## Otero Unit Stages its first Candidate Forums

Several Otero County Unit members coordinated several in-person public forums for candidates in Tularosa and Alamogordo. The first forum with 11 candidates was held on Sept. 30 for Tularosa Mayor, Trustees and Municipal Judge. Other forums will be held during the first week of October for Alamogordo and Tularosa school boards. Tom Krajci and Claudia Powell reached out to candidates to organize their first-time forums. Other League members in support are Sue Preslar and Cindy Broughton from Otero County, and Jo Galván Nash, Kathe Kanim and Nancy Stanton from Las Cruces. Other League members are encouraged to volunteer with upcoming events. Contact [Tom](#) or [Claudia](#) about helping with the forums in Alamogordo or Tularosa.

“These small towns are big in commitment to having healthy debates among a solid list of candidates,” said Jo Nash, SNM co-president. “The audience members offered numerous questions and were very respectful in hearing the varying positions during the first forum.”

SNM is also involved in Las Cruces forums that will be broadcast on KRWG Public TV22. Read about that in Dale Yeo’s report on page 5.



*PHOTOS - Top, clockwise: There was a good crowd in Tularosa for the first forum; SNM Co-President Jo Nash served as moderator; From Las Cruces were (l to r) Nancy Stanton and Kathe Kanim who assisted with audience questions, and Jo; Otero Unit members did a great job in organizing, including Tom Krajci from Cloudcroft. Sue Preslar from Tularosa was the timekeeper.*



## The Legislative Process and the Role of the Legislative Council Service

**Raul Burciaga, Esq.**  
**Director, Legislative Council Service**  
**Thursday, October 12, 2023 - 10 am to noon**  
**Room 322 State Capitol**

**Register for Zoom:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0pd-6vqzwuHNJA43vA82BFH8fGuZ5UVHH0>

Raul Burciaga is Director of the Legislative Council Service; his primary responsibility for the administration of the LCS, the nonpartisan bill drafting, and the legal research agency of the New Mexico Legislature.



## Youth Engagement Preparing for Activities with Area Students

On September 8<sup>th</sup>, we met via Zoom with City Councilor Yvonne Flores, Community Outreach Director Catrina Godinez, and Community Liaison Nissi Jimenez to begin conversation about the *Know Your Local Government* event. At this event, students will solve real world issues impacting Las Cruces and will create a presentation to share with a panel of judges.

As we get closer to the event, we will reach out to League members to see who would like to participate and/or serve as a judge. More information to come! Both the City of Las Cruces and Las Cruces Public Schools are very interested in helping make this project happen in February 2024.

On September 12<sup>th</sup>, we met via Zoom with DAC Election Bureau Communications Coordinator Cynthia Mendoza and Voter Registration Lead Emily Burr to talk about working together to register youth to vote. They organized voter registration at the NMSU Corbett Center on National Voter Registration Day, September 19<sup>th</sup>. Due to LCPS vacation dates, registration of high school youth will begin in February. We hope to provide voter registration in the Gadsden ISD schools. If you are a VRA and are interested in registering students from LCPS in February, please let us know.

Thanks to Branigan Memorial Library Administrator Sarah Booth, the LWVSNM had a Voter Registration table at the library on National Voter Registration Day,

A meeting of the Youth Engagement Committee is being arranged for October. Please reach out to us if you'd like to attend or join the committee.

- *Eileen VanWie and Josie Miller*

## Committees in Action

Within *The Voter*, please read about the work of our committees, such as Development, Affordable Housing, Education, Libraries, and Youth Engagement.



On our website, there is a list of all committees and the members that belong to each one. Use the links on that list to contact the chairs if you'd like to attend the meetings or join.

All meetings are still using Zoom to meet.

## Membership Drive Ends; Renewal Always Available

Reminder letters and emails to members who have not paid their 2023/24 dues has concluded this year's membership renewal drive. We thank every person who remained as a member of this organization. And, we will miss those who have decided not to renew. The Co-Presidents will be verifying the final membership list with Kate Mangelsdorf, our Membership Director. Unfortunately, at first glance, it does appear that more than the expected number of members did not renew. This will have an impact on the SNM budget, which was based on an estimate of renewals.

Kate will now complete the 2023/24 Membership Handbook and Directory with all members listed. She will send to each member an electronic copy within the coming days. She said the Handbook will also be posted on the LWVSNM website under the "Members' Page" tab. The online version will not include members' addresses, emails or phone numbers; the electronic file sent directly to your emails will have the contact information.

It is important to note that we hope those who did not renew, will do so in the future. We are stronger together, and we would appreciate your membership. The final page of *The Voter* can be used at any time.

- *Jo Galvan Nash, Co-President*

## Let's Push Election Turnout

Early voting for the local Nov. 7 General Election begins on October 10, 2023. The League has a number of ways that can help inform voters. First and foremost are the locally published Voters' Guides, in English and Spanish. Look for the English version in the *Las Cruces Bulletin*. The printed guide will cover races for the City of Las Cruces and the Town of Mesilla. It will be inserted in the Bulletin on Friday, October 13.



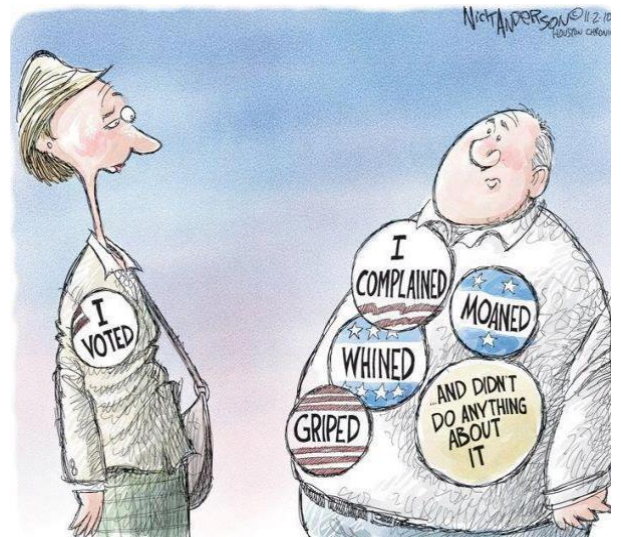
Dale Yeo

*The Camino Real Media Voters' Guide* will be printed in Spanish. On October 9, this guide will be inserted and delivered to various locations throughout the county and will feature the races outside of Las Cruces but within Doña Ana County, including Hatch, Sunland Park, Anthony, and the rural Water/Soil Conservation Districts.

You can also view both of the League Voters' Guides on the League's web site: <https://www.lwvsnm.org/>. And, don't forget, there is a digital way to read about all the candidates. Go to [www.Vote411.org](http://www.Vote411.org) which will be available online shortly before Early Voting starts on October 10. All participating candidates' information should be available (in English) and the Vote411 website also contains a great deal of voter information such as how to register to vote, how to vote absentee, and much more.

Finally, in conjunction with KRWG Public Media, the League will be co-hosting a series of televised Candidate Forums featuring races for the Las Cruces City Council and Mayor, and the Las Cruces School Board. We thank Liz Rodriguez-Johnson, Jennifer Kreie, Ruth Jaure, Eileen VanWie, and Jo Galván Nash for volunteering to be co-hosts. Information on when those forums will be broadcast will be distributed after the schedule is finalized.

- Dale Yeo, Voters Services Chair



## Our Newest Citizens Get Registered to Vote!

There were more than 130 citizens who took their Oaths of Allegiance as they became United States citizens at a September naturalization ceremony conducted by the US District Courts in Las Cruces. And in keeping with tradition, the LWVSNM was in attendance to help celebrate their new status and to register them to vote. Pictured to the right are voter registrars including LWV members (4<sup>th</sup> from right) Rebecca Courtney, and Stew and Karena Oberman. Past President Eileen VanWie and Co-President Jo Nash were introduced during the ceremony.

US District Judge Ken Gonzales (below) gave the keynote address and administered the oath. Ages of the immigrants ranged from 18 to 81. They were from many counties including Mexico, with the largest number, Japan, Canada, Columbia, Philippines, Australia, and Iran. Special recognition was bestowed to military personnel who are from several different countries and now serve with the US Army.



# Community Connection

DAC-NAACP

SAVE THE DATE



## Dec. 2: Social & Legislative Conversation

The invitations will soon go out and we want all members to attend! The annual social will be combined with a conversation with our area legislators from 2:00- 4:30 pm at the Doña Ana Community College Workforce Center, 2345 Nevada Street.

The guest speaker at the Sept. 16 meeting of the NAACP of Doña Ana County was Eric Enriquez, one of the candidates for Mayor. Meanwhile, the reports from the President and other officers included:

- There will be a November memorial service in Las Cruces for Delano Lewis, former U.S. Ambassador to South Africa, who died in Las Cruces in August.
- LC Police Chief Story will be the guest speaker at the chapter meeting in October.
- The State NAACP conference will be Nov. 10-11 in Albuquerque. Chapter delegates will be Bobbie Green (President), Terry Tolbert (Treasurer), Howard Guion (Secretary), Jennifer Kreie (At-large Executive Committee Member) and Secretary Liz Rodriguez-Johnson.
- Liz and Jennifer Kreie will be co-hosts for three of the candidate forums hosted by KRWG and the League of Women Voters.
- Liz is working with Stephen Jones on a campaign to get out the vote in rural Doña Ana County.
- People can now request their absentee ballot and it will be mailed early in October.
- The Library Advisory Board's Diversity and Inclusion subcommittee's report was endorsed. It is now part of the City's policies and procedures for its libraries.

In other business Reverend Carolyn Wilkins said there will be a candidate forum hosted by NM CAFé on October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

- *Jennifer Kreie, LWV and NAACP-DAC*

## UPCOMING GOVT. MEETINGS

**LC City Council:** Oct. 2, (special wksess and reg. mtg); Oct. 10 (wrksess); Oct. 16; Oct. 23 (wrksess); all at 1:00 p.m., City Hall

**County Commission:** Oct. 10; Oct. 24; all at 9:00 am, DAC Govt. Center.

**LCPS School Board:** Oct. 3, (wrksess) 4:00 pm; Oct. 24, 6:00 pm; LCPS Admin. Bldg. Board Room.

**NMSU Board of Regents:** Oct. 4, Potential Quorum, 4:30-7pm, NMSU events.

## Books for LWVSNM Book Club – October 2023

*We read so we know things*

**BOOK CLUB MEETINGS ARE ON 1<sup>ST</sup> THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH**

*If you would like to participate, contact Erika at [grafwebster@icloud.com](mailto:grafwebster@icloud.com)*

<p><b>Oct 5</b></p>	<p><b>The Shadow Docket: How the Supreme Court Uses Stealth Rulings to Amass Power and Undermine the Republic</b> by <a href="#">Stephen Vladeck</a>                  Since 2017, the Court has dramatically expanded its use of the behind-the-scenes "shadow docket," regularly making decisions that affect millions of Americans without public hearings and without explanation, through cryptic late-night rulings that leave lawyers—and citizens—scrambling. The Court's conservative majority has used the shadow docket to green-light restrictive voting laws and bans on abortion, and to curtail immigration and COVID vaccine mandates. But Americans of all political stripes should be worried about what the shadow docket portends for the rule of law</p>
<p><b>Nov 2</b></p>	<p><b>Fool Me Once: Scams, Stories, and Secrets from the Trillion-Dollar Fraud Industry</b> by Kelly R Pope                  A riveting look at the perpetrators, victims, and whistleblowers behind financial crimes. Have you ever wondered why Bernie Madoff thought he could brazenly steal his clients' money? Or why investors were so easily duped by Elizabeth Holmes? Or how courageous people are willing to become whistleblowers? Fraud is everywhere, from Nigerian "princes," embezzlers, and Ponzi schemers to corporate giants like Enron and Volkswagen. Each year, consumers, small businesses, governments, and corporations lose trillions of dollars to financial crime.</p>



### **LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Work Session**

August 28, 2023

Observer: Kathy Brook

The topic of the meeting was policing and the report of the OIR group on its most recent audit. Those with a strong interest in policing may want to review the recording and the audit report which can be found by accessing the agenda for the meeting: <https://lascruces.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal&Id=539>

The police department is beginning the process of attaining accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). In the state, only the State Police and Hobbs have this accreditation. The department's use of force review process was also described.

OIR has a positive sense concerning the department's responsiveness under Chief Dominguez and Chief Story. During the most recent quarter eight formal citizen complaints and two internal investigations were reviewed. Two cases involved use of force allegations and one involved an allegation of racial bias (the first such case for OIR in Las Cruces).

---

### **LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Regular Meeting**

September 5, 2023

Observer: Kathy Brook

Agenda items included approval of a contract for janitorial supplies and budget adjustments and Capital Improvement Plan amendments. In addition, there was a hearing involving appeal of a Planning and Zoning decision to deny a zoning change that would allow construction of a 20-unit apartment complex on McClure Road in an area of single family housing. The zoning discussion was interesting in that there was a balancing of the need for more affordable/attainable housing and for infill with the specific traffic issues of McClure Road. The motion failed so the zoning change was not approved.

---

### **LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Work Session**

September 11, 2023

Observer: Kathy Brook

Two topics were covered: opioid settlement funds and cannabis revenue. Barbara Bencomo from the city manager's office, coordinated a presentation concerning the opioid settlement funds coming to the city and the county. The case, involving producers, distributors and retail establishments, was described as the biggest and most complicated case in US history. New Mexico is slated to receive about \$1 billion with funds going to the state, the City of Las Cruces, Doña Ana County, Sunland Park, and other localities within the state. In total, the county, Las Cruces, and Sunland Park will receive \$25 million spread over about 18 years. The agreement specifies that the funds will be used only for opioid remediation, including treatment and prevention strategies.

—continued next page



The City is currently working with the County on the use of the funds, including deciding how the funds will be handled over time. An advisory council of 10-15 people is being created to assist with the process. The state's approach is to invest the funds as they are received and to pay out annually 5% of the market value of the fund.

Ikani Taumoepeau, assistant city manager, coordinated the presentation on cannabis revenue. The city received about \$847,000 in cannabis revenue during the past fiscal year. The excise tax revenue currently flows into the city's general fund. A question under discussion is whether those revenues should be set aside for particular purposes or treated in the same way as most other sources of revenue.

---

### **LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Regular Meeting**

September 18, 2023

Observer: Kathy Brook

Public participation: most of the public input involved complaints about crime, but concerns were also expressed about publicly funded guaranteed basic income and about the challenges of low-income people getting health care at a city/county leased hospital.

At the end of the meeting, the city manager noted that there is a security patrol in the downtown area at night and at least one councilor referred to efforts to examine ways in which the municipal code might be used to address crime. Councilors Corran, Gandara, and Bencomo spoke in support of the guaranteed basic income. (The Council awarded ARPA funds to the Community Action Agency to provide \$500/month for 18 months to 150 families selected to participate in the program.)

The Council approved acquisition of about one acre of land adjacent to the Mesilla Valley Community of Hope and approved use of Community Development Block Grant funds for a campus solar power project for Casa de Peregrinos.

---

### **LAS CRUCES BOARD OF EDUCATION • Regular Meeting**

September 19, 2023, 6 pm

Observer: Eileen VanWie

*Members Present: President Teresa Tenorio, VP Pam Cort, Secretary Robert Wofford, and Members Carol Cooper and Patrick Nolan*

There were 25 people signed up for public comment. Because of the large number of comments, they were limited to two minutes each. Themes included school resource officers, not banning books, civic education, mental health, and SPED teachers feeling belittled by administrators.

Superintendent Ignacio Ruíz is continuing his goal to visit all the Las Cruces schools. There was lengthy discussion about transportation issues again. STS Transportation, the district's bus contractor, is working to acquire enough drivers. Parents are frustrated. Salaries are low compared to other bus services in the state (\$15.94-18.80/hour compared to other companies that provide \$20-21/hour).

—continued next page





The Board discussed the School Resource Officers Agreement extensively. Robert Wofford thanked the students who spoke and the officers in attendance. He talked about the data he had read from the U.S. Department of Justice and others with evidence that with SROs in schools there is more crime reporting, especially with black and brown students, possibly contributing to the “school-to-prison pipeline.” Consensus of available evidence does not support the belief that police presence makes schools safer overall. He observed from the many voices who spoke during public comment that there is a perception of school safety with SROs. “But does it really make schools safer? Maybe Las Cruces is different, but I don’t know that.”

Carol Cooper commented that students become more comfortable around police officers and benefit from SROs. Students had commented about having good relationships with their SRO. Pam Cort noted that she has observed in some schools the SRO sitting in his office not building relationships and sometimes making disparaging comments about students. Patrick Nolan talked about this being an accountability issue, which is expected of every employee.

Teresa Tenorio thanked the students who spoke, giving them practice with civic participation. She wants to look at the data with an equity lens and wonders why low-income students are facing issues. She sees a need to build support for social workers and counselors. Schools are using restorative justice practices. The Board approved agreements with LCPD and Town of Mesilla for the same number of SROs for the next school year on a 4 to 1 vote.



# MEMBERSHIP FORM

Send this Membership Form with Your Dues and/or Donation

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ New member? Y / N Renewal? Y / N \*Student? Y / N

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>nd</sup> Household Member: New Member? Y / N Renewal? Y / N \*Student? Y / N

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Student Members (age 16+): List current school: \_\_\_\_\_

What League issues are you most passionate about? Circle any that apply:

- |               |                           |                     |                     |
|---------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Voting Rights | Elections                 | Education/Youth     | Redistricting       |
| Gun Safety    | Immigration/Border Issues | Health Care         | Climate/Environment |
| Legislation   | Local Government          | Social Justice/JEDI | Jobs/Economy        |
| Other: _____  |                           |                     |                     |

What skill set or interest do you want to offer to the League? \_\_\_\_\_

*Send the Membership Form with Your Dues and/or Donation • THANK YOU!*

### **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP:**

Annual Dues are paid in May of each year. If paying dues, select appropriate box:

- \$65.00 for first member     \$32.50 for second household member     \*Students (16+) free.

Make checks payable to LWVSNM. Send to: PO Box 15142, Las Cruces, NM 88004. Or pay at [www.lwvsnm.org](http://www.lwvsnm.org) using PayPal or Credit Card. (An additional \$2.50 is appreciated to cover electronic fees.) Forms can be emailed to: [lwvsnm@gmail.com](mailto:lwvsnm@gmail.com) Thank you!

### **DONATION:**

Please accept my donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_. I request my donation be used for:

- General Use         Election/Voting-Related

### FOR OFFICE ONLY

Treasurer \_\_\_ National Data \_\_\_ Membership SNM \_\_\_ Committee \_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_