

the VOTER

February 2025
Volume 56, Issue 9



INSIDE THE NEWSLETTER

Calendar & Events	2	Budget Committee	3
New Members' Orientation	2	Democracy Award	4
Board Openings	2	Treasurer Report	5
ChapterSpot News	3	Observer Reports	6-7

President's Communique

I've got to be honest; I've been sad and angry the past several days. Like many Americans, I'm trying to adjust to the new Trump administration and to the decisions that impact all of us. I've heard comments by others that mirror mine regarding the deportation of immigrants, the removal of DEI initiatives, the freezing of federal grants, and more. Even though the President previously told us about his desired actions, the swiftness of it all makes us question whether it's been thought out, and whether these actions will be successful.

As we discuss these important issues with family and friends, there's something we have to remember. Whether or not we voted for Mr. Trump, he is now our President. A friend of mine recently said Trump wasn't *her* President; she stated "I didn't vote for him." I found myself disputing her comment, stating that regardless of who she voted for, he *is* our President and will be for four more years.



I think we have to embrace the principles that our Republic adopted which is to support the democratic process. A majority of voting Americans cast their ballots in his favor; Isn't it still our obligation to support that process? I'm not saying we have to like the decisions he makes, but we have to uphold the laws that allow him to make decisions. At the same time, we must continuously speak out as to why some of the decisions are, or are not, in the best interest of the citizenry. This is where the League steps in.

Our challenge now is to rely on one of our most important American rights – the freedom of speech. If you feel like me, we need to share our opinions with lawmakers, from City Hall to the White House. We need to let decision-makers understand that most immigrants are not criminals. They are people just like my grandparents who simply wanted a better life; and as Americans, they owned homes and businesses and paid taxes. And we need to remind our

Congressional leaders that DEI has helped women earn wages closer to what men earn and more work is needed with that issue. We also must let our President know that thousands of low-income children in our border community rely on free-and-reduced-priced meals at school and attend Head Start classrooms funded by federal grants.

Through the LWV, let's continue to speak up, present the facts, explain our positions, and advocate for what's good about America. Don't lose sight that this country was built, and continues to prosper, upon the many, many actions of individual people who will continue to defend the democracy and the rights that we have.

Help Plan the League's Annual Program for Next Year

On Saturday, February 15th at 2:00 PM, the LWVSNM is hosting its annual Program Planning meeting at DACC Workforce Center at 2345 Nevada Ave. in Las Cruces. The meeting will also be hybrid for those who want to participate virtually so keep a look out for the zoom link.

The goal of the Program Planning meeting is to do a little bonding and discuss three things:

- What action can we take to defend democracy and implement the "[principles](#)" the League subscribes to including a representative government and the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States;
- What governmental issues should we conduct further study and consensus on at the local and state level (please review our [local](#) and [state](#) positions to inform the discussion); and
- How can the local league participate in the [LWVUS study on the Federal Judiciary](#).

At the conclusion of the meeting, we'll have a much better idea of what our members believe should be the study and advocacy priorities for the next fiscal year. The proposed program will be submitted to the Board who will determine which program recommendations to bring to the membership for approval at the April Annual Membership Meeting.

We look forward to seeing you!

▪ *Beth Bardwell, Vice President*

▪ *Jo Galván Nash, President, LWVSNM*

REMINDER: New Members' Orientation

All new members are encouraged to attend the next New Members' Orientation: **Saturday, Feb. 22**, from 10:00-11:30 on Zoom. We'd also like existing members to attend, as well. In this interactive session we'll talk about the SNM goals, advocacy, and activities for the year and beyond. As a new member, we'll love for you to get involved and we'll talk about the many opportunities for you to consider. If you're an established member wanting a refresher, please join us!

Watch for your email which will have the link to the Zoom meeting. Contact [Membership Director Kate Mangelsdorf](#) for further information.



Volunteer to be a Board Officer or Director



LWVSNM Wants You!

Any local member who is interested in becoming more involved in LWVSNM should consider joining the Board. The Nominating Committee is looking for a few good people to help us continue to our important work in Southern New Mexico. We have the following vacancies that will be up for election in April. The positions are linked to the online position descriptions.

- ⇒ [President or Co-President](#) (two-year term);
- ⇒ [Voter Services Director](#) (two-year term);
- ⇒ [Youth Engagement Director](#) (two-year term);
- ⇒ [Public Relations Director](#) (one-year appointed position);
- ⇒ Development Director (one-year appointed position; description to be developed);
- ⇒ Liaison from the Otero County Unit (one-year appointed position).

If you're interested in helping out, contact Nominating Committee Chair Kate Mangelsdorf (katemangelsdorf@yahoo.com).

Currently, the Board meets twice a month. New members also are encouraged to join and learn more about the activities that the League supports.

- *Kate Mangelsdorf, Membership Director*

Upcoming Calendar Events

FEBRUARY 2025

Black History Month

Feb. 3, Mon.: **ChapterSpot Membership Platform** goes live. Learn to log in.

Feb. 3, Mon.: **Women's History Week Planning Committee**; 4:30 pm, via Zoom; [contact Eileen VanWie](#) for Zoom link.

Feb. 3, Mon.: **Regular Board Meeting**, 5:30 p.m., via Zoom; all LWVSNM Members welcome; contact [Beth Bardwell](#) for a Zoom link.

Feb. 4, Tues.: [Rosa Parks Day](#)

Feb. 5-6, Wed-Thurs.: **League Days at the Legislature**

Feb. 7, Fri.: **Nomination Deadline**, Making Democracy Work Award (see final page).

Feb. 10, Mon.: **Education Committee**, 5:00 p.m., Zoom [contact Eileen VanWie](#) for Zoom link.

Feb. 14, Fri.: **105th Anniversary of LWV and Valentine's Day**



Feb. 15, Sat.: **Program Planning Meeting**, Hybrid, 2:00 p.m., DAAC Workforce Center, 2345 Nevada Ave.

Feb. 17, Mon.: **Presidents' Day Holiday**

Feb. 18, Tues.: **Short SNM Board Meeting**, 5:30 p.m., All members welcome via Zoom; [contact Beth Bardwell](#) for a link.

Feb. 22, Sat.: **New Members' Orientation**, 10:00 a.m., Get a Zoom link by [emailing Kate Mangelsdorf](#).

Feb. 25, Tues.: **Bylaws, Policies and Procedures Committee**, 4:00 p.m., contact [Jo Nash](#) for a Zoom link.

The New Membership Platform Kicks Off in February

By now, you've received a flyer from LWVSNM to help explain the transition to ChapterSpot, the new membership online platform initiated by the national LWV. Please look for that email and get familiar with the process we'll use beginning Aug. 3.

The amount of next fiscal year's dues is recommended at \$75 per person; however, the new dues model has a "pay-what-you-can" option. A minimum of \$20 is required to become a member or to renew your membership.

Most of our members will renew their memberships on May 1, so there's enough time to log into ChapterSpot and fill out your membership information such as your address. Later this spring, you'll use ChapterSpot to pay your dues. Plus, we'll send more information to you about how to donate to the League, which has to be done separately from your dues payment. That way, LWVSNM will get 100% of the donation and it won't be split with the national or state leagues.

In order to use ChapterSpot, you must have a personal email address (not a shared email). We know that several members prefer not to use email at all. Those individuals will be able to contact our local HelpDesk so that an email address can be created for you; our team will enter membership information for you, and will also help pay your dues electronically. So, if you like to pay with a hard-copy check, you'll still be able to do that by sending the check in the mail directly to our Treasurer Kathy Brook. You'll get more details about that in the coming months.

For now, contact [Membership Director Kate Mangelsdorf](#) for assistance with ChapterSpot.

In a few days we'll put more ChapterSpot information on the League webpage (lwvsnm.org) and in *The Voter*. This change should be painless as all of us will learn how to log-in and use it. Thank you for helping us with this new endeavor.

▪ *Jo Galván Nash, President*

2024/25 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO BOARD:

Jo Galván Nash – President
Beth Bardwell – Vice-President
Edwina Jaramillo – Secretary
Kathy Brook – Treasurer
Kathy Brook & Eileen VanWie – Past Presidents
OPEN – Voter Services Director
Kate Mangelsdorf – Membership Director
Eileen VanWie & Josie Miller – Youth Engagement
Co-Directors

and

OPEN — Development Director
OPEN — Public Relations Director
OPEN — Otero Unit Liaison
Jo Galván Nash – The Voter Editor
Ruth Jaure — Historian
Kate Mangelsdorf, Chair, and Rebecca Courtney & Ruth Jaure, Members – Nominating Committee



Once a year, the LWVSNM Board needs to put pencil to paper and develop the next fiscal year's budget. Well, it's that time of year! If you can spend time in a few meetings to work with a small group, please volunteer for the **Budget Committee**. You'll review the existing budget, see how it can be improved or adjusted, and develop a proposed budget for 2025/2026. Contact Treasurer Kathy Brook (kathybrook@comast.net) if you have some time to volunteer in this role. No prior budgeting experience needed!

FEB. 7: Nomination Extension for Making Democracy Work Award

A few more days remain before the Feb. 7 deadline for the 2025 Making Democracy Work Award. Please send in your nominations for anyone (League members are not eligible) who lives in one of these counties: Doña Ana, Otero, Luna, Sierra, or Grant. This is our annual award of \$250 to someone in southern New Mexico who has been involved in civic engagement, strengthens democracy, and support the principles of JEDI (justice, equity, diversity and inclusion).

The honoree will be selected by Feb. 14, which is the 105th anniversary of the League of Women Voters. Don't forget that you can also nominate a small group of individuals who are engaged in support of our democracy. There are many people in southern New Mexico who do things on behalf of others. Let's recognize their efforts!

The nomination form is the last page of this newsletter and it's online at www.lwvsnm.org.

Making Democracy Work Award Criteria

Description: This award recognizes sustained contributions of an individual or a small collective group of individuals to (1) making democracy work by mobilizing civic engagement and (2) promoting justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in Southern New Mexico. Civic engagement includes civics education and participation in government (such as by public officials or citizens involved in public projects/activities). The award is \$250. A small group of nominees would divide the award equally.

Recognition: The recipient(s) will be honored at a meeting of the LWVSNM. In addition, she/he/they will be recognized in an LWVSNM news release, monthly newsletter and website, in social media, and through other LWV events and communications. The winner will be notified within one month after the deadline for submission of applications. The award will be given by February 14, the anniversary of the national League of Women Voters organization.

Solicitation of applications/nominations: The availability of the award will be publicized through www.lwvsnm.org, social media, and announcements to the area media, public schools in Doña Ana County and beyond (as feasible), and to community-based organizations. To nominate someone, or to win the award, residents must live in one of the following Southern New Mexico counties: Doña Ana, Otero, Sierra, Luna or Grant. Current League members are not eligible to receive the award. Recipients of the award are not eligible to receive the award again for a minimum of three years. The LWVSNM Board shall determine the nomination deadline on an annual basis.

Selection process: All applications submitted by the deadline are read and scored by the members of the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Southern New Mexico. Board members who have submitted nominations do not participate in the selection process.

Applications are evaluated on the following criteria:

- the general quality and completeness of the description of the contributions to making democracy work – weight of 40%
- the impact of the project (how it mobilizes people to strengthen democracy, who is served by the project, how many are served, what are the expected and actual outcomes) – weight of 30%
- the ways in which the project promotes justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. – weight of 30%

In the event of a tie, the projects with the highest scores will be reviewed again, including a discussion among board members prior to the vote. The Board reserves the right not to select any nomination.

Approved 2021 • Revised 11.26.22 • 01.08.24 • 12.13.24

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- Find eligible nominees
- Fill out the nomination form (last page)
- By Feb. 7, email or mail to: lwvsnm@gmail.com; LWVSNM, PO Box 15142, Las Cruces, NM 88004

Treasurer's Report for January 2025

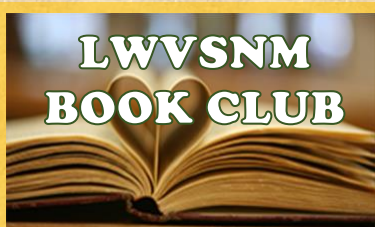
By Kathy Brook, Treasurer

Below is an abbreviated treasurer's report for the Voter. The full report will be given to the board each month and is available to other members on request.

Beginning bank balance, December 24, 2024	\$10,983.24
New Income	\$180.00
Dues	\$130.00
Donations, general fund	\$50.00
New Expenses	\$1,242.79
Walmart, supplies (storage boxes)	\$54.01
LWVNM, per member payment	\$1,157.00
Stop payment on lost check	\$30.00
PayPal fee	\$1.78
Closing bank balance, January 24, 2025	\$9,920.45

Restricted Funds (included in the bank balance)	\$3,776.00
Diversity	\$2,665.00
Otero/LWVSNM	\$736.00
Youth Engagement	\$375.00

Notes: There is a balance of \$93.04 on the \$200 e-card donated by Target. A check for dues/donations in the amount of \$1,500 to be deposited by Jan. 27.



The book club meetings are on the 1st Thursday of each month at 3:00 p.m.

If you want to participate, contact Erika at grafwebster@icloud.com

February 6, 2025

Age of Revolutions: Progress and Backlash from 1600 to the Present

by [Fareed Zakaria](#)

Populist rage, ideological fracture, economic and technological shocks, war, and an international system studded with catastrophic risk—the early decades of the twenty-first century may be the most revolutionary period in modern history. But it is not the first. Humans have lived, and thrived, through more than one great realignment. The mother of all revolutions, the Industrial Revolution, catapulted Great Britain and the US to global dominance and created the modern world.

Now we are entering a world in which the US is no longer the dominant power. As we find ourselves at this nexus we can easily imagine a dark future.



OBSERVER REPORTS

Las Cruces City Council • Regular Session

January 6, 2025

Observer: Jennifer Kreie

There was a resolution scheduled to "cure and ratify" the Council's prior invalid decision to fill the city manager position. However, this was removed and Mayor Enriquez said it will be handled on 1/13/2025.

3 resolutions were passed:

- Transfer of liquor license.
- Approval of amendments to the 2025-2030 Capital Improvements Program.
- Approval of issuance of bonds not to exceed \$21,000,000 to satisfy the agreement between the City and the estate of Teresa Gomez.

LAS CRUCES BOARD OF EDUCATION • Regular Session

Tuesday, January 21, 2025, 6 p.m.

Observer: Eileen VanWie

Members: President Teresa Tenorio, VP Pam Cort (online), Secretary Robert Wofford, Members Ed Frank and Patrick Nolan; Superintendent Ignacio Ruiz was also present.

Multiple public comments were made during the meeting. One was by Sarah Smith who shared her thoughts related to books in LCPS libraries that she termed as inappropriate for children. Several studies show that this kind of material (sex, rape, pornography, and violence) is dangerous for children. Her group published a parents' guide to 95 books in the LCPS system. It lists the worst books in each school and how parents can respond. For example, LCHS has Game of Thrones books. To access the parents' guide book, go to nmfa.us/schoolbooks. She said it was the duty of school board members to protect the children in their schools.

Beth Busque repeated this issue; there are books with sexual aggression in LCPS libraries. For example, *Push* and *Impulse*, includes drug use and self-harm. She read a section from *Impulse* and wanted parents to know.

Edward Thomas asked if others have seen the placards in grocery stores that say there's an age limit for alcohol purchase. He said the same goes for books and pornography. He commented that such books promote promiscuity and said it's the parents' prerogative to educate their children about sex.

Meanwhile, Cory Burford spoke on behalf of school bus drivers questioning when will they be a part of the school district. He said they want to be employees of the school system. Currently, the bus drivers are employed by the contracted bus company.

Athena Huckabee, Health Care Authority, advocating for LCPS to have Naloxone medication to reverse overdose and to address overdose prevention (training all employees). Many families have drug addictions at home. LCPS can take a leadership position for overdose prevention.

Paul Furth said the motto of the US is "In God We Trust." He spoke about the transfer policy that was on the agenda for the meeting. The district provided good information about the redistricting process but felt that doesn't seem to be happening with the transfer policy. He asked that everyone look at the balance between the two. Please do the redistricting and transfer process gradually.

John Frazzini commented on the policy for gifted education. These students have different social and emotional needs as well. The Policy uses the word "programming." He preferred the district use the word "services" instead. He offered his services, having significant experience in gifted and special education.

The School Board elected new officers for the year: President Pam Cort, Vice President Patrick Nolan, Secretary Robert Wofford, Finance Chair Robert Wofford, and Audit Committee Chair Ed Frank.



OBSERVER REPORTS

Las Cruces City Council • Special Meeting

January 13, 2025

Observer: Kathy Brook

The purpose of the meeting was to consider whether to ratify the council’s previous decisions related to the hiring of a new city manager during 2024. The meeting was called after an investigation by the NM Department of Justice concerning alleged violations of the Open Meetings Act in the process of hiring the manager. The actions requested by the DoJ were taken in the course of the meeting. There was a decision to ratify the previous decision rather than to start the hiring process over again. The meeting had both painful and reassuring moments. I encourage you to take a look:

<https://lascruces.civicweb.net/document/205495/?splitscreen=true&media=true>

Las Cruces City Council • Regular Session

January 21, 2025

Observer: Kathy Brook

Public Participation: Numerous members of the community expressed fears or concerns about potential actions by the new federal administration. These included the treatment of immigrants, LGBTQ+ residents, and other vulnerable people. Other topics included access to treatment at Memorial Medical Center by people lacking insurance, support for prevention of harm from alcohol including efforts to increase the tax on alcoholic beverages; bicycle and pedestrian safety in Las Cruces; and challenges of checking for lead in water lines (with comments from League member Liz Rodriguez-Johnson).

The Council approved several items including the annual comprehensive financial report for the fiscal year ending June 2024, the La Vida Buena Park public art project, and a professional services agreement relating to fire hydrant maintenance. The City Manager responded to several concerns and noted that the city has hired a consultant to assist with issues relating to Memorial Medical Center. In addition, a community meeting is being planned to talk about the issue of lead and copper in water lines.

Maintaining the Observer Corps

LWVSNM needs to maintain its presence at local government meetings. Members of the Observer Corps monitor decisions, including those that are aligned with our program and positions. We also keep our members aware of governmental issues that are not in sync with our goals, or issues that may have a serious community impact. We are friendly watchdogs with the intention of ensuring our elected leaders are being transparent, open, and accountable. And when appropriate, League members advocate for community issues, such as affordable housing and education.

We need volunteers to maintain our Observer Corps! We need one or two members who can attend Board of County Commission meetings, or meetings of the NMSU Regents, either in person or virtually, and then send a summarized report (as seen above) in an objective, non-partisan manner to our members.

Please consider volunteering for this important function of our organization. Contact any board member about your willingness to help.



NAACP DAC Chapter Meeting

January 18, 2025

The guest speaker at this month's meeting was Johana Bencomo, Las Cruces Mayor Pro Tem and Councilor for district 4. Councilor Bencomo talked about her priorities for Las Cruces in 2025 and the city's priorities at the state legislative session. She also pointed out that there will be a joint meeting of the City Council and the County Commission on March 10th. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss how to use the money from the opioid settlement being paid throughout the country.

The annual MLK Breakfast was held on Monday, January 20 at the Las Cruces Convention Center. The day before there was a rally from the Downtown Plaza to the front of City Hall. Dr. Bobbie Green, President, had asked local organizations to sponsor a table at the MLK Breakfast. It is great to report that LWVSNM once again sponsored a table with our members.

- Jennifer Kreie, NAACP and LWVSNM

UPCOMING GOVERNMENT MEETINGS

LC City Council:

Feb. 4; Feb. 10 (work session); Feb. 18; Feb. 24 (work session); all at 1:00 p.m., City Hall

County Commission: Feb. 4 (work session); Feb. 11; Feb. 25; all at 9:00 a.m.; DAC Govt. Center.

LCPS School Board: Feb. 18, 6 p.m., Dr. Trujillo Admin. Bldg. Board Rm.

NMSU Board of Regents:

Regents Room of the ESC Building at NMSU.

[Check here](#) to see schedule.

GOOD READS & LINKS

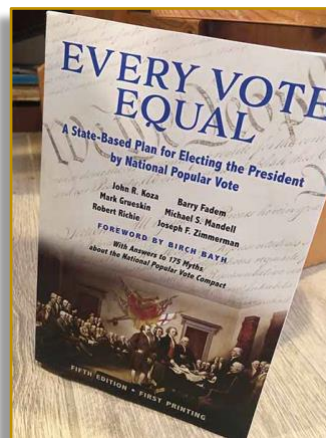
Here are interesting articles or books regarding topics that are related to our League Positions and/or reflect issues associated with our advocacy. Send your suggested articles with the URL (web address) to Jo Nash (jogalvan.nash@gmail.com) by the 25th of each month for inclusion in the next issue of *The Voter*.

1 For 105 years, the League of Women Voters has worked to provide voters with election information, safeguard voter access, uphold election integrity, and defend against efforts to undermine democratic principles. As the League continues to build a membership that reflects America, there will be challenges our democracy will face. Through the "Women Defend Democracy" campaign, the national League will work to:

- Provide Democracy Education & Election Administration Support
- Restore and Defend Voting Rights Protections
- Abolish the Electoral College
- Protect Democracy Organizations & Institutions 15
- Fight for Reproductive Freedoms

This campaign kicks off for the first 100 days of the new administration and beyond. Together, we believe in the power of women to create a more perfect democracy. [Stay Up to Date with Women Defend Democracy](#) and join the mailing list.

2 LWVSNM has received "Every Vote Equal: A State-Based Plan for Electing the President by National Popular Vote" with "Answers to 175 myths about the National Popular



Vote Compact." It's quite a bedtime page-turner, with more than 1,100 pages. It describes how the Electoral College works, details of the NPV Compact, interstate compacts, strategies for enacting the National Popular Vote, and more.

If you're interested in reading it, it will be available to "check-out" by attending the Feb. 15 Program Planning Meeting at 2 p.m. When you're finished with it, simply pass it along to another LWVSNM member or to the President.

**LWV Making Democracy Work Award 2025
NOMINATION FORM**

(Download or print this form, fill out, and email or mail the form with attached narrative to address at bottom)

Nomination Deadline: February 7, 2025

Name of Nominee(s)* _____

Name of Project/Activity _____

Email Address(es) of Nominee(s) _____

Address of Nominee(s) _____

Phone of Nominee(s) _____ **Cell** _____ **Home**

_____ **Cell** _____ **Home**

AWARD CRITERIA:

*The LWV Making Democracy Work Award recognizes community residents of civic projects that have contributed to strengthening our democracy. The League looks for projects/activities and honorees that mobilize civic engagement and promote JEDI (justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion) in Southern New Mexico. *Nominees and nominators must reside within one of these Southern NM counties: Doña Ana, Otero, Sierra, Luna, or Grant. LWV members may nominate but are not eligible to receive the award.*

Attach to this form a brief narrative (no longer than one page in length) describing how the nominee(s) and the project/activity exemplify the Award criteria. Provide examples of: a) how the project strengthens democracy; and b) how it supports JEDI principles.

Name of Person Making Nomination* (can be self-nomination) _____

Email Address(es) _____ **Phone** _____

Address _____ **Zip** _____

Relationship to Nominee(s) _____

Please email the completed form and narrative to: lwvsnm@gmail.com or by mail to P.O. Box 15142, Las Cruces, NM 88004. Nominations must be received by February 7, 2025.