



UPDATE

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Los Alamos

League of Women Voters of Los Alamos

P. O. Box 158, Los Alamos, NM 87544

Website: www.lwvlosalamos.org

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Co-Presidents: Barbara Calef [bfcalef\(AT\)gmail\(DOT\)com](mailto:bfcalef(AT)gmail(DOT)com) and
Rebecca Shankland [rebecca.shankland\(AT\)gmail\(DOT\)com](mailto:rebecca.shankland(AT)gmail(DOT)com)
Newsletter Editor: Waine Archer [byrdcede\(AT\)hotmail\(DOT\)com](mailto:byrdcede(AT)hotmail(DOT)com)

Calendar

- October 16 PED Hearing on Science Standards, 300 Don Gaspar Ave. Santa Fe, 9 a.m. to noon
- October 17 Lunch with a Leader, Naomi Maestas and Gloria Maestas, Mesa Public Library, 11:40 a.m.
- October 26 Board Meeting, Mesa Public Library, noon
- November 2 Nuclear Waste Storage Forum, UNM/LA Bldg. 5 Wallace Room, 7-9 p.m.
- November 14 Lunch with a Leader, Julianna Koob and Marshall Martinez, Mesa Public Library, 11:40 a.m.

Lunch with a Leader: County Clerk Naomi Maestas and Elections Manager Gloria Maestas

Our next Lunch with a Leader will be at 11:40 a.m. on October 17, at Mesa Library. The speakers will be County Clerk Naomi Maestas and Elections Manager Gloria Maestas from the Los Alamos County Clerk's office. They will be discussing the voting process.

County Clerk Naomi Maestas moved to Los Alamos 15 years ago when her husband, Sammy, accepted a job offer from Los Alamos County. She began her career in local government in October of 2005 and has attained numerous certificates acquired through the NMSU/New Mexico EDGE (Education Designed to Generate Excellence in the Public Sector) program. She is also currently participating in various local leadership programs and is a contributing member of the NMAC (New Mexico Association of Counties) Clerk Affiliate and International Association of Government Officials. Clerk Maestas says she intends to reach out to the community and educate them on the different aspects and responsibilities of the office.

Gloria Maestas began working for Los Alamos County in October 1995, with the first six years in the Accounts Payable division and the last 16 years with the County Clerk. She currently serves as Elections Manager, promoted in February 2005. Prior to that, she served four years as Deputy Clerk. Gloria has managed and/or assisted with 38 elections. She holds certification as a Certified Public Official through NMSU Cooperative Extension County College Program NM EDGE and is slated to receive certification as a Certified County Clerk in January 2018. In addition, as required by her position, she is certified as a Voting System Technician through the NM Secretary of State.

In November the topic will be reproductive services with speakers Julianna Koob, Legislative Advocate, and Marshall Martinez, Director of Public Affairs for Planned Parenthood.

Karyl Ann Armbruster

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New Science Standards for New Mexico Schools

The current science standards for New Mexico's public schools were adopted in 2003 and updated in 2006. In 2012 the National Research Council published a new framework for K-12 science education, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), that has since been adopted without amendment by eighteen states.

In 2015 the NM Public Education Department (PED) convened focus groups to examine those standards; they recommended their adoption for New Mexico. It is within the purview of the PED to update the standards; but the department did not act on the recommendation. In September the PED published the draft "NM STEM-Ready Standards," which is largely based on the NGSS, but with some significant revisions and some additional standards for "New Mexico flavor." The revisions include replacing "4.6 billion years" with "geologic" for the age of the earth; substituting "climate fluctuation" for "regional climate change" and "biological diversity" for "the process of evolution."

Analysis of NM STEM-Ready Standards indicating language omitted by PED is available at <https://eeanm.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Analysis-of-NM-STEM-Ready-Standards-vs-NGSS.pdf>.

Copies of the proposed rules may be accessed through the New Mexico Public Education Department's website under the "Public Notices" link at <http://ped.state.nm.us/ped/PublicNotices.html>, or may be obtained from Jamie Gonzales by contacting her at (505) 827-7889 during regular business hours.

The PED will hold a public hearing on Monday, October 16, from 9 a.m. to noon in Mabry Hall, which is located at the Jerry Apodaca Education Building, 300 Don Gaspar Avenue in Santa Fe. If you would like to join a carpool to the hearing, please contact me at [bfcalf\(AT\)gmail\(DOT\)com](mailto:bfcalf(AT)gmail(DOT)com) or 662-3825.

The League strongly encourages everyone to either speak at the hearing and/or send comments by mail to Jamie Gonzales, Policy Division, New Mexico Public Education Department, Room 101, 300 Don Gaspar Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501, or by email at rule.feedback@state.nm.us. The public comment period will last until 5 p.m. on October 16.

Barbara Calef

Co-President's Message: NM Press Women Weigh in on Fake News

A panel of outstanding writers investigated the topic of "Media Literacy in a Fake News World" at the Santa Fe Public Library Southside Branch on Saturday, September 23. The event was sponsored by the Santa Fe Public Library, New Mexico Press Women, Society of Professional Journalists, League of Women Voters of Santa Fe, Foundation for Open Government, and It's the People's Data.

Here is a brief summary of some of the major points made by various panelists.

Kathleen McCleery (PBS *NewsHour*): One of the most notorious items of fake news read, "Pope Francis Shocks World, Endorses Donald Trump for President." This headline was shared 100,000 times on Facebook despite its being false. McCleery pointed out the problem that social media information may be instantaneous, while responsible print media requires journalists to take the time to check and verify their

reporting. As Winston Churchill is credited for saying, “A lie gets halfway around the world before the truth has a chance to get its pants on.”

Statistically, people under 50 get 78% of their news from social media. They may see more first-hand sources, but these sources are unchecked. McCleery pointed out that the Russian Facebook ads were in part created by teams of youth in Macedonia, where 50% of youth are unemployed. Money is an undermining issue in the US as well: McCleery has pitched numerous stories to PBS, only to be told that PBS must have a grant in order to cover their costs. The only solution is to use fact-checking sites like Politifact.com and Snopes.com. Better yet, PAY FOR AND READ REAL NEWSPAPERS (or television news), which vet their material carefully.

Mark Oswald, editor of *Albuquerque Journal's Journal North*, commented on how much time is now spent on authenticating letters to the editor.

Staci Matlock, editor of the *Taos News*, said that a perpetual difficulty is the use of emotional hooks to spread fake news; factual news may not be as exciting. Trump got large amounts of free publicity because of his outrageous claims and celebrity status.

Libel laws have strict requirements for prosecution, so lawsuits to counter fake facts about political figures are rarely successful.

Photos also can be fake. To check authenticity, right click on a photo to find its URL; then paste that into a site like TinEye.

An audience member pointed out that literacy levels are declining and suggested that media should try to reach people with less sophistication. Inez Russell Gomez, editorial editor of the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, replied that responsible media should never underestimate their audience or try to simplify or lower their standards. However, the panelists agreed that there is, overall, less depth of information and less length on NPR pieces (and presumably other media) now than in the past.

Author James McGrath Morris pointed out that ALL media are under attack, not just the media on the side you don't agree with. Morris added his distress that vetted, accurate government statistics are now disputed and undermined, as when Trump said that government unemployment statistics were false. Morris also expressed dismay at the assumption that news is cheap because we don't pay newspapers what we pay lawyers. Newspapers depend heavily on advertising, which is rapidly shrinking. Even the most respected news outlets now have fewer foreign news desks or reporters.

Ironically, Trump's success has been good for newspaper advertising income. Leslie Moonves, the CEO of CBS, famously said during the campaign, "It [Trump's campaign] may not be good for America, but it's damn good for CBS." Moonves later said it was a joke. Another irony: Because there were far more viewers for the Republican candidate debates than for the Democratic ones, CBS could charge more for advertising for the former.

My takeaway from this remarkable event was twofold: first, we are fortunate in New Mexico to have such thoughtful, responsible journalists working for us. Second, it is crucial that we put our money where our intellectual standards lie: WE MUST PAY FOR THE NEWSPAPERS AND MEDIA that we rely on and not assume that they'll survive without our financial support.

Becky Shankland

Can You Recognize Fake News?

The New Mexico Press Women created an excellent brochure [newmexicopresswomen.org “Media Literacy in a Fake News World” - Brochure.pdf] that you can download for information on dealing with fake news and photos. It has excellent articles on teaching media literacy.

To gain some insight into fake news, here are few of their suggestions:

AP: NOT REAL NEWS: A look at what didn't happen this week

<https://goo.gl/J37gSr>

To Test Your Fake News Judgment, Play This Game

<https://goo.gl/82CTa5>

[It only works on a smart phone.]

BBC: The hidden signs that can reveal a fake photo.

<https://goo.gl/2EVmdq>

Fake Headline Perceptions Ranked by Clinton/Trump Voters

<https://goo.gl/ypkPEL>

Welcome, New League Members!

We are delighted to have several new members. Some are new to town; some just new to the League. Here's a list plus some information about a few. Please welcome these folks when you meet them (and ignore the fact that we've listed some names before).

Kristin Henderson

Shirley Roman

Dotty Reilly

Brenda Kelley

Judy Buckingham

Bob Williams

Ellen Mills

Elena Georgi

Jack and Beverly Shlachter

Linda McCormick

Joan Lucas

Caroline (Cas) Mason

Cristina Olds (donated to National LWV, but she's welcome here, too)

Elaine Jacobs has rejoined after being gone awhile.

Linda Nelson McCormick

For almost 30 years, Linda worked for Mission Research Corporation, one of whose founders was Conrad Longmire. Linda decided to spend her retirement years in Los Alamos, arriving on April Fool's Day 2017. She is keenly interested in the issue of voter rights.

Ellen Mills

Ellen has lived in Los Alamos since 1991 and worked for Los Alamos Public Schools as a Special Education teacher, retiring in 2016. She filled multiple officer positions for the Los Alamos Federation of Schools Employees, American Federation of Teachers, including president for seven and a half years. She is committed to this unique community and civic participation.

Elena Georgi

Elena is a scientist, a photographer, and a writer. She is also one of the cofounders and organizers of Voices of Los Alamos, a local group that promotes political activism at the local level. She is joining the LWV because she believes that change can only happen when we all join forces and advocate for the causes we believe in, and she totally supports the idea of promoting political activism through education and research.

Joan Lucas

Joan moved to Los Alamos this past summer where her husband recently took a position at the Lab. She taught for many years in the State University of New York system, in western New York, and continues to enjoy working with students, now at UNM-LA. She appreciates all the wonderful hiking opportunities there are in northern New Mexico. She believes that democracy is best served by an active, informed citizenry, and is interested in projects to improve voter education, registration and turnout.

Member News

Helena Whyte led a group of AAUW members in writing a letter to the PED (Public Education Department) to reject the newly proposed STEM-Ready Science Standards that weaken science education by politicizing some science standards rather than using standards that have been strongly vetted by science educators.

Leslie Wallstrom has been helping to register voters with LA Cares.

Mary Van Eeckhout recently moved to Minnesota to be closer to her daughter Barbara and her two grandchildren. She has been our faithful hospitality director, bringing all the accessories to go with the refreshments we bring for our forums. We urge new or old members to volunteer to help with this non-strenuous, pleasant activity to make League events enjoyable for everyone.

Becky Shankland

Observer Corps Reports

Board of Public Utilities

The Board of Public Utilities joined the County Council at the September 19th White Rock work session to discuss the natural gas rate structure and various options to fund a replacement wastewater treatment facility in White Rock.

As the gas rate contains a pass-through cost component to customers, Council suggested that future consideration might include a periodic audit or Council review of the rate. Various out-of-the-box options were also shared on ways to fund a replacement wastewater treatment plant. The preferred option is to draft an ordinance to authorize the County Council and the Board of Public Utilities to transfer excess revenue funds from the natural gas sub-fund to the wastewater sub-fund. This would allow the DPU to pay down an existing loan on the Los Alamos wastewater plant, which would then qualify the county for a low-interest loan to replace the White Rock wastewater treatment plant. Benefits also include a more aggressive schedule for replacement, with a new plant completed by 2020. Subsequently at an October 3rd special meeting, the BPU endorsed a draft ordinance to authorize the County Council and BPU to transfer said funds. This draft ordinance will now go to the County Council for consideration.

On September 20 the BPU approved a contract to restore the non-potable water system from the reservoir to the townsite. This project is funded through a grant/low interest loan combination issued through the New Mexico water trust board. Council will consider approving the contract in late October, with an anticipated construction start date in November. This work will require that the road to the reservoir area be closed until construction is completed, currently estimated to be June 2018.

Julie Williams-Hill

County Council

At the September 26th meeting, Council voted to approve a rate increase from \$1.15 to \$2.50 per thousand gallons for non-potable water. This is water that has gone through the sewage treatment plant and is pretty clean, but not suitable for drinking. The county uses about 95% of the non-potable water for the golf course and parks. Residual non-potable water flows to the LANL wetlands, which lie below the sewage treatment plant.

Lynn Jones

Nuclear Waste Storage Forum

LWVNM is conducting a study of nuclear waste storage and our League will hold a forum in the Jeannette Wallace Room, Building 5, at UNM/LA on Thursday, November 2 from 7-9 p.m. to discuss what they have learned so far. Come at 6:30 for refreshments!

Recycling Guide for Los Alamos

The Environmental Services Department has produced this updated poster to assist residents in disposing their recyclables responsibly.

Your Guide to Recycling in Los Alamos County

PLEASE RECYCLE

Place these items in your blue roll cart.
No need to separate your recyclables.

- #1-7 PLASTIC BOTTLES, CUPS, JUGS
- NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES, BOOKS
- ENVELOPES, JUNK MAIL
- JUICE, MILK, CARDBOARD EGG CARTONS
- FOIL, ALUMINUM AND STEEL CANS
- OFFICE PAPER, PHONE BOOKS
- FLATTENED CORRUGATED CARDBOARD
- CEREAL, CRACKER BOXES

DO NOT RECYCLE

These items do not go in your blue roll cart.

- STYROFOAM CUPS, PACKAGING
- LIGHT BULBS, ELECTRONICS, BATTERIES
(Recycle at Eco Station)
- GLASS OF ANY KIND
- PAPER TOWELS & NAPKINS
- PLASTIC BAGS
(Recycle at Smith's)
- CHIP BAGS
- GREASY PIZZA BOXES

PLEASE RECYCLE

Recycle glass bottles and jars only.
Glass may be dropped off at the Eco Station, Overlook, Co-op, and Sullivan Field.

DO NOT PLACE GLASS IN YOUR BLUE ROLL CART.
Please no light bulbs, window glass, ceramics, drinking glass, etc.

LOS ALAMOS
Environmental Services

Questions about recycling?
Call the Eco Station, 662.8163

Report of September Lunch with a Leader: Jennifer Sublett and Lynn Bjorklund, USFS

Jennifer Sublett, the district volunteer coordinator for this region of the Santa Fe National Forest (SFNF), presented a PowerPoint program about the history and policies of the US Forest Service and Lynn Bjorklund, the Recreation Staff Officer, responded to questions about both the Forest Service and the BLM, for which she worked previously. Sublett explained that the concept of protecting the forests from degradation began in the 1830s with the “romancing of nature” by landscape painters. In the 1880s, landscape photography inspired the public to visit and protect public lands even as the logging industry was wiping out forests in the East and Great Lakes regions.

The Forest Reserve Act of 1891 directed the General Land Office (the branch of government responsible for administering public lands at that time) to set aside lands as necessary to protect the watersheds. In 1897 Congress passed the Organic Act, which called for the proper care and management of the forests, followed by the Transfer Act of 1905, which moved the Forest Service from the Department of the Interior to the Department of Agriculture.

In its early years the Forest Service was focused on timber and watershed preservation. Fourteen major fires burned in the West in 1910. One of them destroyed three million acres in Idaho in two days, leading to the development of fire prevention and suppression policies. Firefighting is still a major role for the Forest Service, but in 1960 the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act mandated that national forests be administered to give equal priority to outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, and fish and wildlife. Santa Fe National Forest (SFNF) was created in 1915 from the Pecos River Reserve and the Jemez Forest Reserve. It includes five ranger districts: Espanola, Coyote, Cuba, Jemez, and Pecos/Las Vegas. There are four wilderness areas in the Santa Fe National Forest: Dome, Chama River, San Pedro Parks, and Pecos.

SFNF is currently developing a new Forest Management Plan. The plan is supposed to be updated every ten to fifteen years to maintain the balance between the multiple uses as more and more people visit the forest for recreation. In the process, the SFNF must follow the 2012 Planning Rule, which has new policy and analytical requirements and enhanced requirements for public participation.

Barbara Calef

Gun Safety Once Again

Little did citizens know how pertinent a recent talk at Voices of Los Alamos would be: on September 25 Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America (MDA) spoke in Los Alamos; a week later 58 people lost their lives to a deranged man with 23 weapons in his hotel room.

This summary of the Moms Demand Action talk is based on notes by Cristina Olds. The speakers were Maggie Byers, membership lead for MDA, Emilie De Angelis, chapter lead for MDA in New Mexico. The League’s Tarin Nix also spoke about NM legislative action on gun control.

The Moms group was started under the umbrella of Everytown for Gun Safety to demand action from legislators, state and federal; companies; and educational institutions to establish common-sense gun

reforms after the Sandy Hook shooting. Their website is at momsdemandaction.org. They believe in public safety, include gun owners as part of the group, and focus on protection for domestic violence victims. MDA offers a Be Smart program to educate gun owners about proper storage at home and how to talk to your kids' friends' families about the guns at their houses.

MDA urges a data-driven initiative to require background checks for online and gun show sales in NM, based on the experience of 19 other states that passed this legislation and have seen a 50% reduction in gun violence and a 45% reduction in domestic violence with guns. (Some people in the audience questioned these statistics; others replied that any reduction, even 1%, would be worthwhile.) Currently in NM, unless you're buying a gun from a federally licensed dealer, a background check is not required.

The speakers warned that concealed carry reciprocity legislation is gaining ground in Congress which, if passed, would gut gun restrictions at the state level. In NM, concealed carry permitting requires 15 hours of training and a test, but some states allow 17-year-olds to buy guns with no training.

Another bill that was moving quickly prior to the October 1 disaster in Las Vegas was the Hearing Protection Act, part of the Sportsmen Heritage and Recreational Enhancement, or SHARE Act. If passed, the legislation would roll back regulations keeping gun silencers out of hands of shooters.

Tarin Nix, Stephanie Garcia Richard's political strategist, spoke about Garcia Richard's 2017 gun bill, saying that it was initially complex and restrictive. The bill was misrepresented by the media, and many on her side gave up their support even though she modified it greatly toward the end. She carved out seven parts, keeping only the requirement for background checks for online sales and gun shows, but by then it was too late in the session to pass. The governor is not likely to include the stripped-down bill in 2018's short session. However, it will be filed again in 2019.

For those interested in lobbying, Tarin said phone calls are the least effective form of action; e-mail is better; but it's best to show up in person at the legislative session. Emilie added that advocacy is most effective if you are addressing your own legislator.

Join the Eco-challenge: Small Actions Add Up to Real Change

The Northwest Earth Institute is sponsoring an entertaining challenge for those who want an easy way to make a difference for the community and the planet. The EcoChallenge runs from October 11 to 25--two short weeks for a long impact.

Participants can choose from a range of simple actions and record the effect they have each time they're performed. For information and to sign up, go to 2017.EcoChallenge.org.

You can join as an individual or as a group.

Jody Benson



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LOS ALAMOS

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Mail to: LWV Los Alamos
P.O. Box 158
Los Alamos, NM 87544

Name: _____ Date _____

Address: _____

Phone(s): _____ E-mail _____

- Check here to receive our local newsletter Update as an electronic file, saving us postage.
- Check here if you prefer the newsletter mailed in hard copy.
- Check here if you also wish to receive friendly reminders of upcoming events by e-mail.

Membership Categories

- Single membership: \$45
- Household membership (two+ people at the same address): \$65
- Single Sustaining membership: \$75
- Household Sustaining membership (two+ people at the same address): \$95

Note: Membership checks should be payable to LWV-Los Alamos

Additional ways to support the local League

Unrestricted contribution (not tax-deductible): \$ _____

LWV Education Fund (tax-deductible): \$ _____

Note: Checks for tax-deductible contributions must be payable to LWVLA Education Fund and not combined with any other payments.

Interests (check as many as apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> One-time activities (unit meetings, fund-drive mailings, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Affordable Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Living Wage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Budget, Finances | <input type="checkbox"/> Voting Rights/Voter Services |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Water Issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Government | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Money in Politics | <input type="checkbox"/> I just support LWV |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Website, social media | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please suggest) _____ | |

The League of Women Voters, 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.

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