



THE VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County

1472 ST. FRANCIS DRIVE, SANTA FE, NM 87505-4038

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ENERGY SAVING

OPTIONS FOR THE HOME

General Meeting & Luncheon

11:45 am

Wednesday, November 18

Hilton Santa Fe

100 Sandoval Street

Energy saving options for the home will be discussed by Nick Schiavo, energy specialist for the City of Santa Fe, and Debbie Shapiro, local contractor who specializes in retrofitting older homes. In addition, David Rasch, with Santa Fe's Historic Preservation Division, will answer questions about the city's historic preservation ordinance.

Reservations Required!

Lunch is \$15.

To make your reservation (or to cancel a reservation)

email rsvp@lwvsfc.org or call **982-9766**

no later than Noon, Friday, November 13.

Please indicate your choice of entree:

grilled chicken salad OR grilled vegetables.

(Sorry, "no shows" will be billed.)

Please Complete Member Survey

If you've renewed your membership, but didn't fill out the member survey, please take a few minutes to let us know which issues are most important to you and whether you have time to contribute to the work of the League.

As a grassroots organization, we depend upon the volunteer efforts of our members to carry out our work. You can volunteer to work on the issues supported by the LWV, to help with voter services, or to contribute to the organizational tasks that keep the LWVSFC in operation.

To complete the survey, visit the "Join Us" section of the website (www.lwvsfc.org), download the membership form, fill it out, and mail it in. If you have any questions or need us to mail you the form, call Molly Seibel at (505) 995-8622.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER: Meredith Machen

One of my greatest pleasures as a member of LWVSFC has been attending US District Court Naturalization Proceedings. This fall, I had the special honor of being recognized and asked to come to the stage to welcome 157 new citizens who had just been sworn in. It was a great joy to line up with the dignitaries to shake all of those hands and to see the sparkle in the eyes of such a diverse group of people. Some of the new citizens had been in this country for 30 years and some for six months. An Eastern European woman commented to me that she was extremely excited to be able to vote for the first time in this country. As I contemplated the significance of the event and talked to new citizens at the voter registration table, I thought about the important role the League plays in America.

The League of Women Voters makes a difference in the lives of all citizens, whether or not they become members or even realize that we exist. We work year around to make sure everyone who wants to vote can do so. Not only do we register voters, we encourage people to participate in making our democratic way of life better. We provide the public with voter guides and other educational materials to cast informed votes, and we familiarize voters with election procedures. In this way, they are empowered to take action and can ensure that their votes count. We also believe that people can make a difference in government by informing their representatives of

their values. We study issues carefully before we take positions, and we revisit all of our positions every year to make sure that they are up-to-date. This year we have been actively presenting our positions supporting health care reform and climate change/natural resources legislation. Soon we will be presenting our positions to Congress in support of comprehensive immigration reform. There is much to celebrate as we approach the 60th birthday of LWVNM and the 90th birthday of LWVUS.

In preparation for our February Program Planning meeting, I ask all members to examine and reflect on our national, state, and local positions, abstracts of which are printed in the Member Handbook and posted on our website, www.lwvsfc.org, and on www.lwv.org. We are pleased to announce that Judy Williams has agreed to be our new Program Director. She can help us keep track of areas where our local and state positions may need further study and updating. From membership surveys, we are finding candidates for chairs for our major position areas. If you want to become more involved, I encourage you to contact Judy at program@lwvsfc.org. The work that has been done on LWV positions over the years has given us the credibility and knowledge to speak out on policy issues. We need and greatly appreciate your voice. Our involvement in democracy inspires new citizens to also speak out.

OCTOBER BOARD HIGHLIGHTS: Donna Reynolds, Secretary

At its regular monthly board meeting on October 14, 2009, at the Recursos Building, 826 Camino del Monte Rey, the LWV-SFC Board of Directors:

- Listened to Judy Williams share her background and League experience with Board members
- Discussed ways the League could review the County's Sustainable Land Use Plan and educate members
- Reminded members of the Water Consensus scheduled for October 21
- Agreed to spend funds to purchase a promotional sign for events
- Discussed the upcoming candidate forums for City Council Election
- Nancy Florsheim agreed to help with the annual fundraising drive and Donna Reynolds agreed to manage the Education Fund
- Discussed member surveys on file

The next Board Meeting will be at 4 p.m., November 11, 2009, at the Recursos Building. Board meetings are open to all members.

ACTION & ADVOCACY: Jody Larson, Chair

Committee members have updated our matrix of local issues and League positions for the 2009-2010 League year. The matrix, which notes priorities for LWVSFC action and advocacy, and a flow chart, "From Study to Action," comprise our fundamental documentation. For copies, contact Jody at action@lwvsfc.org.

Santa Fe County is proposing a new land use plan and code. Members will monitor the progress of the code, and there may be an opportunity for advocacy or education in the community. Please see the related article in this VOTER for details, and please help out if you can. This is a perfect opportunity for a limited commitment.

Rebecca Frenkel and other members of her Santa Fe Community College subcommittee are still reading through hundreds of pages of plans and other documentation regarding the SFCC's proposed bond issues. After reading and discussing these materials, the subcommittee will report to the Action and Advocacy Committee with a recommendation to the LWVSFC Board regarding possible advocacy or other action, such as education, in time for the December Board meeting. It is remarkable that every member of this committee has been contacted for the interest survey the SFCC has been conducting in the community.

Our committee meets the first Tuesday of the month at noon at the Hidden Chicken Café, 730 St. Michael's Drive. The next meeting is Tuesday, November 3. Please join us!

CONSENSUS: Water Supply and Demand

The October 21 meeting to reach consensus on the questions posed by the LWVNM Water Supply and Demand Study was led by Barbara Calef, Water Study Chair and President of LWV- Los Alamos; Kathy Campbell, LWVNM President; and Rebecca Shankland, LWV-Los Alamos Vice President. Twenty people attended.

The breadth and depth of the Committee's knowledge on statewide water issues and regulations was impressive. In the two-hour meeting, the presenters expanded on ways scarce water should be managed in our arid land. Generally, League Studies are completed within two years but, according to Barbara Calef, "Because political considerations are so complicated, this study has taken three years, instead of two."

LWV-Los Alamos met October 1 to reach consensus on the issues. LWV-Central New Mexico will weigh in on the study in November, and LWV-Greater Las Cruces will provide their input in January. A full report will be published in La Palabra, later in the spring.

BOARD BIOGRAPHY:

Judith K. Williams, Program Chair

We are delighted to welcome Dr. Judy Williams to the LWVSFC Board. A long-time League member in Florida, Judy brings to our work in Santa Fe more than 40 years' experience in public policy and health services research and evaluation in various settings, including the federal government, academia, and the private sector. Judy worked in national health policy, planning, and evaluation at the Department of Health and Human Services in

Washington, D.C. She designed and directed national demonstrations and evaluations for Medicare and Medicaid, and she has led various other health services research, evaluations, and quality improvement programs. Judy is active as president of Williams, Stern & Associates, a health services research and program evaluation firm, and is a member of Santa Fe County's Health Policy and Planning Commission. She holds a Ph.D. in Social Welfare Policy and Health Economics from the Heller School at Brandeis University and a B.A. from Middlebury College.

MEMBERSHIP: Molly Seibel, Chair

Condolences on the death of long-time League member Katherine "Kate" Abbott, who died October 15 at the age of 86. Kate gave many years of active service to the League and will be missed.

A warm welcome to new member, Elisabeth Lerner. We look forward to having you participate in League events.

Restoring Trust: Banning Political Contributions from Special Interests and Lobbyists

THINK New Mexico, a non-partisan think tank, is proposing a package of campaign finance reforms designed to restore public trust in the political process. THINK has asked for League endorsement of its proposed legislation to reduce the actuality and appearance of "pay to play" corruption in New Mexico and lessen the influence of special interests in the political process. Their research indicates that ending "pay to play" will save public dollars that are currently wasted on corruption, will increase the pool of candidates willing to run for public office in New Mexico, and will increase public trust in government.

Elements of Proposed Legislation:

- Prohibit political contributions from lobbyists, government contractors, and entities seeking targeted government subsidies
- Prohibit these groups from contributing to state or local candidates who have the power to influence whether they receive taxpayer dollars
- Prohibit these groups from bundling contributions from other donors and delivering them to candidates, committees, or parties
- Apply these prohibitions at both the state and local government level, including counties, municipalities, and school boards

On November 14, the League of Women Voters of New Mexico Board will decide whether to support this initiative.

Let's Make the Census Count! Judy Williams, Program Chair

2010 will see the decennial U.S. Census to enumerate the entire population for purposes of allocating congressional districts, federal funding, monitoring anti-discrimination rules and other analysis. The Census, required by the Constitution, has been conducted every 10 years since 1790. It will enumerate every individual in every household in the U.S. There are only 10 questions on the 2010 Census; they concern number in residence, age, gender, race/ethnicity and home ownership.

Millions of census forms have been printed, and a monumental effort to educate the public about the census will occur starting in January. Census forms will be mailed to every household in America in March; April 1 is National Census Day. Those not returning their forms will receive home visits. Homeless populations will be counted in late March.

Having accurate census numbers is vital to the economy of New Mexico because it will bring in \$1,200 per individual of federal funding. Local governments base their planning for schools, hospitals, emergency services, transportation, and other infrastructure on census figures.

LWVSFC has signed on as a Census partner along with other Leagues and non-profits across the country. The League will work with local groups for the next few months to help reassure the entire population of the importance and integrity of the process and to clarify issues as they arise. We urge League members to get involved and to help stress the importance of a complete count in this community. If you want to help, please contact Judy Williams at program@lwvsfc.org. For more information, check out the website www.census.gov/2010census.

Virginia Blakeslee Lifetime League Member

This is the second in a series about our Lifetime League Members - those who have belonged to the League for fifty or more years.

Virginia Blakeslee has been a member of the League for 57 years. She grew up on the Eastern shore of Maryland and joined the League when she and her husband moved to Port Washington, New York, in 1952.

"We moved on Tuesday, and on Thursday the membership chair of the League stopped by to welcome me to Port Washington, asked me to join, and picked me up on Monday for their meeting," she laughed. "The two women who sat on either side of me at that first meeting are still my best friends. At that time, the League was the only organization in town that people paid attention to. When I joined, our League had 240 members and there were 16 chapters in the county."

In 1997, Virginia moved to El Castillo, after her husband, who was science editor for the Associated Press, died, to be near her daughter, Sandra Blakeslee, who lives in Santa Fe and is an author and award winning science writer for the New York Times. Virginia said she found the Santa Fe League more focused on local affairs and less on foreign policy than the East Coast.

"Dues were \$2.50 in 1952," Virginia said. "My first job was Voter Services. After that I chaired a study to fluoridate the city's water, which failed. Fluoridating the water was quite controversial in the 1950's," she said. "People called and threatened you and said you were a communist. This is where I cut my teeth on

how to get things done. To get things done you have to know the local community first.

"In the 1950's, the national League also took on McCarthyism. The McCarthy period was just terrible, horrible. The husbands of League members got called up and asked, 'Did you know your wife is a communist?' Although national reached consensus against McCarthyism, it never went anywhere."

Virginia chaired major studies and was active in action and advocacy efforts. She tackled land use and development, keeping Port Washington zoning intact when there was a lot of pressure for uncontrolled growth; she lobbied for permanent voter registration in New York, where prior to passage of this law, voters in the state had to register every year in order to vote; she helped stop an oil storage tank offshore in Port Washington for oil tankers to reload; and she helped defeat "weighted voting," a system in which 10,000 people in a city equalled one vote, giving bigger cities the power to decide for smaller cities in the county. "Getting one person, one vote--a national law that was ignored in New York--was one of the most important things I did," Virginia said.

Virginia was president of her chapter from 1959 to 1962 and in 1987 wrote a comprehensive history of the Port Washington-Manhasset League for its 50th anniversary. Her New York League had a big void to fill when she moved to Santa Fe.

LWVSFC 2009 CALENDAR

(Go to www.lwvsfc.org for updates)

NOVEMBER

- 3 Action & Advocacy Committee**
Noon, Tuesday
Hidden Chicken Cafe, 730 St. Michael's Dr.
- 11 Board Meeting, 4 - 6 pm, Wednesday**
Recursos Bldg., 826 Camino del Monte Rey
- 18 General Meeting/Luncheon**
11:45 am, Wednesday
Energy Saving Options for the Home
Hilton Santa Fe, 100 Sandoval St.

DECEMBER

- 1 Action & Advocacy Committee**
Noon, Tuesday
Hidden Chicken Cafe, 730 St. Michael's Dr.
- 9 Board Meeting, 4 - 6 pm, Wednesday**
Recursos Bldg., 826 Camino del Monte Rey
- 16 Holiday Luncheon, 11:45 am, Wednesday**
Hilton Santa Fe, 100 Sandoval St.
Mary Wilson, LWVUS President, is invited

VOTER SERVICES, Meredith Machen, Chair

November 17 Fire Protection Excise Tax Election

Denise Lamb, Santa Fe County's Deputy Clerk in charge of elections, says her staff is prepared for the November 17 Fire Tax Election, despite the fact that the County was late in publicizing information about the election on their website.

The UNINCORPORATED areas of Santa Fe County will vote on a .25 percent increase in gross receipts tax for fire and ambulance services outside of municipalities. Unincorporated areas are those that lie outside city limits. In this case, eligible voters are those who live in the 26 precincts of the County that are outside the limits of the City of Santa Fe, Edgewood, and southern Espanola.

- Absentee voting is available October 20 - November 13
- Absentee ballots are available in the Office of the County Clerk, 8 am - 5 pm weekdays
- If you wish to request a ballot by mail, call (505) 986-6280. Please allow time for the ballot to be mailed to you and to be returned to the County by November 17
- Regular voting goes from 7 am - 7 pm on November 17

For information on the election—including deadlines, consolidated precinct polling locations, and a sample ballot—please visit the County Clerk's website (www.santafecounty.org/clerk) under *Info Updates*.

MORE ELECTION INFORMATION: Important dates in 2010!

January 22 LWVSFC Voters' Guide for 2010 Municipal Election published in the *Santa Fe New Mexican*

January 28 City Councilor Candidates Forum, Unitarian Church, 6:30 - 8 pm

February 2 Mayoral Forum, Santa Fe Prep School Auditorium, 6:30 - 8 pm

February 3 Early and Absentee Voting begins

March 2 Municipal Election Day, 7 am - 7 pm

June 1 Primary Election, 7 am - 7 pm

Sustainable Land Use Plan Proposed for Santa Fe County

Members representing LWVSFC were briefed in late September by Santa Fe County consultant Robert Freilich regarding a proposed new county master plan and proposed new code for sustainable land use. Goals of the plan and code include control of sprawl, promotion of green development, and encouragement of sustainability through creation of jobs in "green" industry, reduction of vehicle-miles traveled, and incentives for other sustainable practices. The consultant considers sustainability the umbrella for sensible practices that government can control or encourage through its codes and administration.

The consultant anticipates greatly reduced timetables for permits because of better organization and staffing if the plan and code are approved. For example, only one hearing covering seven assessments will be required for zoning changes. In addition, he anticipates the virtual elimination of variances and

continuances. For the few variance requests that may occur, a hearing officer will be required, and a "fixed record" produced, with appeals as provided under New Mexico law. He also believes that the code will strengthen the community participation process; non-governmental organizations like the League and homeowners' associations will be able to register and receive notice of hearings in advance.

Public hearings are in progress now. Check the county website, www.santafecounty.org, for schedules and materials. If the original schedules holds, the Board of County Commissioners will consider these documents in December. This is a very aggressive schedule, and some members of the Action and Advocacy Committee are reviewing the many hundreds of pages of plan and code for possible action or advocacy by the League. If you would like to be involved in this project, please contact Rebecca Frenkel at action@lwvsfc.org.

Santa Fe County Sustainable Development Land Use Plan

An Introduction to the Proposed Plan and Process

Santa Fe County's current land use plan was approved in 1999. It must be revised or replaced because it now ten years old. The Board of County Commissioners (BCC) has contracted Robert Freilich of Los Angeles and Bruce Peshoff of Leawood, Kansas, to work with the County Planning staff to develop the Sustainable Land Development Plan (SLDP). This report covers some aspects the 800-page document and the League's positions that relate to the plan.

Members of LWVSFC have had a long interest in city and county land use planning. Since the early 1970s there have been studies that have established numerous positions. Excerpts of LWVSFC positions follow selected statements from the proposed plan, and are in italics.

The process of developing the SLDP began in December 2008 when multiple meetings and discussions were held throughout the County to assess what citizens want to see in a County land use plan. In October 2009, a series of hearings were held throughout the County. The next two public hearings will be held on November 12 and December 3 at 6 pm in the County Commission Chambers, 102 Grant Avenue. The plan, with the final alterations resulting from the public hearings, will be presented to the BCC in January or February 2010.

- *LWVSFC supports dialogue among the public, governing body and the planning staff and encourages maximum participation of citizens in the formulation and review process for land use plans and regulations.*

The Executive Summary of the proposed SLDP states the "County recognizes an ecological imperative to protect the environment, a social imperative to create livable communities and an economic imperative to balance opportunities and production with responsible resource use." The SLDP promotes: (1) Maintenance and improvement of the historical, cultural, archaeological and natural environment. (2) Opportunities to protect and conserve natural resources, including acquisition of parks and open spaces.

- *LWVSFC supports protection of traditional villages and historical sites and establishment of greenbelts, open spaces and parks in developing areas.*

The SLDP proposes: Protection of the quality and quantity of ground water resources, environmentally sensitive lands and air quality; regulation of oil, gas, mineral and rock excavation, major land alteration and grading, and other potentially noxious development activity. Protect the natural landscapes and vistas that define our community.

- *LWVSFC supports guidelines for terrain management to control drainage, prevent erosion of land and protection of watersheds and designated vistas.*

The SLDP promotes: Smart Growth [that] directs growth into compact and sustainable development patterns within areas already served with adequate public and private infrastructure, or in areas where infrastructure provision is planned and included. Foster livable neighborhoods and communities, with a variety of housing options and adequate community services, amenities and infrastructure.

- *LWVSFC supports development of zoning and land use regulations that discourage inappropriate development and creation of self-sufficient new towns and/or villages.*

The SLDP proposes to: Protect the quality and quantity of our limited water supply. Promote sustainable water use throughout our community.

- *LWVSFC supports linking development to available water supply.*

The complete plan is available at www.santafecounty.org. CDs of the plan are available at no charge at the Planning Department, Santa Fe County building, 102 Grant Avenue. The LWVSFC Board will continue to follow the development and implementation of the plan. If you can participate, contact Meredith Machen at president@lwvsfc.org.



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF SANTA FE COUNTY**
1472 St. Francis Drive
Santa Fe, NM 87505-4038

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OUR MISSION

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

DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS

Help sign in and collect payment from guests at League luncheons. Volunteers are needed from 11:25 am to the start of lunch on these dates:
December 16, 2009
March 10, 2010
April 7, 2010
and at 9 am, May 1, 2010
Please contact Nancy Florsheim at rsvp@lwvsfc.org or call 982-9766 to offer your help.
Thank you!

**LOGON ON TO
www.lwvsfc.org**

Get up-to-the-minute information on League activities. Read "Hot Topics" about upcoming local, state, and national events and more.

*Thanks to these
FRIENDS OF THE LEAGUE
for their support in 2009!*

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