League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County

The Voter

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From the Leadership Team

March is Women’s History Month!

Women’s History Month had its origins as a national celebration in 1981 when Congress passed Pub. L. 97-28 which authorized and requested the president to proclaim the week beginning March 7, 1982, as “Women’s History Week.” Throughout the next five years, Congress continued to pass joint resolutions designating a week in March as “Women’s History Week.” In 1987, after being petitioned by the National Women’s History Project, Congress passed Pub. L. 100-9, which designated the month of March 1987 as “Women’s History Month.” Congress passed additional resolutions requesting and authorizing the president to proclaim March of each year as “Women’s History Month.” For more, see the official website: www.womenshistorymonth.gov.

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The website hosts exhibits and collections as well as audio and video materials to celebrate women’s history. One of the newest featured online exhibits includes portraits of 19th Century African American women activists that the public can access at: [https://blogs.loc.gov/picturethis/2017/03/portraits-of-nineteenth-century-african-american-women-activists-newly-available-online/](https://blogs.loc.gov/picturethis/2017/03/portraits-of-nineteenth-century-african-american-women-activists-newly-available-online/) The William Henry Richards collection includes portraits of people who joined him and others working in the suffrage and temperance movements and in education, journalism and the arts. These newly digitized photographs represent women who were in the public eye and active in a variety of professions and causes.

The National Archives will launch a new exhibit in 2019 called “Rightfully Hers: American Women and the Vote,” commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment by looking beyond suffrage parades and protests to the often overlooked story behind this landmark moment in American history. This fuller retelling of the struggle for women’s voting rights illustrates the dynamic involvement of American women across the spectrum of race, ethnicity and class to reveal what it really took to win the vote for one-half of the people.

The Women’s History Month website is supported by the Library of Congress, the National Archives and Records Administration, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Gallery of Art, the National Park Service, the Smithsonian Institution and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. These institutions have joined in commemorating and encouraging the study, observance and celebration of the vital role of women in American history.

I hope you will enjoy these online resources celebrating Women’s History Month!

—Donna Reynolds, LWVSC VP of PR/Communications

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**Santa Fe NOW Film Series**

**Wednesday, April 10, 7 p.m. BE NATURAL: The Untold Story of Alice Guy-Blaché**

Narrated by Jodie Foster, this Pamela Green directed documentary investigates the full scope of the life and work of cinema’s first female director, screenwriter, producer, and studio owner who’s career was lost to history.

**Wednesday, June 19, 7 p.m. FEMINISTS: What Were They Thinking?**

In 1977, a book of photographs captured an awakening: women shedding the cultural restrictions of their childhoods and embracing their full humanity. Johanna Demetrakas’s film features interviews with women such as Jane Fonda, Gloria Steinem, Lily Tomlin and Judy Chicago.
From Immigrant to Mayor: A Lifetime of Public Service

“I’m proud to say I put two little cracks in the glass ceiling: one was becoming the first woman mayor of Dobbs Ferry, New York; the other was becoming the first woman president of the Westchester County Municipal Officials Association.”

These are just two of the many accomplishments lifetime League member Gisela Knight can lay claim to, achievements that are all the more remarkable given that she immigrated to the US from post-World War II Germany and only became a citizen in 1960.

Now 91, Gisela grew up in dynamic times. She came of age right after the war and experienced the occupation of Berlin, first by the Russians and then by the Allies. She learned Russian and English in school. When she met her husband, an American citizen, she was working for the military government in the British sector of Berlin.

“I was the oldest growing up,” she recalled. “My father had died, and until my mother got her widow’s pension, I had to go to work for the family.” She had only been able to complete two years of her law degree.

Coming to America in 1955, she was immediately impressed by what she saw as a strong tradition of volunteer service. “That really grabbed me,” she remembered. “There was nothing like that in Germany when I was growing up.”

Her first volunteer activities in America were with the American Field Service (AFS). Her younger sister had gone to America with AFS in 1950, and Gisela had met her husband through that connection. When a neighbor came around one day asking for contributions, Gisela wrote a check; then she asked how she could help. She became a volunteer in 1961, and local chairperson in 1967.

A new mother as well, she occasionally as a favor watched the children of a few friends while they attended meetings. “What were these ‘meetings’? Where were they going?” she wondered. When she found out they were League of Women Voters meetings, she asked to go along. She began attending meetings as an associate member, and after she got her citizenship in 1960, she became an official member.

“I’m an immigrant, but I probably know more about how our government works than the average American. And I have the League to thank for that.”

At that point, she knew very little about American politics. Her husband was apolitical, and she got what information she could from reading The New York Times “. I came home from my first League meeting, which was about the 1961 NY State elections,” she recalled, “and I said to my husband, ‘There are nine ballot issues, and I know how to vote on them.’ ‘Good, he said, now you can tell me how to vote!’”

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“I was amazed by what this organization was doing,” she continued, “so much reading, and discussion and then coming to consensus. Participating in League workshops was like going to university seminars.”

The first issue Gisela worked on was One Man One Vote, the examination of apportionment and redistricting in voting. “We agreed to support the “one man, one vote” apportionment initiative, she remembered. “We also came to a consensus that redistricting should not be done by politicians and proposed appointing non-partisan commissions. Of course that went nowhere because politicians of whatever party want to keep their power. We are still struggling with that,” she added smiling.

Gisela served as president of the Dobbs Ferry League from 1970 to 1973. After that, she was asked to serve on the board of the first non-profit day care center in town and became a charter member of the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society. She was becoming well-known in her community for her volunteerism.

Then, in 1975, she was asked to run on the democratic slate for the Dobbs Ferry municipal board. Her first reaction was disbelief: “I said, ‘You want me to run? I can’t win; I’m a woman! In addition to that, I’m an immigrant from a country that only 30 years ago was an enemy, we had been at war.”

She was finally persuaded, and the democratic slate won. She is modest about her win: “I had shown I could do things, and whoever shows they can do things are always asked to do the next thing!” She was re-elected four times. The next thing was becoming mayor of Dobbs Ferry; she was elected in 1985 and served until 1989.

In telling her story, Gisela emphasized that she went into these elections as a person who supported good government, not as a politician. “You know, at the local level, we’re all interested in the same things, whatever party,” she observed. “People don’t realize that many local government positions are practically volunteer because the token compensation is so small, pennies per hour.”

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Gisela credits the League with advancing women’s participation in government. “If it weren’t for my experience in the League, I don’t think those guys would have asked me to run for office,” she said. “In my case,” she added, “there was my wanting to learn about my new country. I wasn’t going to just sit back and observe! And I wanted to give back. And I found public service very rewarding.

“I’m an immigrant,” she continued, “but I probably know more about how our government works than the average American. And I have the League to thank for that.”

“You know,” Gisela confided with a smile, “they asked me to join the Westchester County Municipal Officials Association board as secretary. I said, ‘Secretary? No, I don’t think so.’ Then they said, ‘How about vice-president?’ I said, ‘Yes.’”

—Stephanie Schlanger
2020 Vote: Women’s Suffrage Centennial

A century ago, women and men in New Mexico and around the country were urgently lobbying their members of Congress to approve the 19th Amendment, which had been first proposed decades before. In 1877, Congress laughed when Susan B. Anthony delivered petitions for women’s suffrage from 26 states with 10,000 signatures. Women continued to organize through women’s clubs to fight for fair labor laws for women and children, health care, and many other issues we still work on today. In 1887, two suffrage organizations merged as the National American Woman Suffrage Association with Elizabeth Cady Stanton as president and Anthony as vice-president. Carrie Chapman Catt, head of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, succeeded Anthony as president of the NAWSA.

Catt became the next president of NAWSA, which she transformed into the League on February 14, 1920, in anticipation of the ratification of the 19th Amendment by the states. In 1919, Catt rallied both men and women to work on the cause when she visited New Mexico and other states that had not granted women’s suffrage. Her amazing efforts and ceaseless energy in accomplishing the “Winning Plan” to get states to grant women full suffrage had not worked in New Mexico because of provisions the NM Constitution of 1910.

The NM Federation of Women’s Clubs had won the right of women to vote in school elections, but our constitution then required a three-fourths majority of voters in each county to amend the suffrage provision. In 2016, LWVNM overturned that onerous requirement when we won our NM Supreme Court case against the state. As a result, school elections will forever more be combined with local elections in November of odd-numbered years.


Carrie Chapman Catt celebrates the passage of the 19th Amendment

Read more about the struggle to win full women’s suffrage, Catt, and the people who worked with her here to overcome enormous challenges. See the NM chapter in the *History of Woman Suffrage*. Vol. VI, edited Ida Husted Harper, available for free at http://www.gutenberg.org/files/30051/30051-h/30051-h.htm#Page_434

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For another wonderful article on our history, see Jason Shapiro’s “New Mexico’s Journey to Universal Voting Rights for Women,” [http://elpalacio.org/articles/fall12/suffrage.pdf](http://elpalacio.org/articles/fall12/suffrage.pdf)

**SUNSHINE WEEK LUNCHEON**

Tuesday, March 19th
11:30 to 1:00 pm
Hotel Santa Fe

Mayor Alan Webber

The luncheon will feature Alan Webber, the first full-time mayor of the City of Santa Fe, to report on the progress his administration has made during his first year in office.

At our Annual Meeting last May, Mayor Webber spoke to us about his goals and priorities, and promised transparency and accountability. This will be his opportunity to tout his successes, own up to his failures, and let us know if his priorities have changed. On the list of topics the mayor will cover is the McHard Report’s disastrous findings on the city’s system of accounting and financial affairs: what has been fixed and what hasn’t.

Need a primer on city budgeting and finances? Plan to attend “The ABCs of City Finances”, a workshop designed to get you ready to ask the hard questions of Mayor Webber during his Sunshine Week presentation. City Councilor and Chairman of the Finance Committee Roman Abeyta and City Finance Director Mary McCoy will teach us the basics of where the city gets its funding, how that money is spent, and how those decisions are made. TBA during the week of March 11-15. As soon as the date and time are set, we will send out a Constant Contact invitation by email and post the information on the League’s website:

Please help the LWVNM History Committee by submitting information and photos to history@lwvnm.org. Not only will we celebrate the League’s 100th birthday and the ratification of the 19th amendment in February 2020, with proclamations from state and local officials and displays at the NM Capitol, but we will publish a pamphlet about our rich history and accomplishments. We need volunteers to explore and summarize some of the numerous documents related to suffrage efforts that are in the NM State Records. The goal is to commemorate the past in order to inspire a tremendous, diverse turn-out in the 2020 elections and to increase civic engagement.

—Meredith Machen, LWVNM Special Projects Director
[projects@lwvnm.org](mailto:projects@lwvnm.org)
The Case for Election Reform

WHY COMPETITION IN THE POLITICS INDUSTRY IS FAILING AMERICA:
A strategy for reinvigorating our democracy
Katherine M. Gehl and Michael E. Porter

The authors present an assessment of our current political process, which they describe as a “Political Industrial Complex,” a “duopoly” that exists to advance its own interests and not those of its citizens.

“This report is about politics, but it is not political. The problem is not Democrats or Republicans .... The problem is not the existence of parties, per se, or that there are two major parties. The real problem is the nature of political competition that the current duopoly has created, their failure to deliver solutions that work, and the artificial barriers that are preventing new competition that might better serve the public interest.”

They recommend the following reforms in the election process:

- **Establish nonpartisan top-four primaries.** The current partisan primary system shifts both campaigns and governance toward the extremes. States should move to a single primary ballot for all candidates, no matter what their affiliation, and open up primaries to all voters, not just registered party voters.

- **Institute ranked-choice voting with instant runoff in general elections.** This system will ensure that no candidate is elected with less than majority support, resulting in the election of candidates with the broadest appeal to the most voters.

- **Institute nonpartisan redistricting.** Drawing legislative district boundaries must be non-partisan to eliminate artificial advantages for the party in control.

- **Rewrite debate access rules for presidential elections.** Current requirements for participation in presidential debates are unreasonable (for anyone except the Democratic and Republican nominees) and anticompetitive.

These are all positions supported by the League of Women Voters (see “Positions” at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)). We also asked the NM Secretary of State’s Office where New Mexico stands on these initiatives, and here is the response from their communication officer, Alex Curtas:

- Secretary Toulouse Oliver supports a modified open-primary model where eligible voters who are not members of a major political party can choose the primary ballot they wish to vote. There are multiple bills moving through the New Mexico Legislature right now that would open up our primary elections.

- Currently, only municipalities are authorized to conduct runoff elections, either as a top-two or ranked choice runoff election. Santa Fe has already conducted an election using rank-choice voting and Las Cruces will begin using it in their municipal elections as well. There is also House Joint Memorial 6 currently being considered by the New Mexico Legislature that would amend the state constitution to allow runoff elections in every election other than municipal elections.

- Secretary Toulouse Oliver supports an independent redistricting commission to draw legislative district boundaries.
Food for Thought...

“I used to think that black and white films made things seem more realistic, but the movie *They Shall Not Grow Old* proved that wrong. Real, old-timey, black and white movies from WWI are technologically smoothed out and colorized, narrated with the actual words of the soldiers who served, and lifted to a whole new level. I can't stop thinking about it.”

—Marcy Litzenberg

“Jill Lepore, Harvard historian and frequent contributor to *The New Yorker* and other magazines, has written an engrossing account of American history that traces fundamental ideological conflicts that have characterized and divided our country from its foundation to the present day, among them liberty and slavery, capitalism and democracy, politics and the media. If you’re wondering how we got to where we are now, read this!”

—Stephanie Schlanger

League Libations

March 28th, 5:30-7 p.m.

Hotel Santa Fe, Ortiz Bar & Grill

Catch up with League members. Bring a friend and make new friends. Discuss books and movies. Share ideas and get inspired.

The League extends a warm welcome to new members Anne Culp, Rex Culp, Julie Wirick and Katharine Clark.

And our heartfelt appreciation to Roger Taylor for his generous donation.

What are YOU reading, watching, listening to? Send us your recommendations: stephanie.schlanger@gmail.com
Public Form on Immigration

April 27, 2-4 pm
Unitarian Universalist Church
107 Barcelona Rd

The League of Women Voters is sponsoring a public forum on immigration on Saturday, April 27 at the Unitarian Church of Santa Fe from 2 to 4 p.m. Panelists include Marcela Diaz, Somos Un Pueblo Unido; Allegra Love, Santa Fe Dreamers Project; Santa Fe City Councilor Renee Villarreal, and Rebekah Wolf, NM Immigrant Law Center. Hear what local experts and officials are seeing and how they're responding to federal, state, and local policies affecting undocumented immigrants living in NM and those seeking asylum and entry at our border. Come get the latest updates, ask questions, and learn how you can help!

For more information, contact Meredith Machen
projects@lwvnm.org
505 577-6337

Who's Who, or The Roster of Santa Fe County Elected Officials, Needs updating!

What the job entails:

The Who's Who is out of date as of the November election and needs to be revised. This is not a difficult task, but it does require diligence and time.

This is a volunteer job you can do completely at home, on your own schedule.

You could take on the job of updating the entire Who's Who, or just a section, e.g., the State Legislators for Santa Fe County, the City government, or the County Council members.

Any help offered will be much appreciated. The Who's Who can be accessed at https://www.lwvsfc.org/whos-who-in-santa-fe.html. Take a look and see if this is something you'd be willing to help with.

Please respond to: sronneau@bellsouth.net or call Suzanne Ronneau at 505-699-7781.
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA FE COUNTY
ACTION & ADVOCACY COMMITTEE REPORT

February 2019

- **Christus Behavioral Health Services for Youth**: Judy Williams, Dawn Abriel and Olivia Ridgeway met with Kathy Etre and the new head of Behavioral Health at Christus, Melissa Powers. Christus counts on its community partners for youth behavioral services. Dawn Abriel reported that several groups with interests in this area attend the Health Policy and Planning Commission of Santa Fe County. She will continue to monitor this issue.

- **The new Emergency Department will** be giving a tour for those interested once it’s completed. Trauma patients and children will be physically separated.

- **County SLDC proposed changes**: Chris Furlanetto reported that the proposed changes to Chapter 11, the mining and resource section of the County’s SLDC, are unobjectionable. There have been a series of public meetings but not much controversy. Jody Larson and she would like to write a complimentary letter to the county that also states the League positions that agree with the code.

- **City Transparency Issues**: Renny Ashleman and Hannah Burling will meet with city officials to discuss the committee’s concerns.

- **Midtown Campus Project**: Still on hold.

- **County 2020 Census Complete Count Committee**: Still on hold.

Next Meeting:
March 7, 12 noon
Rio Chama Restaurant,
Capitol Room
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA FE COUNTY
VOTER SERVICES REPORT

February 2019

High School Pilot Project

We are planning one or two pilot projects at select high schools to engage students in exercising their right to vote. The focus of the pilots will be on registering young voters and educating them on the value of living in a democracy, their role as citizens and the importance of voting. The project will include these activities:

- Recruiting teachers and students as voter registrars.
- Training new registrars on site, at the high schools (training to be modeled on the one attorney Clifford Rees conducted for League voter registrars by last fall).
- Identifying League members to conduct voter registrar training in high schools (“train the trainer” model).
- Identifying key students to lead the initiative and communicate the mission via social media platforms.

A meeting is being scheduled with County Clerk Geraldine Salazar to discuss preparing teachers and students to be voter registrars and educators in area high schools.

A Yearly Civic Event Initiative for High School Students:

Esther Kovari, a Monte del Sol teacher who organized a candidate forum in the spring of 2018 for Santa Fe high school students, is interested in partnering with the League to sponsor a yearly civic event focusing on city and state government officials and initiatives that impact students. The event would be interactive, with student participation. A meeting is being scheduled with Esther, Sharon Starkey, Stephanie Schlanger and Kelly Davis to start planning an event for next year.

Event Tabling Protocol

A list of materials to be used for tabling at League events along with a protocol for accessing the materials and returning them to storage has been created. The goal is to make sure essential materials are on hand and to replace supplies as needed. The list will be posted on the League’s storage cabinet in The New Mexican building.
Test Your Women’s History IQ!

1. Who became the first female Secretary of State of the United States, appointed by President Clinton in 1997?

2. Who was the first woman of color elected to the U.S. Congress and was a founding member of the National Women’s Political Caucus?

3. Who was the United States delegate to the United Nations who championed and won approval of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948?

4. Who is the architect of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., which she designed when she was only 21 years old?

5. What woman attended the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, signed the Declaration of Sentiments, and lived to see women win the vote in 1920?

6. What woman ran for president on the National Equal Rights Party, receiving 4,149 votes in 6 states in 1884?

7. Who became the first woman vice-president candidate on a major political party ticket when selected in 1984?

8. Who was the female lawyer who worked for equal rights and suffrage, co-founded the ACLU in 1910, and helped write the Equal Rights Amendment?

9. Who led the fight to criminalize lynching, helped form the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), and aided many black people who migrated from the South to Chicago?

10. Who was the first woman in modern history to lead a major Native-American tribe, the Cherokee Nation?

Find more questions to test your knowledge at
The National Women’s History Alliance website:
https://nationalwomenshistoryalliance.org/quizzes/

(Answers on page 14)
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF SANTA FE COUNTY

Calendar 2019

March

March 9, 11-3: LWVNM Board meeting, Santa Fe, HEC, 1950 Siringo Rd Rm 135
March 19, 10-11:30: LWVSC Board meeting
March 19, 11:30-1: Sunshine Week luncheon (Hotel SF) Progress report on city finance fixes
March 21, 10:30-11:30: Nonfiction Book Club, Collected Works Bookstore, 202 Galisteo Street
March 28, 5:30-7: League Libations-Hilton Hotel

April

April 16, 10-12: LWVSC Board meeting
April 25, 5:30-7: League Libations-Hilton Hotel
April 27, 2-4: Public forum on Immigration, Unitarian Church of Santa Fe 107 W Barcelona

May

May 8, 11:00-1:30: Annual Meeting (Hotel SF)
May 15, 10-12: LWVSC Board meeting
May 19, LWVNM Convention, Las Cruces (?)
May 20, 11-3: LWVNM board meeting
May 23, 5-30-7: League Libations-Hilton Hotel

Check [www.lwvsc.org](http://www.lwvsc.org) for locations and updates.
*LWVNM and other organization functions in italics

Regular meetings:
Action-Advocacy 1st Thursday of each month
LWVSC Board meetings 3rd Tuesday of each month
10-12 at NM Bank & Trust, 1592 St. Michael’s Dr.
League Libations: Last Thursday of each month @ the Hilton Hotel Ortiz Café & Bar

Public Forum on Immigration
April 27, 2-4 pm
Unitarian Universalist Church
107 Barcelona Rd

Answers to quiz on page 13
1. Madeleine Albright (b. 1937)
3. Eleanor Roosevelt (1884 – 1962)
4. Maya Lin (b. 1959)
5. Charlotte Woodward Pierce (1831 – c. 1921)
6. Belva Lockwood (1830 – 1917)
8. Crystal Eastman (1881 – 1928)
10. Wilma Mankiller (1945 – 2010)
MAIL-IN MEMBERSHIP FORM
(Print out this form and follow the instructions at the bottom for mailing.)

☐ New Member  ☐ Renewal

Please check box of the membership you wish to start or renew:

☐ Individual membership: $60
☐ Household membership: $100 (two family members living at the same address)
☐ Student membership: $30 (students 16-25 years old and currently enrolled in an accredited institution.)

Member Information:

Name (first and last): ________________________________________________
Address: (include zip code) ____________________________________________

Phone: ___________________________ Email: __________________________

Please include information about the second household member here, if appropriate:

Name (first and last): ________________________________________________
Phone: ___________________________ Email: __________________________

Donation - I would also like to donate:
☐ $25 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $150 ☐ $200 ☐ $250 ☐ $500 ☐ other $____________

Make check for dues and donation payable to “LWVSFC” and mail the check with this form to the address below:

LWVSFC
P.O. Box 31547
Santa Fe, NM 87594-1547

Thank you for joining! As soon as we receive your membership registration form and payment, we will send you a confirmation and welcome letter by email.

The League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County is a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt organization. All dues and donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Updated: 9/17/18