



# The Voter

1472 St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87505-4038

Phone: 505-982-9766 www.lwvsfc.org

Vol. 66, No. 4

April 2017

## **Officers**

President

Suzanne Schmidt

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

Patricia Hawkins  
(Communications)

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

Marcy Litzenberg (Finance)

Secretary—Rosemary Greenlee

Treasurer—Berit Leonard

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Laurie Glaze (Director,  
Program/Calendar; Liaison to  
Development Committee)

Miriam Ries (*The Voter*)

Barbara Conroy (Office Liaison)

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## **Nominating Committee**

Donna Reynolds, Chair

Sharon Chastain

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(appointed by the board)

Marcy Litzenberg, Chair

Flavel Chastain

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Laurie Glaze

Judy Williams

Berit Leonard (ex officio)

## **Executive Committee**

Suzanne Schmidt

Rosemary Greenlee

Berit Leonard

Susan Mertes

Miriam Ries

## **The League's Springtime**

*by Suzanne Schmidt, President*

A touch of spring is in the air! Birds are chirping and nesting, blooms have appeared, fresh touches of green clothe trees and shrubs. Spring is a time of renewal, transition, and transformation. It is a season that fills many of us with energy and optimism, allowing us to cast aside any gloom that might have pervaded during shorter days with colder temperatures. Its signature elements have been enshrined in poetry, prose, and song. It is, indeed, a gift.



The change of seasons invites reflection on change in general—that element of life that is totally predictable and ever a challenge. For the truth is that even the smallest of changes requires adjustment. If you have never considered that fact, put your watch on the “wrong” arm and see how it feels. Or leave off a ring that you routinely wear and note how long it takes before you reach to turn it on your finger. Or travel to a different country and try driving on the “wrong” side of the road. I could go on.

Your personal style impacts how change will affect you. You might find yourself emotionally or literally resisting. You might feel distraught if the change is significant to your life. You might abdicate responsibility and hand a related task off to someone else. (My choice when Dan and I traveled to Ireland with friends. Understanding my visual perception challenges, I simply said, “No thanks. I’ll leave the driving to you.”)

Or, you might say to yourself that change can be an opportunity. A chance for new perspectives and new benefits to enrich your life. It can help expand your emotional, intellectual, or physical horizons. In short, it can contribute to your growth.

Just as with individuals, organizations also routinely experience change. Each new leadership team introduces a new style of operation. With each new member comes a different group dynamic. Each new issue addressed brings a need for more information and greater understanding.

***In its own version of spring, the LWVSFC is approaching the possibility of significant change. In two important arenas.***

One aspect of potential transition involves conversion from a 501(c)(4) Internal Revenue Service designation to a 501(c)(3) with a dormant (c)(4) arm that could be readily activated if needed. The seed for this transformation was planted by the Suffrage Celebration Picnic Committee and the soil tilled by the LWVSFC Board at its June Retreat. The impetus for this recommendation was the need for contributions to be easily identified as tax deductible, for membership dues and in-kind contributions to provide our members a tax deduction, and for the dissolution of a two-tiered system of donations that was confusing. The change would also acknowledge the reality that the work of the League is overwhelmingly advocacy and not lobbying. You have seen information about this possible transformation presented by Laurie Glaze (see February's *The Voter*) and perhaps chose to attend the March 28<sup>th</sup> exploratory workshop presented by LWVUS Consultant and "First Gent" Tom Carson. Additional information is contained in this issue.

The second area where significant change is being considered is in the League leadership structure. The Nominating Committee recognized that the traditional hierarchical system imposes time and energy demands that are difficult to manage, that a wealth of member skills/ talents was being underutilized, and that a more feminine, collaborative model of leadership is consistent with League history and current practice in many other local Leagues across the country. Consequently, a leadership slate will be offered for election at the Annual Meeting that will create a Leadership Team. The team would serve as transition agents, considering new governance and operational structures. Donna Reynolds provided comprehensive information about this alternative in the March issue of *The Voter*.

And now the decisions enter your realm. You will be asked to vote on each of these changes at the May 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. To help in your decision-making, **a General Meeting will be held on April 13<sup>th</sup>** to answer questions. Both the proposed leadership structure and the IRS designation will be discussed. See this issue of *The Voter* for details about that meeting.

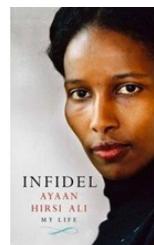
As you consider both of these recommendations, I would offer this oft-quoted thought . . . "A transition period is a period between two transition periods."

-Suzanne Schmidt

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## Reminder—April Nonfiction Book Club

Thursday, April 20, 2017, 10:30 a.m.  
Collected Works Bookstore



## Special Election Voter Guide

Undecided on the soda tax? League members looked at numerous sources and assembled a handy Pros/Cons for your consideration. There is also info on voting dates/ times/ places. It's all on our website:  
<http://www.lwvsfc.org/uploads/7/9/7/7/7977240/2017-sodataguide.pdf>

Please note that the League has **not** taken a position on this issue.



## League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County Minutes of the Executive Committee

Board members who are members of the Executive Committee:

President, Suzanne Schmidt  
Treasurer, Berit Leonard  
Secretary, Rosemary Greenlee  
Director, Miriam Ries  
Director, Susan Mertes

Business was transacted via e-mail: March 26-27, 2017.

**Action:** On March 27, 2017, Miriam wrote: I move that the final version of the Soda Tax Voter Guide be approved by the Executive Committee. Seconded by Rosemary. Approved unanimously.

The background of this motion was sent to the members of the Executive Committee.

Submitted by,  
Rosemary Greenlee, Board Secretary

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### Welcome New Member

Coleen Dearing



### Highlights—March 8, 2017, Board Meeting

1. Following a report from Jody Larson regarding the Economic Development Study, the Board moved to approve the consensus questions presented by Jody. The Consensus Meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2017. The study conclusions will be discussed and the consensus questions presented to the LWVSFC members who will determine this League's consensus on the issues. The outcome of this consensus will be presented to the Board on April 12.
2. The Board moved to accept the expansion request for \$500.00 to pay for the conversion fee and other expenses related to the (potential) conversion to a 501(c)(3) organization during FY 2017-2018, should the membership vote to approve the conversion.
3. The Board approved the FY2017-2018 budget.
4. Position descriptions have been published under "documents" on the website.
5. No Action & Advocacy Meeting is scheduled for March.
6. A new membership brochure has been developed.

-Rosemary Greenlee



## **Notification of LWVNM State Convention**

May 20 and 21, 2017, Hilton Santa Fe Historic Plaza Hotel,  
100 Sandoval St., Santa Fe

The League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County invites all League members to attend the 2017 LWVNM State Convention May 20 – 21, 2017. The convention will adopt a program for study and action, elect officers and directors, adopt a balanced budget for the next two years, consider revising the bylaws and transact such other business as may be presented.

We have reserved a special rate of \$130.00 + tax per night at the Hilton Hotel. **This rate is only good until April 19, 2017.** Call Reservations at 1-800-774-1500, or 505-988-2811 and use the group reservation code LWV.

All events will take place at the Hilton, except for the Friday evening reception.

Each local League is entitled to a number of delegates based on membership counts. Only delegates can vote. However, all members are strongly encouraged to attend, as there is ample opportunity for discussion, debate and networking.

### **Highlights of the convention include:**

#### **Evening Reception**

On Friday, May 19, there will be an informal evening reception, beginning at 5:00 p.m. at the home of Meredith Machen, state president. Please RSVP when you register.

#### **2017 Silent Auction Fundraiser**

Time to polish and shine those auction items to bring to Convention! Please turn in your silent auction items in good condition beginning at 11 a.m. on Saturday, May 20. Bidding will continue through much of Sunday morning, culminating in picking up your winning treasures after the plenary session ends. Come bid on items for yourself or for your family and friends.

#### **Opening Luncheon**

A buffet luncheon will open the convention at noon on Saturday. The speaker is Henrietta Saunders, our liaison from LWVUS. Her topic will be "The League from a National Perspective: Where We Are and Where We Are Going." Ms. Saunders is the Treasurer of the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) and the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF). She also served for four years as President of the League of Women Voters Lake Michigan Region, a 4-state Interleague Organization. Ms. Saunders' non-League experience includes 16 years of commercial banking. She has a BA in Organizational Behavior from Brown University, an MBA in Finance from the University of Chicago, and an MS in Education and Social Policy from Northwestern University.

#### **Convention Banquet**

Saturday evening there will be a no-host bar opening at 6:00 p.m., followed by the banquet at 7:00 p.m. Valerie Plame, noted activist and anti-nuclear proliferation expert will speak about "The Nuclear Threat in Our New Trumpian World." A former career covert CIA operations officer, Valerie Plame worked to protect America's national security and prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. During her career with the CIA, Valerie managed top-secret covert programs designed to keep terrorists and rogue nation states from acquiring nuclear weapons. She now lives in New Mexico and sits on numerous boards, including the United Way; Global Data Sentinel, a cyber security company; Starling Trust, a predictive behavioral analytics company; and Global Zero, a non-profit that seeks to eliminate nuclear weapons. A graduate of Penn State, she holds graduate degrees in International Relations from the London School of Economics and the College of Europe.

**Business Meetings**

The Saturday afternoon Plenary Session begins immediately after the luncheon and includes discussion of the LWVNM program for the next biennium – proposed studies, positions and action. Other business includes bylaws, budget and nominations.

The Sunday, May 21, Plenary Session will begin at 9:00 a.m. and adjourn at noon. At this time, delegates will vote on the items discussed and debated on Saturday afternoon.

The new state board will meet immediately after the conclusion of the Plenary Session.

**2017 LWVNM Convention  
May 19-21 Hilton Hotel, Santa Fe, NM**

**REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATION STATUS (PLEASE CHECK ONE)**

State Board Member \_\_\_\_\_ Local Delegate \_\_\_\_\_ MAL Representative \_\_\_\_\_

All Others: \_\_\_\_\_ (include registration fee of \$75 below)

**REGISTRATION FEE AND MEALS**

\*Registration Fee @ \$75 \_\_\_\_\_  
(includes the “Chef’s Choice Luncheon Buffet” on Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>)

\*Only non-delegates need pay the fee; local Leagues and State Board will pay for their delegates.

Saturday Banquet @\$50 \_\_\_\_\_  
Check Banquet Choice: \_\_\_\_\_ London Broil with Mushroom Sauce  
\_\_\_\_\_ Grilled Vegetables with Portobello Mushroom

Post-Convention LWVNM Board Meeting box lunch @\$25 \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDITIONAL GUEST MEALS:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Luncheon Guest(s) @ \$25

\_\_\_\_\_ Banquet Guest(s) @ \$50

Indicate number of each: \_\_\_\_\_ London Broil \_\_\_\_\_ Grilled Vegetables

**TOTAL: REGISTRATION AND MEALS \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**REGISTRATION FORM AND CHECK MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE DEADLINE OF 5/5/17**

Mail To: LWVSFC, 1472 St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87505 505-982-9766 www.lwvsfc.org



## **Why you should care whether your League is a 401(c)(3) or a 401(c)(4) organization (IRS)**

**Learn the facts before you vote on May 5, 2017.**

At its May 5, 2017 Annual Meeting, members of the League of Women Voters of Santa Fe County (LWVSFC) will vote on whether or not to convert to a 501(c)(3) organization. In preparation for this vote, on March 28, Tom Carson, LWVUS Consultant, presented a workshop on the conversion process. The event was attended by twenty-five League members from LWVSFC, LWVLA, and LWVCNM.

In March, The VOTER featured an article on the conversion process. In anticipation of the May 5 vote, we are once again bringing you specifics on some of the conversion issues.

The LWVSFC is currently a 501(c)(4) organization incorporated in New Mexico. It is exempt from state and federal income taxes but can support/oppose candidates for elected office and political parties. Internal LWVUS as well as LWVSFC rules prohibit this kind of political activity. There is no limit to lobbying activities and contributions and dues are not deductible for members or donors. LWVSFC currently utilizes the LWVUS Ed Fund for its 501(c)(3) activities.

In assessing the pros and cons of conversion, it is important to consider not just possible benefits to LWVSFC internally, but also potential benefits to its members and donors. The following points were extracted from Tom Carson's presentation.

**Deductibility of dues and contributions** - Donors and members who itemize deductions would achieve a tax benefit from donations and member dues, including in-kind contributions. One prominent example of an in-kind contribution is money spent by members to attend LWVUS or LWVNM conventions or councils. All contributions to LWVSFC would be tax deductible to those who itemize their deductions (unless the contribution is specifically made for lobbying activities or a benefit is realized from LWVSFC). This is a certain benefit, and by itself could be a central argument in favor of the conversion.

**Increased contributions** – It is likely that the tax deductibility of contributions would increase the level of contributions but it will be difficult to ultimately determine this effect. However, history shows that large donors are likely to consider this issue when they decide how much to contribute.

**Eligibility for appropriate grants** – Many public and private donors, including corporations, individuals, and foundations, restrict their giving to 501(c)(3) organizations. In some cases they limit or prohibit giving to 501(c)(4) organizations. As LWVSFC expands its development activities, the change would enable the organization to expand funding opportunities.

**Reduced administrative burdens/Possible lower expenses** – Conversion to a single 501(c)(3) organization would simplify administrative work. The organization would no longer have to maintain a separate education fund. LWVSFC might become eligible for discounts which certain vendors (e.g., PayPal, rental agents) give to 501(c)(3) organizations but not to other kinds of tax exempt organizations.

**Annual filings** – Converting to a 501(c)(3) tax exempt status does not change the basic federal and state document filing requirements. The same rules will determine the appropriate forms. However, LWVSFC would file a one-time only 501(h) election which enables nonprofits to be

measured by the objective “**expenditure test**” for lobbying activities (see below “Lobbying activity concerns” for more information).

**Lobbying activity concerns** – Federal tax laws allow all charitable nonprofits to freely engage in legislative lobbying *as long as* that activity amounts to only an “*insubstantial*” amount of the nonprofit's activities. Since neither Congress nor IRS has defined “insubstantial”, charitable nonprofits may file a short form known as “taking the 501(h) election” which enables nonprofits to be measured by the objective “**expenditure test.**” This election allows any lobbying to be measured by **dollars spent** rather than **time spent**. The threshold for determining what is “substantial” is not met for organizations the size of LWVSFC unless lobbying expenditures exceed 20% of the organization’s total annual expenditures (approximately \$6,000 for current fiscal year). Currently, if there is any lobbying activity, it involves members’ time rather than staff time and little or no monetary expenditures. With a 501(h) election in place, LWVSFC would almost never realize any restrictions.

**Process for conversion** – For several months, members of the Budget Committee have been working with Tom Carson to prepare for a possible conversion. On April 12 the Board of Directors will review and vote to approve updated bylaws recommendations and amended Articles of Incorporation, both recognizing LWVSFC as a 401(c)(3) organization. If approved by the Board, these drafts will be electronically sent to members for review a minimum of two weeks prior to the May 5 Annual meeting. ***Members will also have an opportunity to acquire additional information at a General Membership meeting, April 13, 2017, at 2:00 at the Santa Fe Main Public Library.*** Information on this meeting is in this issue as well as available through Constant Contact.

Once members vote to approve the updated bylaws and amended Articles of Incorporation, the amended Articles will be filed with the State of New Mexico. LWVSFC will file IRS Form 1023-EZ (required form for approval as a 401(c)(3) organization) and required documentation and payment of \$275 with the Internal Revenue Service. As noted by Tom Carson, it is currently taking organizations 2-3 months for a confirmation from the IRS.

Please feel free to contact me with any concerns.

-Laurie Glaze  
Director of Program and Calendar Committee



L-R: Laurie Glaze, Tom Carson CPA, LWVSFC President Suzanne Schmidt, LWVUS President Chris Carson



Guests check in with League volunteers



Javier Gonzales

On March 16, 2017, the Santa Fe League observed Sunshine Week by hosting a festive event at La Posada de Santa Fe. Guest speakers former Lt. Governor Diane Denish and Santa Fe Mayor Javier Gonzales presented their thoughts on **Money in Government** and fielded questions from some of the 100+ guests. Old and new members and other invited guests mingled, schmoozed, ate, and drank—just like the pols—but with an eye to getting money—especially big money—out of our government.



Diane Denish





LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF SANTA FE COUNTY

NEW MEMBERSHIP / RENEWAL FORM

(Please complete fully even if renewing.)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: (please include zip) \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_ **DO NOT** include my contact information in the annual Membership Handbook Directory listing.

**Membership checks made payable to LWVSFC:** (Please mail form with check to Attn: Membership Chair at address at bottom.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual membership: \$54

\_\_\_\_\_ Family membership: \$80 (Individual plus one family member) Family member name: \_\_\_\_\_

• For separate listing of Family member in Handbook directory, please list phone and email:

Family member phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Family member email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Student membership: \$30 (For students 18-25 years and currently enrolled in accredited institution.)

*(Membership is paid annually between September 1 and the following August 31. It includes state (LWVNM) and national (LWVUS) dues. If you are joining between April to August of any year, your membership will extend through the following year to September 1.)*

• **Donation check payable to LWVSFC** - (Please note "General Fund" on your check.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Unrestricted general fund contribution (**not tax deductible**): \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

• **Donation check payable to LWVSFC** - (Please note "Education Fund" on your check.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Education Fund (**tax deductible**): \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

• Can you attend mid-day meetings, luncheons and other activities during the week? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**Volunteer Interests** - LWVSFC success is based on the assistance of member volunteers. We welcome and encourage your help!  
(Circle all that apply):

**Voter Services:**

• Voter registration • H.S. voter registration • Info tables

(Are you a trained Voter Registrar? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_) (If No, walk-in training is available at County Clerk office downtown.)

• Monitor public meetings • Candidate forums/meetings • Lobby government officials (w/LWVNM)

**Organizational Support:**

Help at events • Development • Membership • VOTER content • Website • Staff League office • Board member

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO THE LWVSFC, 1472 ST. FRANCIS DR., SANTA FE NM 87505  
505-982-9766 • www.lwvsfc.org



## Calendar 2017

### April

April 12, 11-1: LWVSFC Board meeting

April 13, 2:00-3:30: General Meeting, LWVSFC, League Governance, IRS Tax Status, SF Main Library

April 20, 10:30-11:30: Nonfiction Book Club, Collected Works, 202 Galisteo, SF

### May

**May 5, 11:00-1:30: Annual Meeting, Hilton**

May 11, 11-1: LWVSFC Board meeting

*May 20-21, LWVNM Convention – Santa Fe, Hilton*

#### Regular meetings:

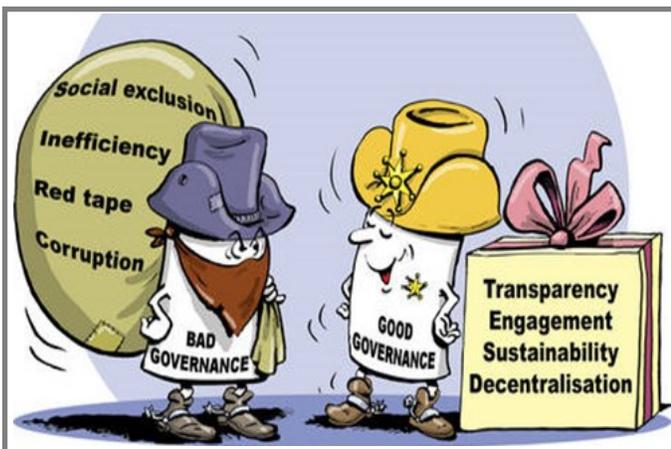
Action-Advocacy 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month, Rio Chama (Susan Mertes)  
(No meeting March 2017)

LWVSFC Board meetings 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month, 10 a.m. to 12 noon, NM Bank & Trust, St. Michael's Drive

Unit Meetings are for League members only

Check [www.lwvsfc.org](http://www.lwvsfc.org) for locations and updates.

*\*LWVNM and other organization functions in italics.*



## General Meeting to Discuss Recommendations Concerning League Governance and IRS Tax Status



**Thursday, April 13, 2017  
2:00 p.m.**

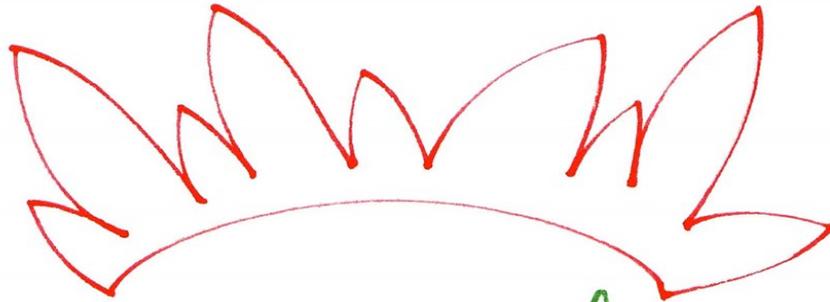
**Santa Fe Main Library  
145 Washington Avenue**

Please join several LWVSFC leaders for a General Meeting to discuss the 2017 Nominating Committee recommendations and the proposed conversion to 501(c)(3) tax status.

The 2017 Nominating Committee is recommending that the incoming board of directors consider achieving several important organizational goals in the coming year. Those recommendations are highlighted in the March 2017 VOTER. Donna Reynolds, 2017 Nominating Committee Chair, will introduce and discuss the recommendations.

President Suzanne Schmidt and Program Chair Laurie Glaze will present information regarding the potential LWVSFC governance transition from a 501(c)(4) Internal Revenue Service designation to a 501(c)(3) designation. Requirements, steps and benefits will be discussed.

**Please come with your questions, interest and ideas.**



Honesty and  
transparency makes  
you vulnerable.

Be honest and  
transparent  
anyway.

Mother  
Teresa



(1.)



League of Women Voters of  
Santa Fe County  
1472 St. Francis Drive  
Santa Fe, NM 87505-4038  
[www.lwvsfc.org](http://www.lwvsfc.org)  
email: [league@lwvsfc.org](mailto:league@lwvsfc.org)

