

The VOTER

League of Women Voters
of Greater Las Cruces
Las Cruces NM
524-VOTE (8683)
www.lwvglc.org
April 2015



2015 ANNUAL MEETING

*Saturday, April 18, 2015, 9 a.m. - Breakfast Meeting
Good Samaritan Social Center, Creative Arts Room
3011 Buena Vida Circle, Las Cruces*

AGENDA

Welcome and IntroductionsErika Graf-Webster
Meeting AdministrationErika Graf-Webster

- Appoint Minutes Readers (2)
- Appoint Parliamentarian
- Adopt Business Meeting Rules

Changes to the Agenda All
Approval of the 2014 Annual Meeting Minutes (See Appendix), p.18) All
Treasurer's Report (Handouts at Meeting)Ruth Benjamins
Report from the President Erika Graf-Webster
Recognitions Erika Graf-Webster

Annual Meeting Business

- Adoption of the Nonpartisan Policy Erika Graf-Webster
- Adoption of Bylaws Erika Graf-Webster
- Adoption of the 2015-2016 Operating Budget Marcia Anderson
- Adoption of the 2015-2016 Education Budget Marcia Anderson
- Approval of Annual Membership Dues..... Ruth Benjamins
- Proposed Program for Study and Action Erika Graf-Webster
 - Adoption of Revised and New Positions (see pp. 5-6)
 - Adoption of Current Statement of Positions
 - Adoption of Recommended/Non-Recommended Program for Study and Action
- Report of the Nominating Committee and Election . . . Ardyth Norem

Other Annual Meeting Business

- LWVNM Convention Delegates
- Direction to the Board from Members
- Announcements

Membership
Directory
Please Bring It

Adjournment

**This meeting will start with a buffet breakfast at 9 a.m.
Cost: \$10 - RSVP by Friday (April 10, 2015)
Roberta Gran, 373-8490
Email: robertagran@q.com**

Welcome to the 46th Annual Meeting

Meeting Administration

Appointment of Readers of the Meeting Minutes (2):

Appointment of a Parliamentarian: Yvonne Magdalena Flores

Business Meeting Rules:

- Only members will have the privilege of the floor.
- No person may speak twice until all members who wish to speak have spoken.
- Motions with wording important to the minutes will be submitted in writing to the secretary.
- Adoption of recommended program items requires approval by a majority of members present. Adoption of non-recommended items requires approval by two-thirds of the members present.
- Those members present at the Annual Meeting shall constitute a quorum.

Annual Meeting Business

NONPARTISAN POLICY (2014-2015 Membership Directory, pp. 18–19)

PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGES: *Erika Graf-Webster*

Note: These changes all address the timeframe for sending notices to the membership about items that need to be voted on at the Annual meeting. Last year, the Board decided that a two-week notice would be adequate, and the intention was to change all “one month” notice provisions to “two weeks” notice provisions. However, some of the “one month” provisions were overlooked in the proposed changes to the Bylaws that were approved last year. So these changes are just intended to correct those oversights, and make the noticing provision consistent throughout the Bylaws.

Under Article VI, Section 3, Budget, Second Sentence: Change “one month” to “two weeks”, so that the sentence reads: “The proposed budget as approved by the Board of Directors shall be sent to all members two weeks before the Annual Meeting and shall be submitted to the Annual Meeting for adoption.”

Under Article IX, Section 3 b, Program: Change “one month” to “two weeks”, so that the sentence reads: “The Proposed Program shall be sent to all members two weeks before the Annual Meeting.”

Under Article XII, Section 1, Amendments, First Sentence: Change “one month” to “two weeks”, so that the sentence reads: “Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the membership in writing at least two weeks in advance of the Annual Meeting.”

Proposed 2015-2016 Operations Budget

(Assuming 65 full plus 10 household and 1 Honorary member)

Category	Budget 2014-2015	Budget 2015-2016
Retained Cash on Hand	\$6,179	
Donation - Scholarship	\$845	
Income (Operational)		
Members Dues	\$4,080	\$4,200 ¹
Voter Printed Subscriptions	\$36	\$36 ²
Contributions		
Members	\$1,000	\$1,000
Community	\$500	\$800
Fund Raising	\$3,429	\$3,059
Total Operations Income	\$9,045	\$9,095
Expenses		
Per Member Payment		
LWVUS	\$2,108	\$2,240 ³
LWVNM	\$884	\$910 ⁴
Meetings and Conventions		
LWVUS Convention (2016)	\$1,200	\$510 ⁵
LWVUS Council (2015)	\$0	\$300
LWVNM Convention (2015)	\$0	\$325 ⁶
LWVNM Council (2016)	\$150	\$0
League Day at Legislature	\$300	\$300
Local Annual Meeting	\$100	\$100 ⁷
Legislative Breakfast	\$100	\$100
Study Groups	\$400	\$800 ⁸
Symposium	\$0	\$250
Board Expenses	\$0	\$300
Office Expenses		
Telephone	\$500	\$500
P.O. Box	\$80	\$80
Office Supplies (incl Postage)	\$200	\$200
Office Equipment	\$0	\$300
Membership Expenses	\$100	\$120 ⁹
Membership Scholarships Expense	\$120	\$120
Fund Drive Expense	\$50	\$50
Website Domain	\$0	\$0
Website Server	\$120	\$120 ⁸
Website Upgrade	\$750	\$0
Publications		
Voter Printing	\$600	\$600
Voter Postage	\$350	\$350
Impact on Issues	\$63	\$20
New Member Brochure	\$500	\$200
Membership Directory	\$200	\$200
Member Directory Postage	\$150	\$100
Total Operating Expenses	\$9,045	\$9,095

Operations Budget Notes

1. Member Dues:
\$3,900 = Individual 65@\$60
\$ 240 = 2nd Household 10@\$30
\$4,200
2. Subscription to The VOTER is available for \$12 per year.
3. Per Member Payment to LWVUS is budgeted at \$32 per full member, \$16 per 2nd household member for FY 2015-2016
4. Per Member Payment to LWVNM is \$13 per full member, \$6.50 per 2nd household member for FY 2015-2016
5. LWVUS Convention (2016):
2015 pay registration fee, \$510
Planning for 2 delegates
\$720 = Hotel, \$180 x 4 days
\$500 = Travel Expenses
\$1,220 = Total
6. LWVNM Convention, Albuquerque - Registration Fee estimated at \$65 x 5 delegates
7. Legislative Breakfast - \$10 for 10 Legislators.
8. All study groups combined.
9. Includes Pay Pal Cost



**TIME TO PAY
MEMBERSHIP
DUES**

May 1 - June 30

**\$60 - INDIVIDUAL
\$30 - 2nd Household**

**LWV of Greater Las Cruces
P.O. Box 8322
Las Cruces, NM 88006**

PROPOSED 2015-2016 EDUCATION FUND BUDGET

Category	Budget 2014-2015	Budget 2015-2016
Income		
Transferred from Op. Budget	\$0	\$0
Retained Balance	\$3,300	\$3,520 ¹
Member Donations	\$1,000	\$1,000
Community Donations	\$500	\$600
Total Education Fund Income	\$4,800	\$5,120
Expenses		
Voter Services		
Voters Guide	\$900 ²	\$900
Candidates Forum	\$300	\$100
Who's Who	\$0	\$0
Retained for Voters Services	\$3,500	\$4,020
Public Education		
Public Issue Forum	\$100	\$100
Total Education Fund Expense	\$4,800	\$5,120

Education Fund Notes

1. Retained Balance of \$3,520 is current Education Fund balance.
2. Negotiated contract with Sun-News for 2014 Voters Guide and Who's Who for \$900.

Note: During 2015 Voter Services activities involve City of Las Cruces Municipal Election.

TO THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTE TO THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE

*MEMBER CONTRIBUTORS
With Special Appreciation*

*COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS
With Our Gratitude*

Operating Fund

Education Fund

Anderson, Anne
 Anderson, Kurt & Marcia
 Burn, Bonnie
 Christman, Sally
 Evans, Polly
 Goedecke, Barbara
 Graf-Webster, Erika
 Kershner, Lee
 Lee, Connie
 Leverett, Marnie
 Little, Christina & William
 Mattiace, Bill & Wanda
 McCarthy, Charlotte
 Ossorio, Peter
 Simons, Vicki
 Wooten, Kathy
 Yeo, Dale
 Young, Ellen

Burr, Marjorie & Alex
 Butler, Oscar Vasquez
 Cain, Sue & Terry
 Carter, Jane
 LaPointe, Judith
 Lilley, Diane & Michael
 Little, Christina & William
 McClure-Post, Joan
 Ossorio, Peter & Jean

Bleavins, Lu & Jake
 Burbamo, Sharon
 Burn, Bob
 Camunez, Joseph
 Davidson, Maggi
 Dresp, Don
 Fortunato, Rae
 Goldbaum, Joy
 Hall, Ken & Nancy
 Kratz, Pat

Lockhart, Louise
 Myers, Barbara Lee
 Pelton, Clifford
 Phillips, Nancy
 Scott, Judith
 Pool, Betty
 Sunsport Solar
 Sutter-Sinden, Marie
 Tate, Donna



2015-2016
is in progress.

Please check your listing and send any changes to

Johnnie Aldrich, Membership
522-1544 or jaldrich@earthlink.net

PROPOSED LOCAL PROGRAM - 2015-2016 - Erika Graf-Webster**NEW AND REVISED POSITIONS**

Education Position (Revised 2014): Upon completion of a study about for-profit charter schools and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics), the Education Committee held a Unit Meeting on November 17, 2014, and the following updates to the position resulted:

1. **Opening paragraph:** insert between first and third sentences, *The League opposes the use of public education funds to support for-profit alternative options for parental choice within the public education system.*
2. **Section 1 - Innovative Practices for Student Success:** Delete Bullet 2 because it was replaced by #1 above.
3. **Section 3 - Evaluation of Teachers, Students and School Performance:**
 - **Bullet 2:** Re-word to read: *Student testing to be used for the purpose of enabling teachers to create timely teaching strategies for the best possible student academic achievement outcomes.*
 - **Bullet 4 -** Re-word to read: *Evaluation of teachers based on achievement of the goals in their performance evaluation plan, significant classroom observations, and some consideration of the overall student academic progress in their classroom.*
4. **Section 4 - Finances and Funding**
 - **Bullet 1 -** Re-word to read: *A state budget process that considers public education as the highest priority.*
 - **Bullet 3 -** Delete because it has been addressed in the opening paragraph (see #1 above)

Election Procedures Position (Revised 2015):

1. **Voting Impediments Study** concluded with a presentation at a Unit Meeting on December 15, 2014. Because the study finding involved the election process, there was consensus that an additional statement be added to the current Election Procedures position (*See Bullet 1 below*).
2. **Update of Election Procedures Position:** Because the position had not been reviewed since 2003, a committee was convened on August 20, 2014, that resulted in the revised position below, which is submitted for member approval:

The League supports:

- *Increased efforts to inform voters of the importance of voting by
 - *participating in special Get Out the VOTE campaigns in election years*
 - *developing and distributing educational materials that explain the voter registration process and why voting is important*
 - *collaborating with community government and non-partisan organizations for the purpose of encouraging voter registration and voting.**
- *Clarification and simplification of options for early and absentee voting procedures. Election officials should send clear notice to the public of the dates on which early voting or absentee voting begins and ends and provide publicity about the location and use of Voting Convenience Centers.*
- *Cooperation and coordination among city, county and school district officials to establish consolidated election dates and the use of common polling places such as the Voting Convenience Centers.*
- *Implementation of mail ballot elections locally for small elections in order to reduce costs and increase voter participation.*

(Continued on page 6)

Proposed Local Program *(Continued from page 5)***New and Revised Positions** (Continued)

Quality of Life (2015, New Position): This two-year study was concluded during a Unit Meeting held on February 23, 2015. There was member consensus and the following position resulted:

League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces supports applying a quality of life and community wellbeing approach when local government engages in planning, development, assessment, and policy decisions. "Quality of Life" is defined as the overall wellbeing of individuals and societies that results from maximizing human capacities and function so that life is led in a way one values.

The League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces supports:

- *Action by government agencies and community organizations that actively pursue social, economic, and environmental initiatives that improve the quality of life for community residents.*
- *Utilizing a comprehensive quality of life approach that includes applying well-defined measures, and that takes into account the diversity and inequality in the community when local government officials undertake comprehensive planning efforts.*
- *Actions that increase civic engagement, particularly voter participation, in the community.*

ADOPTION OF CURRENT POSITIONS

(See pp. 28-35, Membership Directory)

PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR STUDY AND ACTION - 2015-2016

ADOPTION PROCESS

When you are considering recommendations for the programs for study and action, please keep these three questions in mind:

1. Is there widespread member interest?
2. Is this a timely issue?
3. Is government action the most effective way to address this issue?

Adoption Process for Recommended Program:

A study item is recommended by the Board for consideration at Annual Meeting. All recommended items are considered and adopted by majority vote.

Recommended Program by Board of Directors:

Update of the Metropolitan Court Position (2007). The study committee responsible for the current position on this issue suggests that in light of recent developments the original committee undertake a review and update of this position. Two important changes have occurred: (1) the criterion for establishment of a Metropolitan Court (to replace magistrate and municipals courts) was a county population of 200,000. The NM Legislature has raised that number to 250,000. (2) Magistrate judges are required to be attorneys in Class A counties (200,000 plus) under a separate statute. The League's current position recommends that magistrate judges be lawyers, and that criterion has been met. The metropolitan courts, however, have other requirements that differentiate it from magistrate courts. This study proposes to review through research and observations the operation of the current magistrate/municipal court system to determine whether the metropolitan court system would be more effective.

(Continued on page 7)

Program for Study and Action *(Continued from page 6)***Not-Recommended Program by the Board****Adoption Process for Not Recommended Program**

If an item is not recommended by the Board, it may be considered at the Annual Meeting if the membership votes to do so by majority vote, and it may be adopted by a two-thirds vote.

1. **Study Factors (including Voter Suppression) that Hinder Voter Turnout in Doña Ana County.**

The Voter Impediments study identified the factors negatively affecting voter registration numbers, but did not look at the voting process itself. Objectives: Identify the factors that hinder registered voters from actually voting. Identify possible remedies. Identify, if possible, the prevalence of these factors (e.g., what percentage of the voting population is affected). Develop possible remedies, so that voter turnout is increased.

Board voted to NOT RECOMMEND due to lack of interest by members to work on it.

2. **Study the Effect of Different Levels of Government on the Major Factors that Determine Quality of Life.**

Objectives: Using the results from the Quality of Life Study Group, identify the major factors that constitute quality of life for Doña Ana County residents. For each major quality of life factor (e.g., education, health, transportation, etc.) determine the extent of the effect on that factor of each of the following government entities: federal, state, county, city/town/village. *(NOTE: The intent is to focus on the state and the city or county.)* Determine which level of government has the major influence for each factor. Work with Voter Services to develop targeted advertising for major elections, community elections, school board elections, etc., based on highlighting the importance of voting in elections for offices that have the major influence on each QoL factor.

Board voted to NOT RECOMMEND due to lack of interest by members to work on it.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

*Ardyth Norem, Elected Chair, and Sue Cain, Elected Member
Marcia Anderson, Co-Director, Voter Services, and Appointed Board Member*

For Two Year Terms (2015-2017)

President: Gwen Hanson
Treasurer: Ruth Benjamins
Director, Membership: Yvonne Magdalena Flores

For One-Year Term (2015-2016)

Vice-President: Ardyth Norem
Nominating Committee Chair: Ellen Young
Nominating Committee Member: Johnnie Aldrich

Note: Those remaining on the Board to complete the second year of their two-year elected term:

Secretary: Sadie Valverde
Co -Directors of Voter Services: Marcia Anderson and Dale Yeo

INTRODUCING THE PROPOSED NOMINEES (2015-2016)



Gwendolyn (Gwen) Hanson Candidate for President (2015-2017)

Gwen moved to Las Cruces in January 2011, and joined the League for the first time. She is a licensed clinical social worker and has worked in several mental health settings as a

psychotherapist and as a prevention specialist in a large suburban school district. Her MSW degree was earned at the University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work, after completing a BA in Sociology. Prior to moving to New Mexico, she volunteered locally and nationally with the American Red Cross, Disaster Mental Health Services, Greeley and Rapid City Symphony Guilds, and political campaigns in Colorado and South Dakota.

She and her husband Thomas Hanson, M.D. have three married adult daughters, and eight grandchildren. The Hansons were long-time residents of Houston, Texas, where they raised their children and each practiced. She is retired, while her husband, Dr. Hanson, currently practices Internal Medicine-Endocrinology locally.

Gwen has been an active member in the League since joining in 2011 having served as Co-Director of Voter Services (2012-2014) and vice-president (2014-2015).



Ardyth Norem - Candidate for Vice-President (2015-2016)

My lifetime efforts have been directed toward embracing what is positive and good in the pursuit of greater good as I know it.

My past residences include North Dakota, Minnesota, Arizona,

Washington, and New Mexico.

I have a BS in Secondary Education and Speech Therapy, an MA in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling, and a PhD in Social Psychology and Evaluation.

My professional career includes teaching and research in prevention of alcohol and drug abuse among adolescents, and for 25 years I had a counseling and psychotherapy private practice.

I was married for 23 years, have two children, five grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

I am retired and enjoy participating in pro-social committees and causes and am seeking to live a positive and productive life in Las Cruces.

My current interests are education, cosmology, health, and environment. I am excited by intellectual "menus," travel, and life-long learning.

Ruth M. Benjamins – Candidate for Treasurer (2015-2017)

Ruth was born and grew up in Binghamton, New York. After high school, she went to the University of Michigan and received a degree in chemistry. She went to work for Abbott Labs as a radiochemist. Ruth married and moved back to Ann Arbor while her husband completed his PhD in Chemistry. Afterwards, they lived in Wilmington, Delaware, where she became active in the League of Women Voters. When her husband was transferred to a plant in western Michigan, Ruth obtained a certification in secondary education. She then taught chemistry, physics, and mathematics for 25 years.



After retirement, she and Ed, who passed away in 2012, moved to Las Cruces where they have lived for 23 years. She has served as treasurer for the Symphony Guild and for the Las Cruces Branch of AAUW. She is presently the State Finance Officer for AAUW, as well as the treasurer of LWVGLC. She is seeking a third two-year term in office as Treasurer for the League.

Yvonne Magdalena Flores – Candidate for Director of Membership (2015-2017)

Yvonne is originally from El Paso, Texas. When she was a young child, her family moved to Los Angeles (Santa Fe Springs), California, where she experienced orange groves, fragrant gardens and the seashore. The best part of living in California was attending school in the Los Nietos School District. She had a teacher in the third grade, Mrs. Evelyn Marshall, who made all the difference in her life. Because of her, she learned to love the English language and school in general.



Yvonne's parents were active in civic organizations, leading to her father being elected the city's first

Mexican-born mayor, and her mother, an artist, becoming the first Mexican-American president of The Women's Club. They inculcated an education and work ethic which led to all of their five children attending university.

During her university years, Yvonne became active in socio-political issues primarily working on affirmative action, busing, breakfast programs for children in elementary school, and the United Farm Workers of America. This led to her heading for law school. She holds a Juris Doctor from the University of California Hastings College of the Law. After law school, Yvonne was an instructor at Sacramento College, a lecturer at California State University at Sacramento, and a professor at California State University at Northridge. During her sons' early years, she was a substitute teacher for Los Angeles Unified School District, and an active participant in the PTA, chairing the Great Works of Art Program Committee for 11 years, which merited the California PTA Service Award.

As an attorney, she became President of the Mexican-American Bar Association of Los Angeles County, the largest local voluntary Latino Bar in the country, and is a founder of the Latina Lawyers' Bar Association, also in Los Angeles.

Yvonne has two sons. The older, Joaquin, is a political analyst residing in Belgrade, Serbia, and is working towards his PhD in economics. The younger, Gordon, is the resident illustrator for a fashion house in Paris, France, where he resides.

Las Cruces became her home in October, 2012, after retiring from the practice of law. She loves the beauty of the Organ Mountains.

Ellen Young - Candidate for Chair, Nominating Committee (2015-2016)

Ellen joined the League soon after she moved to Las Cruces in 2004. It was high time, since she had been depending on League *Voters' Guides* all of her voting life. Before joining the League, most of her political activity was through church activities on hunger and justice issues. While she lived near Philadelphia, she went to Washington, D.C., for rallies about Central America, Jubilee and the Ribbon Project.

Ellen was born and raised in California, except for two years when her father had Fulbright grants to teach in Egypt and Rome. She went east to Radcliffe for college and has done post college study in Archaeology and American Religions. She and her husband Peter spent 38 years near Philadelphia. They have two grown sons; no expectation of grandchildren.



Ellen published a biography, *John Emerson Roberts: Kansas City's Up-to-date Freethought Preacher* in 2011. Since then her work has been in poetry. In addition to writing, she is an editor of *Sin Fronteras Journal*, runs its website, and blogs at www.freethoughtandmetaphor.com. She is also currently serving as President of the Library Advisory Board.

Johnnie Aldrich - Candidate for Elected Member, Nominating Committee (2015-2016)

Johnnie, a life-long "political junkie," did not join the League until she moved to Las Cruces in 2002. She retired from a 30-year career teaching English and Spanish that year and suddenly had time for political activism, golf, and crossword puzzles. She also serves as an election poll worker and volunteers as a tax preparer with the Tax Aid for the Low Income and Elderly, a program sponsored by both AARP and the IRS.



Johnnie has served on LWVGLC Board as Secretary and Membership Director and as Membership Director for LWVNM. She rarely misses a candidates forum and loves working voter registration events.

Primarily because of teaching assignments with the University of Maryland University College Overseas Division, Johnnie has traveled in 50 countries, living for at least nine weeks in six of the 50. She's glad to be back home in the U.S.A. and is now focused on getting to know all 50 states. Her 11 years of community college teaching in Memphis, Tennessee, gave her ample opportunity to explore the Southeast before coming to the aridity (and wind) of the Southwest and the Mesilla Valley. Only Hawaii, Michigan, and Minnesota remain on her "bucket list" of unvisited states.

Unmarried, Johnnie has no children of her own, but looks forward to annual family events in Texas that let her renew acquaintance with numerous nieces and nephews and their children

*With much gratitude
to those who volunteered
to serve. Thank you!*

YEAR-END REPORTS - 2014-2015



President's Message

The State of Our League

As with many other "State of ..." addresses, I'll start by saying the state of our League is strong. Our financial position is stable and good, and we expect that to

continue in the near future. We have seen a 10 per cent growth in membership during the past year.

We accomplished a great deal during this year, and we have a lot to be proud of. The community (and some state officials) have recognized our efforts, which is very satisfying.

I again extend my thanks to the membership for giving me the honor of being your President. It has been an educational and very rewarding experience for me. I am so proud of our League, our reputation and our community involvement.

Here are some highlights of the year:

Voter Services: From the start of September through March, our Voter Services team has performed exceptionally. We held three Candidate Forums before the general election, as well as publishing a *Voters Guide*. The *Voters Guide* was so popular that we ran out of copies before the election. We then went on to hold a Candidate Forum for the Las Cruces Public School Board election, and received some nice, positive feedback on this as well. Finally, we completed a new version of the *Who's Who* (it's only done every other year), which is on our website and has been distributed. I commend the Voter Services team – our League really shone in this area.

Our Membership Meetings: Whether it was a lunch or a late afternoon social, we had good attendance at our monthly Lunch with a Leader membership meetings. These meetings offer good food and the opportunity to learn about what is going on in the community. We had some very good speakers this year, from State Representative Bill McCamley in May 2014, through ACLU Policy Advocate Brian Erickson this March. If you don't usually attend the luncheons, you should give them a try – they are full of good information, intelligent conversations and questions, and they are truly enjoyable.

Keeping up with the Community: Many of our members attend as observers at a variety of community meetings, including the Las Cruces School Board, the South Central Solid Waste Authority, the Ratepayer Advisory Committee, the Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority, the Children's Reading Foundation, the City Council, the County Commission, ACLU's Regional Center for Border Rights, and a variety of meetings dealing with water issues.

One of the more frustrating community observer activities was the monitoring of the discussions in City Council meetings about the establishment of a new minimum wage. A large number of community residents spoke for or against the minimum wage issue, and there was considerable disagreement among the Councilors. We, the League, could not advocate for or against this issue, because at that time the League had no position on minimum wage (our state League now has one). So all we could do was observe from the sidelines – it was frustrating!

Doing Studies, Developing New or Revised Positions

Besides Voter Services, this is our most important work. Two complete studies and one mini study were completed this year, including the multi-year Voting Impediments and Quality of Life studies. Voting Impediments was focused on identifying the reasons why a majority of Hispanic citizens in Doña Ana County were not registering to vote. This study resulted in a recommendation for a revision of the Election Procedures position. The Quality of Life study produced a brand new position that enables the League to advocate on issues that affect the wellbeing of county residents. The Education Committee did a mini-study of for-profit virtual charter schools, STEM education efforts, and the manner in which teachers are evaluated. It resulted in a recommended update to our Education position. All three new or revised positions are printed in this *VOTER* (see pp. 5-6), and will be voted on by the membership at the Annual Meeting.

Building Relationships

A lot of my personal effort during this year was devoted to establishing and building relationships with other organizations. In each case, we think that

(Continued on page 11)

President's Message *(Continued from page 10)*

collaborating with these organizations will promote the League and its mission, will help the partner organizations with their goals, and will be of benefit to the community. With the Bureau of Elections, we promoted a new approach (a Fiesta) for getting voters registered, and will be working with them to develop new voter education materials both in video and document form. We partnered with CAFé in developing a Spanish version of the *Voters Guide*, and providing simultaneous Spanish translation at our candidate forums. We have met several times with the Ocotillo Institute and its Empowerment Congress, and are continuing to develop collaborative efforts (for example, teaching a session at their Leadership Academy) in some quality-of-life areas. Our relationship with KRWG, led by our Education Committee, has been ongoing for two or three years, and we have had the opportunity to develop and present shows and show segments about education issues. In addition, KRWG has agreed to produce professional videos with us that address voter registration and the voting process. They are already running 30-second Public Service Announcements about the importance of voting. Finally, Sue Cain has been our representative on ACLU's Southern NM Immigration Task Force. This committee's mission is to help documented and undocumented immigrants to make sense out of the changing immigration laws and executive orders, and to help them with their living situations in our community.

Building League Visibility

A great deal of the achievement of greater League visibility is due to our Education Committee. Their mini-study, described above, and the resulting letters to legislators received statewide notice, and was also covered in the local newspapers. In addition, the KRWG programming developed in partnership between the League and KRWG, served to bring us to the attention of the community. Further, the League's 95th Birthday resulted in proclamations by both the City Council and the County Commission, and was covered in both of the local newspapers.

Constraints and Priorities

There are **a LOT** of issues that we are interested in and **a LOT** of things that we would like to do, but the reality is that the working corps of the League, i.e., the **active** members, is actually quite small, roughly a quarter of the entire membership. This leaves us

quite shorthanded in a number of the areas that we would like to pursue. Our committees generally only have a handful of members, and repeated requests for additional volunteers have had poor results. The League's leadership has recognized that we simply cannot do everything we would like to do.

We determined that we had to prioritize our advocacy efforts. The Board and the chairs of the committees agreed on four priority items for advocacy: Affordable Housing, Health, Education, and Water. Fact sheets for these priorities were developed, and, under the leadership of our Vice President Gwen Hanson, were assembled into packets. These packets were provided to the local NM legislators – in person, if they attended our Legislative Breakfast, or by mail. We think the packets were well received.

Looking to the Future

The new Board of Directors will set the program and action for the League for the next year. Here are a few recommendations to consider: (1) Think of new and different approaches to increasing membership, especially attracting young women and men, (2) Do more and better outreach to the Hispanic community (they are 66% of our county!), and (3) Embrace and fully utilize social media.

Erika

Membership - *Johnnie Aldrich, Director*

LWVGLC is in "Growth Mode," to use some 21st-century language. Our 2014 total membership at this time last year was 73. As of 15 March, our total membership stands at 81.

I'm delighted to report that many of these newcomers already are active supporters. They have attended the new member orientation (in November, 2014), our regular second Monday of the month luncheons, unit meetings, and even League Day at the Legislature in February. Two joined us at the Immigration Hearings in Federal Court in March.

How do we account for this growth? Some are newcomers in town in search of a way to get unbiased information about our community and meet like-minded people. One is a recent retiree who wants to continue contributing to the community. At least two that I know of attended the Board of Education Candidates Forum and were approached there by members with application forms in hand.

(Continued on page 12)

Membership *(Continued from page 11)*

Most of our new members, however, are with us because present members invited them to meetings or other activities. That final reason, fellow Leaguers, is the secret, pure and simple. My profound thanks to all of you who have helped advance our cause during the past year.

I predict that we can look forward to a splendidly active 2015.

Voter Services

Marcia Anderson and Dale Yeo, Co-Directors

Voter Service has been busy in 2014-2015 with four public candidates forums, a *Voters Guide*, updating the Who's Who and voter registration activities.

Candidates Forums: In September LWVGLC held a Candidates Forum for the offices of New Mexico Attorney General and Public Regulations Commissioner. October saw League hosting two Candidates Forums; one for Magistrate Court Judges and Doña Ana County offices, and one for the New Mexico House of Representatives. In February we hosted a forum for candidates for two positions on the Las Cruces Public Schools (LCPS) Board of education. For school board forums all candidates except one were able to attend and participate. The forums were broadcast live, and rebroadcast periodically on the City of Las Cruces Television on Comcast Channel 20 and rebroadcast periodically until the election. The forums were coordinated by Marcia Anderson and Dale Yeo with help from many other League members.

Publications: In October the League issued questions to candidates, collected responses, formatted and proofread them and submitted them to the Las Cruces Sun-News for publication of a *Voters Guide*. This 10-page project, spearheaded by Dale Yeo, featured 57 candidates, five Constitutional Amendments, three bond issues and one Gross Receipts Tax question. The newspaper inserted them in a Sunday edition of the newspaper and League members distributed an additional 3,500 copies throughout the County.

The updated publication of **Who's Who** was also developed and led by the expertise of Dale Yeo in March. League members compiled and verified information and the process of distributing 7,000 copies is ongoing.

Voter Registration: Voter registration activities were coordinated by Marjorie Burr and Johnnie Aldrich. About 12 League members who are certified registrars staffed registration tables at public schools, DACC, and NMSU. We cooperated with the County Clerk's office at a registration fiesta at Young Park and also registered voters at other community events from August through October. In all, the League registered about 35 voters before the general election in November 2014.

STUDY AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Affordable Housing

Christina Little and Vicki Simons, Co-Chairs

Committee Members: Vicki Simons and Chris Little, co-chairs, plus Jane Carter and Charlotte McCarthy. We welcome new members.

The Committee activity has been low during the past year. Vicki has continued to attend the meetings of the Mesilla Valley Housing Authority and to submit Observer Reports to The *VOTER*. There was an Affordable Housing Work Session in October 2014. Progress has been modest. The 2011-2015

Consolidated Plan had estimated a shortage of approximately 4,700 affordable rental units in the City. The staff report of the city's efforts covered the last three years and showed the addition of 42 tenant-based rental assistances units, 26 property acquisitions/new construction, and 10 down payment assistance actions. In addition, there has been some progress in developing the Land Bank and Trust Fund.

The Committee prepared an information position paper on the need for Affordable Housing that was

(Continued on page 13)

Affordable Housing *(Continued from page 12)*

presented to Legislators at the December Legislative Breakfast.

For 2015, the Committee anticipates the following activities:

- Continue to monitor affordable housing at the local level.
- Prepare reports on the Mesilla Valley Housing Authority. Beth Bardwell, a Housing Authority Commissioner, will be submitting these articles to *The VOTER*.
- Be aware of possible changes in funds for Section 8 and other HUD programs, since the Obama Administration is talking about revisiting sequestration.
- Follow the development of the City of Las Cruces 2016-2020 Consolidated Plan.
- Monitor the hoped-for creation of a Citizen's Advisory Committee to oversee the Land Bank and Trust Fund. This group will need to develop policies and procedures for the use of these tools.
- Be aware of possible expansion within the community of "Housing First," a model that is increasingly employed throughout the United States. The Community of Hope does have two residences that follow this pattern. There is the possibility that more permanent structures will be constructed for the population living at Camp Hope.

Education

Committee Members: Ruth Benjamins and Bonnie Burn, co-chairs, Jane Asche, Sue Cain, Mildred Evaskovich, Barbara Goedecke, Anita Hernandez, Sadie Valverde, and Bonnie Votaw.

Accomplishments: The Las Cruces Public School Board of Education meetings were observed by members of this committee beginning in August at the start of the new school year. Thank you to Sadie Valverde, Sue Cain, Jane Asche, Bonnie Burn and Anita Hernandez. Members of the committee participated in or attended the League sponsored Las Cruces Public School Board of Education Candidates Forum on January 21, 2015.

The committee was relatively active this year, although only three meetings were held: May 29,

2014, August 18, 2014, and November 11, 2014. The major focus of work was as follows:

- **For-Profit Virtual Charter Schools: Literature Review and Report** was distributed widely to elected officials, LCPS board members and top administrators, NEA - Las Cruces, and the NM Legislative Education Study (LESC) Committee. There were responses to the paper from U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich's office and Public Education Commissioners Gene Gant, Jeff Carr, and Carolyn Shearman, chair. Two op-ed article, *Virtual Schools Should not be Profit Centers*, and *The Professional Teacher and Virtual Education* were published in the Las Cruces Sun-News and the Las Cruces Bulletin. KRWG-TV posited the op-eds on its newly created web feature, Local Viewpoint. A Unit Meeting was held on November 17, 2014, to update members about the for-profit study and **STEM** education that is ongoing in the community. The unit meeting resulted in some modifications to the education position adopted in 2012 (see p. 5).
- The League sent a letter to **NM Attorney General Gary King** asking him to investigate the award of a contract to K 12Inc, a for-profit education management company, to operate the New Mexico Virtual Academy, Farmington, NM. Mr. King found that the K 12Inc. contract violated the guidelines for operating a charter school in NM and the NM procurement codes.
- **Education Issue Fact Sheets** were developed and given to NM Legislators at the League's Legislative Breakfast Meeting. The priority issues we are following during the 2015 Legislative Session are: funding for early childhood education, funding for public schools, and student testing, teacher evaluation, and school grading.
- **The League and KRWG-TV** began collaborating to present a series of 30-minute programs on educational issues. *Fronteras - A Changing America* will be airing the series, and Antony Moreno will be moderating the programs. The first show was aired on October 23. The topic was teacher evaluation. Jane Asche presented for the League. The next program, *Blended Learning Part 1*, aired February 19 and involved blending professional teaching with computer

(Continued on page 14)

Education (Continued from page 13)

learning. This show featured presenters from LCPS high schools. *Blended Learning Part 2* involves professional teachers and computer learning at the elementary level. Presenters will be from LCPS and the League. Additional programs are planned for the near future.

FY 2015-2016: The committee is going to continue to be active, monitoring the "hot button" education issues and taking advocacy action as needed. At this time we are not planning further studies but at the pace at which education is moving, we may have to review our current position sometime during the next year. Bonnie Burn has stepped down as co-chair. Members will function as a committee and Ruth Benjamins accepted the responsibility of contact person.

Election Procedures

Committee Members: Ardyth Norem and Barbara Goedecke, co-chairs, Shirley Armstrong, Yvonne Magdalena Flores, Barbara Goedecke, Erika Graf-Webster, Roberta Gran, Gwen Hanson, and Rosemary Sanchez.

The Election Procedures committee was first convened on August 20, 2014. The first objective and achievement of the committee was to draft a revision of the Election Procedures Position. This draft was revised several times and was approved by the committee on January 20, 2015. The approved proposal was submitted to the LWVGLC board on February 4, 2015, and once again revised. The revised position from February 4 will be submitted for approval at the annual meeting on April 18, 2015.

The secondary objective of this committee is to design and implement voter orientation materials with a focus on first time and infrequent voters. The committee will also be seeking ways to distribute these materials.

To implement the secondary objective, Erika Graf-Webster initiated a series of contacts with community persons central to creating and distributing voter orientation materials. These materials are to be designed to initiate greater voter participation and empowerment. The designated information may include the following.

- Location of polling places
- Importance of voting
- Orientation to the process of voting
- Review of ballot formats and how to complete them
- English and Spanish versions of materials generated.
- Strategies for wide dissemination of educational materials
- Utilization of a spectrum of media to carry the messages.

This and other efforts will be implemented through the use of television, radio, newspaper, and the Internet. Contacts and initial planning have been made to date with respect to public television.

HEALTH CARE

Committee Members: Vicki Simons, chair, Sue Cain and Judith La Pointe

The Health Care Committee met in December, 2014, with members of Health Security for New Mexicans (HSNM). We decided to support the Health Security Bill in the 2015 NM Legislative Session (HSNM is Senate Bill 152). It successfully moved out of the Senate Public Affairs Committee but received a "do not pass" from the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The Committee proposes that we monitor the health care reform situation and keep members posted. There will be several uncertainties in the coming year:

1. Will the U.S. Supreme Court effectively invalidate the Affordable Care Act (ACA)?
2. What will NM do about setting up a state insurance exchange? The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services rejected New Mexico's application for more money to continue this process, and the state has no money to do so without more allocations from the NM Legislature. If the ACA no longer can grant subsidies through the federal health insurance exchange and New Mexico has no exchange, many more New Mexicans will lose their insurance.

We will not be an active committee in 2015, but a standing committee.

(Continued on page 15)

Study and Committee Reports *(Continued from page 14)*

Quality of Life and Well-Being in Doña Ana County

Committee Members: Cynthia Pelak, Chair, Shirley Armstrong, Jane Asche, Gwen Hanson, and Dale Yeo

The Quality of Life & Well-Being (QoL) study was adopted at the Leagues 2013 Annual Meeting, and the study period was extended at the 2014 Annual Meeting. The original impetus of the study was the growing activity and initiatives of private and public entities in the county related to enhancing the QoL in the region. These actions included the 2013 Las Cruces community survey that asked residents to assess their satisfaction with city services and to share their perceptions and behaviors regarding their quality of life, including their civic participation.

Over the course of 2013 and 2014, the QoL study committee completed its research and finalized its study report. The study committee consulted the academic literature on the global QoL movement and interviewed local community leaders to understand how the QoL approach was being applied in Doña Ana County. The final QoL report was authored by Cynthia Pelak, Jane Asche, Joy Goldbaum, and Dale Yeo, with contributions from Shirley Armstrong, Ruth Benjamins, and Gwen Hanson. The report is organized in six parts: an introduction; definitions and brief history of quality-of-life models; popular QoL measurements and indices; the applications of quality-of-life models in Doña Ana County; measurements of civic engagement as a dimension of QoL in Doña Ana County; and the study summary and recommendations. The final study report is available at http://www.lwvglc.org/documents/lwvglc_qol_final2_2015.pdf.

During January 2015, the committee developed a set of consensus questions based on the recommendations of the study, and then, on February 23, 2015, the QoL study committee (represented by Cynthia Pelak, Jane Ashe, Dale Yeo and Shirley Armstrong) held a unit meeting to educate the LWVGLC membership on the study and to engage the consensus process for the study. The members present at the unit meeting voted unanimously to support the findings and recommendations of the study and urged the QoL committee to develop a LWVGLC policy position

related to the quality of life and well-being in Doña Ana County. The study committee, with the assistance of Erika Graf-Webster and Bonnie Burn, developed a position that will be presented for adoption at the Annual Meeting on April 18, 2015 (see p. 6).

Voting Impediments

Committee Members: Erika Graf-Webster and Roberta Gran

As reported in The VOTER, February 2015, the Voting Impediments Study is concluded. A unit meeting was held on December 15, 2014, at which members accepted the findings of the study and supported the recommendations to be included as statements in the current Election Procedures position. The recommendations included increased efforts to inform voters of the importance of voting by participating in special Get Out the VOTE campaigns in election years, developing and distributing educational materials that explains the voter registration process and why voting is important, and collaborating with community government and non-partisan organizations for the purpose of encouraging voter registration and voting. The recommendations were approved at the February 5, 2015, Board Meeting and are presented for membership approval (p. 5, Election Procedures Position) at the Annual Meeting.

Water Interest Group

Group Members: Kurt Anderson, Beth Bardwell, Jane Carter, Win Jacobs, Jim and Marnie Leverett, William Little, and Sharon Thomas. Members are active in watching developments in water through affiliations with various organizations.

This year's outreach efforts that consisted of learning through dialog and offers to facilitate public education were extended to the City of Las Cruces, Elephant Butte Irrigation District (EBID), Lower Rio Grande Water Users, Office of State Engineer, Viva Doña Ana, Dr. Phillip King, NMSU and EBID, New Mexico First, and Joint Land Use Study.

During this year we developed a data base of information sources and an understanding of (a) the storm water plans for the City of Las Cruces shared

(Continued on page 16)

Water Interest Group *(Continued from page 15)*

by Sharon Thomas, former Councilor, City of Las Cruces; (b) regional hydrology reviewed by Dr. Phil King; and (c) outlook about the immediate future of water for our area presented by Dr. Eric Fuchs. Group members experienced a renewed appreciation of the League as a participant of standing in water discussions, both with the City of Las Cruces Utilities and EBID.

We participated in various water interest groups such as:

- Town Hall sponsored by New Mexico First on April 15-16, 2014.
- "New Mexico's Water Future: Connecting Stakeholder Needs to Water Information," sponsored by NMSU's Water Resources Research Institute, November 18-19, 2014.
- Lower Rio Grande Water Users work groups to help the Interstate Stream Commission draft revisions.

Several important questions remain open. For example, the outcome of the Texas/New Mexico water law suits is now in the hands of the special master appointed by the U.S Supreme Court; continuing consideration of the Gila River diversion project and the Augustin Plains sale; funding of science necessary to find and maximize every drop of water; changes in lifestyle necessitated by continuing aridity of our region; and engaging the community. Members of the League's water group are well represented across various affiliations that have specific charges regarding these questions.

The group will continue to observe and report about water issues but will not form a separate study group.

Membership Directory 2014-2015
Updated

Please add these members who joined after the 2014-2015 Membership Directory was printed.

Butler, Oscar Vasquez (575) 541-3436
6480 Grape Vineyard Rd. (575) 203-9534 (C)
Las Cruces, 88007
Email: oscarvbutler@gmail.com

Garrett, Bea (575) 382-0010
P.O. Box 6688, Las Cruces, 88006
Email: bea_garrett@yahoo.com

Flores, Yvonne Magdalena (575) 521-3980
1173 Cave Spring Trail (818) 458-7480 (C)
Las Cruces, 88011
Email: yvonnevavoom@aol.com

Litts, Mary (319) 330-5755 (C)
1890 Palm Canyon Dr., Las Cruces, 88011
Email: marylitts2yahoo.com

Sanchez, Rosemarie (575) 650-3545 (C)
3931 Tiger Woods, Las Cruces, 88011
Email: rmelon@nmsu.edu

Shoemaker, Sharon (575) 202-3231 (C)
201 W. Lucero, Las Cruces 88005
Email: shoemaker714@gmail.com

Sorg, Christine & Gill (575) 358-3773
1140 Hermosillo Dr., Las Cruces, 88005
Email: christiesorg@gmail.com

Walker-Riggs, Judith (575) 312-3526
3049 Buena Vida Circle (#303), Las Cruces, 88011
Email: revjwrnm@yahoo.com

New Email Address:

Yeo, Dale y.dale43@gmail.com

Telephone Number Corrections

Bonnie Burn (575) 526-0013
Beth Bardwell (575) 418-0288 (C)
Jon Holtzman (575) 621-7380 (C)
Charlotte Lipson (575) 527-4083



Lunch with a Leader - March 9, 2015
Out of Focus: Our Values, Rights and Laws on the U.S.-Mexican Border
Brian Erickson, Policy Advocate, American Civil Liberties Union
Reported by Yvonne Magdalena Flores

On March 9, 2015, the League hosted guest speaker Brian Erickson who is the Policy Advocate from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) New Mexico Regional Center for Border Rights ("Center") located in Las Cruces.

Mr. Erickson opened his presentation by stressing that the Center focuses on equality and fairness regarding immigration enforcement. He stated that Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is comprised of border patrol agents (green uniforms at check points which are up to 50 miles inland per immigration laws enacted in the 1950s and blue uniforms which are in field operations). There are two other departments in immigration enforcement which were not discussed. He focused exclusively on the actions of border patrol agents of the CBP and the impact these actions have on individuals and families. The CBP alone is the largest law enforcement agency in the U.S. with 21,370 agents of which 85% are assigned to the border between the U.S. and Mexico border. This means there are 10 patrol agents per linear mile along this border so "to say that nothing is done at the border, is far from the truth," said Mr. Erickson.

The Center is engaged in the issue of family unification and helping families who have been torn apart. Mr. Erickson gave several real life stories of families experiencing unnecessary stops and questioning due to racial profiling. He recited a story of Esperanza who had immigrated with her young son. At age 16, her son who was by then a high school student here in the U.S. and also worked in the chile fields was deported, and the family has been separated since then. There were other stories of border actions which resulted in summary deportations.

Summary deportations are accomplished without the benefit of a judicial hearing or counsel. In fact, there is no right to counsel even if a hearing is available. Summary deportations, in many cases, mean that the deportee is banned from ever immigrating to the U.S. At states bordering Mexico, immigrants are treated differently than U.S. citizens. Racial profiling is okay to do, which means someone can be pulled over and summarily deported.

Prevention through deterrence would be a solution to the many deaths caused by CBP. As of December 12, 2013, the reported deaths at the hands of CBP agents have been 42, about 12 of those being U.S. citizens. Some of those were young children and some were still in Mexico. Most notably was the death of Jose Antonio Elena Rodriguez, a 16 year old, who was in Nogales, Mexico, at the time he was killed by an agent of CBP. Mr. Erickson further stated that there is no transparency and that former CBP Internal Affairs Director, James F. Tomsheck, said, "most agents were not fit to carry a gun."

Mr. Erickson reported that there is some progress. A think tank in Washington, D.C., Police Executive Reform, found that agents put themselves in harm's way and should back off to de-escalate the situation when rocks are being thrown at them. Although there has been a national dialogue regarding the marches in Selma, Ferguson, and New York concerning law enforcement policies, border patrol is left out of this conversation. Community members [Latinos] have to prove who they are regarding the right to be in the U.S. He stated that racial profiling is wrong and that it should be banned.

His presentation ended with a request that letters be sent to President Obama to state: (1) there is a need for oversight, accountability, and transparency regarding CBP; (2) complain to Homeland Security; and (3) body worn cameras are necessary.

In response to questions from the floor, Mr. Erickson answered:

1. Operation Stonegarden, a Homeland Security Program, has provided \$1,000,000 to Doña County to pay the sheriff's department to enforce immigration laws. Peter Ossorio, League member, suggested communicating with Doña Ana County Sheriff Kiki Vigil.
2. The Artesia Detention Facility in New Mexico closed in December 2014. Detainees were moved to Texas. It had 90 beds prior to last summer, and the need is now closer to 3,000

(Continued on page 22)

Appendix

**League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces
2014 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
April 26, 2014, 9:00 a.m. Noon
Good Samaritan Village, Creative Arts Room, Las Cruces, NM**

Attendees: 20 (List on File)

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by President Erika Graf-Webster at 9:40 am. All members present introduced themselves.

MEETING ADMINISTRATION

Appointment of Minutes Readers: Charlotte McCarthy and Gracia Class agreed to read the minutes, which will not be published until the 2015 *Annual Meeting VOTER*.

Appointment of Parliamentarian: William Little will serve as parliamentarian.

Business Rules: the Business Rules were published on page 2 of the *VOTER*. These were adopted by acclamation.

Changes in Agenda: There were no changes in the agenda.

Approval of the 2013 Annual Meeting Minutes: These were published on pages 17-19 in the *2014 Annual Meeting VOTER*. Kurt Anderson moved and Judith LaPointe seconded the motion to approve the minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's: The Operating Budget (with which the League conducts business) shows total income of \$6,854 and total expenditures of \$6,986. Income was \$1,258 less than had been budgeted. Expenditures were \$1,126 less than had been budgeted. The checkbook balance is approximately \$6,000.

The Education Fund (which can be used to finance educational projects such as the Voters Guide) started the year with a balance of \$1,832 and ended the year with a balance of \$3,612. No funds were expended from the Education Fund because LWVGLC received a very favorable contract from the *Las Cruces Sun-News*, and costs for the Municipal Election Voters Guide were paid out of the operating fund.

Kurt Anderson moved and Judith LaPointe seconded a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion carried unanimously.

President's Report: Erika reported a very successful year. Membership has increased by approximately 10 members. The organization is in sound financial condition. LWVGLC successfully hosted the State Convention. Both Voters Guides and Candidates Forums were done for the City of Las Cruces Municipal election. A Candidates Forum was held for the Town of Mesilla. The Education Committee participated in a televised forum on Education. The Education committee wrote a letter to the New Mexico Attorney General questioning the legality of a for-profit on-line only charter school established in Farmington. Attorney General King is now following up.

A retreat was held in November 2013 that resulted in both a short term and a long term strategic plan. As a result of the retreat, the League now has a "buddy" system for new members, informal discussions called "Talk Abouts" have been initiated (first one on water), committee chairs will be asked to briefly update the

(Continued on page 19)

Annual Meeting Minutes *(Continued from page 18)*

membership at each Lunch With A Leader meeting, and a survey is being conducted of all members to get their feedback on how the League is doing.

There were some areas of disappointment. Erika continues to search for ways to foster more member participation. Jane Asche suggested that new members be actively recruited to participate in the Talk Abouts. Dale Yeo recommended that tasks be broken into smaller components, so members can more easily accomplish them.

The other area of concern for Erika is increasing the depth of knowledge of members in areas where the League currently has positions. Examples include health, mental health, and water.

Erika recognized the following people who made substantial contributions to LWVGLC during the past year and presented them with a small gift: Bonnie Burn, Sue Cain, Gracia Class, Roberta Gran, Gwen Hanson, Christina Little, and Dale Yeo. At the same time, the membership thanked Erika Graf-Webster for the excellent job she has been doing as president.

ANNUAL MEETING BUSINESS

Adoption of the Nonpartisanship Policy: This is found on pages 18 and 19 of the 2013-2014 Membership Directory. Basically the policy affirms that the League is a political but not a partisan organization. It never supports or opposes candidates. However, after study, the organization does come to member agreement and take positions on issues. Kurt Anderson moved and Dale Yeo seconded a motion to approve the Nonpartisanship Policy. Motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of the Bylaws: The Bylaws are found on pages 20-27 of the 2013-2014 Membership Directory. Two proposed Bylaw changes are found on page 2 of the 2014 Annual Meeting VOTER. The first proposed Bylaw change adds the following words to Article V, Section 5. The Treasurer, "The records of the treasurer shall be reviewed annually at the end of the fiscal year." The second change is in Article VIII, Report of the Nominating Committee. This would change the requirement that the slate of officers be sent to all members two weeks (as opposed to 30 days) before the Annual Meeting. Marjorie Burr pointed out that there is a similar requirement in the Bylaws that Program be sent to

members 30 days before the Annual Meeting. This will have to be dealt with in a subsequent Annual Meeting (Article IX, Section, 3 b). Kurt Anderson moved and Dale Yeo seconded a motion that the Bylaw changes proposed in the VOTER be adopted. Motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of the Proposed 2014-2015 Operating Budget: The proposed budget along with explanatory comments is found on page 3 of the 2014 Annual Meeting VOTER. The proposed budget calls for income and expenditures of \$9,045. This is an increase of nearly \$1,000 over the current year and is necessary because of the costs of lodging for two delegates to the LWVUS Convention. There is \$750 in the budget for a Website Upgrade. This will be for the professional services of Heather Kurtz, who has designed the underlying structure. She will be available to help Dale Yeo with future modifications. William Little moved and Gracia Class seconded a motion to approve the proposed Operating Budget. Motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of the Proposed 2014-2015 Education Budget: This is printed on page 4 of the 2014 Annual Meeting VOTER. The proposed budget calls for income and expenditures of \$4,800. After sending a Request for Proposal to both the *Las Cruces Bulletin* and the *Las Cruces Sun-News*, the Board was able to negotiate a very favorable contract with the *Sun-News* for the printing of both the 2013 Municipal and 2014 General Election Voters Guides, the *Who's Who*, and four quarter-page advertisements. The total cost for these publications is \$1,800. Roberta Gran moved and Kurt Anderson seconded a motion to approve the Education Fund budget as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR STUDY AND ACTION

– Marjorie Burr handled this portion of the meeting. As Marjorie explained, no new program items have been proposed for consideration by the members at the Annual Meeting. The Bylaws (Article IX, Section e, 1 and 2 printed below) provide for some flexibility during the year.

e. Changes in the adopted Program may be made provided that:

1. *Information concerning the proposed changes has been sent to all members at least two weeks prior to a general*

(Continued on page 20)

Annual Meeting Minutes *((Continued from page 19)*

membership meeting at which the change is to be discussed, and

2. *Final action by the membership is made in a succeeding meeting.*

There was discussion about whether it was necessary to have a formal study before changing an existing position. The recommendation was that any change probably requires a study, though this might be an abbreviated study. Certainly, any change needs to be presented to the Board of Directors and then to the members at a general membership meeting. Additionally, the membership needs to be informed about the reason for and implications of the proposed change.

Adoption of Current Statements of Positions:

Marjorie read through these, which are printed on pages 28-35 of the *2013 Membership Directory*. In some cases, there was discussion which is noted in the minutes.

- Affordable Housing
- Education – Bonnie Burn explained that the Education Committee is not anticipating changing the position. However, in the fall there may be meetings on For-Profit On-Line Charter Schools and on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Education. It is possible that the Committee may feel that minor changes in the position are appropriate. If so, these will be presented next year.
- Mental Health Services in Doña Ana County
- Solid Waste Recycling – Johnnie Aldrich left brochures for distribution on recycling, including directions for glass recycling.
- Metropolitan Court – No change is needed. Doña Ana County does not have a Metropolitan Court. Marjorie Burr commented that, except for one “grand-fathered” individual, all candidates for the Municipal Court are attorneys.
- Branigan Library
- County Government
- Election Procedures – This position will be updated at the end of the Voting Impediments Study.
- Health Care in Doña Ana County – Sue Cain brought up Health Security for New Mexicans. This group is working on developing a single payer health care plan for New Mexico (allowed under the Affordable Care Act). Vicki Simons worked on the Health Security campaign for nine years. She quit because she did not think the plan was politically viable. However, perhaps the situation has changed

with the flawed rollout of the Affordable Health Care Act in New Mexico. Sue, Vicki, and Judith LaPointe volunteered to be on a committee to monitor the situation. Ardyth Norem is also possibly interested.

- Land Use Planning – Attention should be paid to this position. Both the City and County are working on new comprehensive plans. Both are going to look very different than previous plans because they will have an emphasis on form-based codes and smart growth techniques.
- Municipal Elections
- Water – Kurt Anderson, Marjorie Burr, Jane Carter, and Sharon Thomas expressed interest in serving as an on-going Water Committee. They will examine the present position, become informed about current conditions, and possibly recommend an update in the position. Win Jacobs, who was not at the meeting, is also interested in participating on this committee.

Marjorie Burr moved and Gracia Class seconded a motion to adopt the current positions. Motion carried unanimously.

Adoption of Recommended On-going Program:

Marjorie explained that there are two ongoing studies.

Quality of Life and Well Being in Doña Ana County Study

Cynthia Pelak discussed the Quality of Life and Well Being in Doña Ana County Study. The study began in the spring of 2013 with a literature review. In the fall, interviews were conducted with government officials and leaders of nonprofits. The first draft of a report was written. At its next meeting the Committee clarified the process going forward. Two goals were established: The first goal is to educate League members on the current concept of Quality of Life and how it is being acted upon by the community. The second goal is to make recommendations about how the LWVGLC can promote community engagement, which is one of the indicators that impacts quality of life. There are several organizations interested in preparing a Quality of Life Annual Report. Among them is the Ocotillo Institute for Social Justice which has identified eight areas that make up quality of life. One of these is civic participation and community engagement. Bonnie Burn and Cynthia Pelak have been invited to serve on this committee. The group will develop indicators of civic participation.

During the rest of the summer, the Committee will

(Continued on page 21)

Annual Meeting Minutes *(Continued from page 20)*

work on a report, may schedule additional interviews, and will plan unit meetings for the fall. Consensus questions will be developed, and there should be an adopted position by the spring of 2015.

Sue Cain moved and Bonnie Burn seconded a motion that the Quality of Life and Well Being in Doña Ana County be continued for 2014-2015. Motion carried unanimously.

Voting Impediments Study

Roberta Gran reported that the Committee is finishing the second year of the study, which focused on the development of a survey (both in English and Spanish) which was administered in public places (such as Walmart and a church), at all Government 101 classes at NMSU and Constitutional Law classes conducted by Peter Ossorio at NMSU, and at the New American High School. Two hundred surveys were collected. Based on the information obtained, a database was created, and a report is being written.

The report focuses on the voting patterns of minorities. Fewer than 50% of the Hispanic citizens are registered to vote. The results of the survey suggest that this is largely due to lack of knowledge. People do not know that they need to register, how to register, etc. A significant number of people are simply not interested.

Next steps include finishing the report, meeting with Lynn Ellins, developing cards with information about basic registration information. Another publication telling people why it is important to vote will be developed. Additionally, there will be unit meetings where consensus questions will be addressed. Some modifications will probably be proposed to the Election Procedures position.

Dale Yeo moved and Marcia Anderson seconded a motion that the Voting Impediments Committee be continued for an additional year. Motion carried unanimously.

Report of the Nominating Committee and Election of Officers: Marjorie Burr, Chair of the Nominating Committee, introduced the slate. Other members of the Nominating Committee are Sue Cain and Johnnie Aldrich. Biographical information can be found on pages 6 and 7 of the *2014 Annual Meeting VOTER*.

- Gwendolyn Hanson, Vice President
- Sadie Valverde, Secretary
- Marcia Anderson, Voters Service Co-Chair
- Dale Yeo, Voters Service Co-Chair
- Ardyth Norem, Chair of the Nominating Committee
- Sue Cain, Member of the Nominating Committee

Erika Graf-Webster, President; Ruth Benjamins, Treasurer; and Johnnie Aldrich, Membership Chair, will serve on the board through 2014-2015.

Erika asked if there were additional nominations from the floor. There were none. Gracia Class moved and Kurt Anderson seconded a motion to elect the proposed slate of officers. Motion carried unanimously.

LWVUS Convention: Ardyth Norem and Dale Yeo will be representing LWVGLC.

Directions to the Board:

- Bonnie Burn urged the board to have official League observers at most governmental meetings. The very presence of such observers lets elected and appointed officials know that the League is observing the process. Bonnie would particularly like to find someone who would observe the Soil and Water Conservation District meetings.
- Jane Carter asked the board to consider providing a regular column to the *Las Cruces Sun-News*. A column could provide education on the issues the League has studied as well as on voting issues.
- Jane distributed voter information flyers (English and Spanish) that have been prepared by the Doña Ana County Bureau of Elections. She asked League members to take and distribute some.
- William Little noted that the publication of the Voters Guide has been timed to coincide with Early Voting. He suggested that the board look at this timetable and consider publishing somewhat closer to the election, but while Early Voting is still ongoing. William observed that most Early Voters who vote as soon as the process opens already know how they are going to vote.
- Marjorie Burr asked the board to be vigilant about voter suppression issues. One of the

(Continued on page 22)

aspects could be encouraging all groups to use the Voting Convenience Center. Letters to the editor can help emphasize League interest in this subject.

- Marjorie Burr asked the board to identify people who would be interested in updating the water position and to form a committee to work on this project.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Web Site: Dale Yeo announced that If anyone would like to look at proposed website, they can go to the current website <http://www.lwvglc.org/> and add "\test."

ADJOURNMENT- Gwen Hanson moved and Jane Asche seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Christina Little



Lunch with a Leader - March 9, 2015 *(Continued from page 17)*

- beds; hence, the move to Texas;
3. Contact Senators Udall and Heinrich; and
 4. Recommended attendance at the J. Paul Taylor Social Justice Symposium which begins Saturday, March 14, 2015, with the film "Who Is Dayani Cristal" at 7:00 p.m. in the Good Samaritan Village Auditorium, followed by a talk by Robin Reinke, co-founder and executive director of the Colibri Center for Human Rights.

Notes

The VOTER

Volume 43, Issue 11 - April 2015
Published Monthly

**The League of Women Voters of
Greater Las Cruces**

P.O. Box 8322
Las Cruces, NM 88006-8322
(575) 524-VOTE (8683)
www.lwvglc.org

President - Erika Graf-Webster

Vice President & Program
Gwen Hanson

Secretary - Sadie Valverde

Treasurer - Ruth Benjamins

Director, Membership
Johnnie Aldrich

Co-Directors, Voter Services
Marcia Anderson
Dale Yeo

Director, Events & Speakers
Roberta Gran

Nominating Committee
Chair, Ardyth Norem
Elected Member: Sue Cain
Board Member: Marcia Anderson

Program for Study & Action

Affordable Housing
Vicki Simons - 522-4813
Chris Little - 573-1882

Education
Ruth Benjamins - 527-0204

Election Procedures
Ardyth Norem - 522-0780

Health Care
Vicki Simons - 522-4813

Quality of Life & Well Being
Cynthia Pelak - (575) 496-3170

Voting Impediments
Roberta Gran - 373-8490

Water Issues
Win Jacobs - 521-9331

ACTION COMMITTEE
Barbara Goedecke - 522-0323

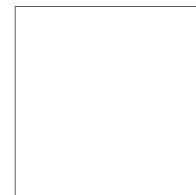
Web Master
Dale Yeo - 405-7530
Y.dale43@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor
Bonnie Burn - 526-0013
burnb@comcast.net



League of Women Voters
of Greater Las Cruces
P.O. Box 8322
Las Cruces, NM 88006-8322

Tel: (575) 524-VOTE (8683)
Web Site: www.lwvglc.org



FIRST CLASS

Annual Meeting
April 18, 2015 - 9 a.m. - Noon
Good Samaritan Social Center
MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY
Please bring it to the meeting.

EXTRA

APRIL 18, 2015 - ANNUAL MEETING

Business Meeting Rules	2
2014 Annual Meeting Minutes (Appendix) 18-22	
2015 ANNUAL MEETING BUSINESS	2-7
• Nonpartisan Policy (Membership Dir.)	
• Bylaws	2
• Proposed Annual Budget	3-4
• Proposed Local Program	5-7
• Nominating Committee	7
• Introducing Proposed Board	8-9
President's Message	10-11
Year-End Reports	
Membership	11
Voter Services	12
Affordable Housing	12
Education	13
Election Procedures	14
Health Care	14
Quality of Life & Well Being	15
Voting Impediment	15
Water Interest Group	15
Membership Directory (Updates)	16
Summary Lunch with a Leader (March 2015)	17

CALENDAR

April 10 (Friday) - Deadline for Reservations for Annual Meeting. RSVP Roberta Gran, 373-8490 or robertagran@q.vom.

April 18 Saturday) - 9:00 a.m. - ANNUAL MEETING, Good Samaritan Social Center, Creative Arts Room, 3011 Buena Vida Circle. **BREAKFAST** is \$10. **Reservations required.**

MARK Your Calendar

May 15-16 - LWVNM Convention, Albuquerque
June 18-21 - LWVUS Council, Leesburg, VA

The League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces, 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.