

LWV

the VOTER

*League of Women Voters of
Greater Las Cruces*

JUNE 2017



Dinner with a Leader

June 12, 5:15 p.m. Good Samaritan

Rosario Olivera, who serves with La Clinica de Familia (LCDF) as **Chief Behavioral Health Officer**, will speak at LWVGLC Dinner with a Leader on June 12. She will be speaking on services provided and challenges confronted at the Clinic.

LCDF network serves thousands of patients — many of whom are low-income — in central and southern Doña Ana County. La Clinica started with migrant health services and has expanded since 1965 across Doña Ana County. Originally the clinic was required to be located in a medically underserved area, outside the city. But the most recent addition to the campuses is within the City of Las Cruces. The 43,000-square-foot building at 575 S. Alameda Blvd. was the former Memorial General Hospital — from 1948 until 1972 — and then served as the city of Las Cruces Office Center until April 2010.

Along with expanding premises LCDF has also taken on broader and more challenging healthcare roles. Presently the clinic has programs in medical, dental, behavioral health, prenatal and pediatric health care.

Negative effects of Statewide turmoil in behavioral health care are still impacting local efforts. The LCDF behavioral health client base had grown sharply since August 2015 but taking on the role as behavioral health provider had been a huge challenge. Rosario Olivera is happy to share her experience in this endeavor.



**LWVGLC MEMBERSHIP
DUES - REMINDER: *NOW*
*OVERDUE***

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

June 2017 Voter

Greetings Members of LWVGLC,

I am pleased to tell you that we had a very productive three- hour board meeting May 4th. Besides taking care of general business, we spent half the time discussing our vision for the league, what should be our focus, what we do well, and what we could do better. We will be inviting your input during The Program Fiesta in September. Your Directions to the Board from the Annual Meeting helped us to frame the discussion. Thank you. I will be reporting on the Board's response to the Directions at each meeting as we address them. So far, these are the directions we have addressed:

1. We developed and passed a policy on responding to requests from outside entities for publicly endorsing a position. "Requests for LWVGLC to make public statements/positions may be approved by the board via email by a minimum of 4 members, except if any members object, a complete discussion will be conducted and the request will be voted on at the next board meeting."
2. Request for a strategy to go digital on voter services publications: The board decided to make Voter Services a priority for the next two years. We will focus our efforts on 3 areas; voter registration, voter information, and voter turnout. Plans are to engage the membership in discussion and planning and increase member participation in these efforts. We need to figure out a strategy to get voter information to the public transitioning to more use of digital media.
3. The board concurred with the direction for the need to appoint a Public Relations Director. We will discuss this at the next board meeting as well as discuss the appointment of an Observer Corp Coordinator.
4. Request for more lunch meetings during winter months. So far, breakfast or lunch meetings are planned for November, December, January and February.
5. Request for replacing some Dinner with a Leader meetings to a Discussion of Issues meetings. The board concurred. We will have a discussion on issues addressed at the state convention during the July meeting.

2018 marks the 50th anniversary of the LWVGLC! We need to start planning for a BIG CELEBRATION!!! If you are interested in being part of the planning committee let me know. The board approved the reimbursement of the registration fee for the state convention for delegate members up to the amount budgeted.

The Affordable Housing Committee and the Student Engagement Committee have been very active. They are to be commended for their efforts. Please read their reports.

My Best to you All,
Kim Sorensen, President

UPCOMING EVENTS – LWVGLC CALENDAR

- June 8** Board Meeting, Branigan Library, 2:00 p.m.
- June 12** Dinner with a Leader, Good Samaritan 5:15 p.m.
- June 22** 2 p.m., Erika Graf-Webster's house. The book is **Who Thought This Was a Good Idea**, by Alyssa Mastromonaco (President Obama's former Deputy Chief of Staff).
- June 22 – 25** LWVUS National Council 2017: **BLUEPRINT FOR MISSION IMPACT, ENGAGEMENT & SUSTAINABILITY**
- **WHAT:** Help refine the "blueprint" for the League's organization-wide transformation to strengthen the League of Women Voters' role in the American elections process by 2020
 - **WHO:** Two representatives of each State League + observer attendees
 - **WHERE:** The National Conference Center, Leesburg, Virginia (near Washington-Dulles Airport)
 - **COST:** Registration fee of \$795 covers all sessions, lodging and all meals

THE LWVGLC BOOK CLUB

Formation of a LWVGLC Book Club was proposed in late 2011, and the first meeting occurred on January 10, 2013. The club is devoted to non-fiction books dealing with Current Events. Generally, the books we read deal with issues that are somehow related to political and governmental actions that affect our lives and/or furthers our understanding of the state of the US and the state of the world. Within this broad category, we have read books about economics, history, biographies (for example, Supreme Court Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Ruth Bader Ginsberg), the Defense Department, terrorism and other subjects that enable us to gain insight into current issues. Our members would probably agree that the two most frightening books were "The Pentagon's Brain" about the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (did you know that an atomic bomb had been exploded in the atmosphere?), and "Heretic", which discussed the perversion of Islam and its religious pressures to "kill the Infidels" (and that includes us). The members generally agree that we would probably not read on our own most of the books that we read in the club – but we all feel that reading these books is worthwhile, and discussing them amongst us is enjoyable.

The Book Club has 13 members, and while some don't come to the meetings, they do not want to be removed from the Book Club list ("we want to know what you're reading"). The meetings take place on the fourth Thursday of each month, at 2:00 PM, and are rotated among the homes of the active members. Any member can suggest books to be added to the club's "Book List". Books are then selected for reading by a consensus of the members at each meeting. The meetings start with a discussion of the book of the month, usually led by the person who suggested the book in the first place. Inevitably, the later part of the meeting turns to a discussion of current political issues – members agree that this venting is valuable, and makes them feel better.

Would you like to join our Book Club? If yes, please contact Erika Graf-Webster at egrafwebster@q.com.

BONNIE BURN SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

The 2017 League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces Bonnie Burn Scholarship, administered by the Las Cruces Public Schools Foundation, was presented to Centennial High School Senior Brighton Joe Turner. LWVGLC members Gwen Hanson and Reed (Bob) Burn presented the scholarship at the Senior Robing Ceremony, Centennial High School on Monday, May 8, 2017.



BONNIE BURN SCHOLARSHIP FUND INFORMATION

The League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces Education Scholarship in Honor of Bonnie Burn, administered by the Las Cruces Public Schools Foundation, Inc., was adopted February 9, 2015. Members, friends and family made many generous contributions to the fund last year. However, in order to sustain this scholarship fund, additional contributions are needed.

All donations to the **LWVGLC Education Scholarship in Honor of Bonnie Burn** are to be made directly to the Las Cruces Public Schools Foundation, Inc. Designate the scholarship in the memo line of your check. This designation **must name the Bonnie Burn Scholarship** in order to be credited to that scholarship fund; otherwise the donation will be credited to the general fund of the Foundation.

Send your tax-deductible contribution to:

Betsy A. Geery, Executive Director
Las Cruces Public Schools Foundation
P.O. Box 16214
Las Cruces, NM 88004

THE OBSERVER'S POST

SCSWA Observer Report, April & May 2017

Submitted by Johnnie R. Aldrich

Meetings of the Solid Waste Authority Board have been cancelled at times in previous years, but rarely has it happened in two consecutive months.

In April, many of the usual attendees were present, including employees among the public audience and this observer. (The employees often are called upon to clarify or add to the reports of the various supervisors or to answer specific questions.) However, two Board members were not present that day, meaning that without a quorum, the Board could do no official business. The quarter-inch-thick Board packet and agenda had been prepared, but no official reports were presented orally.

The Board used the next hour in listening to Director Peck's presentation of suggested changes in the budgeting process and discussing them unofficially for their own clarification.

In May, we were notified by email, 10 days before the meeting, that there would be no meeting "due to lack of an agenda."

Trash collection, including the recyclables, continues.

The next scheduled Board meeting is the usual third Thursday at 9:00 a.m.

Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority

Board of Commissioners Meeting

April 18, 2017

Housing Authority Offices

Vicki Simons

LWV Observer

Present: Shelly Sanders, Chari, Felix Cordero, Marcos Montes, Joseph Figueroa, Resident Commissioner

Absent: Beth Bardwell, Vice-Chair

This was a regular meeting, no consent agenda, no resolutions, no unfinished business.

Shelley Sanders gave a brief report from the National Affordable Housing organization conference in Washington, D.C. which she and several staff members attended in late March. HUD Secretary Ben Carson spoke to the attendees and emphasized the need to lessen regulations. It is anticipated that there will be deep budget cuts to HUD.

Staff presented monthly reports. Director Juan Olvera reported that MVPHA will be submitting a project to Mortgage Finance Administration (MFA) for tax credit development this coming year. It will be rehabilitation of the Pecos Street Apartments which currently is a 20-unit 2 bedroom-apartment complex to a 30-40 one-bedroom complex. The City of Las Cruces Community Development Department has committed up to \$500,000 to the \$8 million project.

Treasurer's Talk

Submitted by Steve Litts

FIRST, thanks to all members who have sent in their dues and donations. Much appreciated.

In the last *The Voter* I reviewed the four funding streams that support your league's work in the Las Cruces area, the need for increased donations beyond annual dues and how to make tax-deductible donations. This month I will review how your dues (\$60.00 single) are put to work and how dues alone are unable to meet your league's challenges. Are you sitting? Let's begin: (rounding results in a total less than 100% - all data taken from the past fiscal year)

Where Your Dues Go

- \$32.40 or 54% goes to our national league
- \$12.00 or 20% goes to our state league
- \$15.00 or 25% remains for local operational needs

Put another way, your local's net was approximately \$1,258 from the total dues collected. Our volunteer board and committee members have held local operational costs to \$724.76, well below the \$1,258 realized from dues.

However, your local also incurred additional expenses of \$5,162 for election-related efforts such as The Voter Guide, Voter Publication Materials and Convention Expenses. Clearly, available local dues remaining from operational needs were insufficient to cover the magnitude of these expenses. **So, how does your local, LWVGLC, fund those expenses?** Thanks for asking..... Answer???

Donations to the LWVUS Education Fund; and to the LWVGLC Operations Fund

Education Fund donations go to the tax-exempt LWVUS Education Fund so your donations to that fund are tax deductible. Those donations are credited to each local league to be returned to that local in the form of a grant. **BUT like any bank account, our members need to make deposits into the Education Fund in order for your league to withdraw any.** Last year LWVGLC was successful in returning \$2,594 from our LWVUS Education Fund account but our balance wasn't large enough to cover the entire expenses. Donations to the **LWVGLC Operation Fund** go directly to your local LWVGLC but are not tax-deductible. The remaining costs were funded through the reduction in carryover funds.

There you have it - LWVGLC finances at a glance. Local Operation Costs are adequate, but unable to support the most important work of the league. Please consider making a generous contribution to the LWVGLC Operation Fund and to the LWVUS Education Fund. **It's your donations to those funds that allow LWVGLC to promote informed voter participation in our**

democracy. The process for making those donations can be found in the May issue of The Voter, or email s.litts2011@gmail.com and I'll be happy to send you the information.

BOOK CLUB MOVES TO FOURTH THURSDAY

The Book Club is switching its meeting date to the **4th Thursday of the month** (from the 3rd Thursday). Time stays the same, 2:00 PM.

NEXT MEETING IS June 22, 2PM, at Erika Graf-Webster's house. The book is **Who Thought This Was a Good Idea**, by Alyssa Mastromonaco (President Obama's former Deputy Chief of Staff).

UPCOMING: July 27, 2PM, at Vicki Simon's house. The book is **The Populist Explosion: How the Great Recession Transformed American and European Politics**, by John B. Judis

Anyone wishing to join our Book Club is welcome to do so! Contact Erika Graf-Webster at grafwebster@icloud.com.