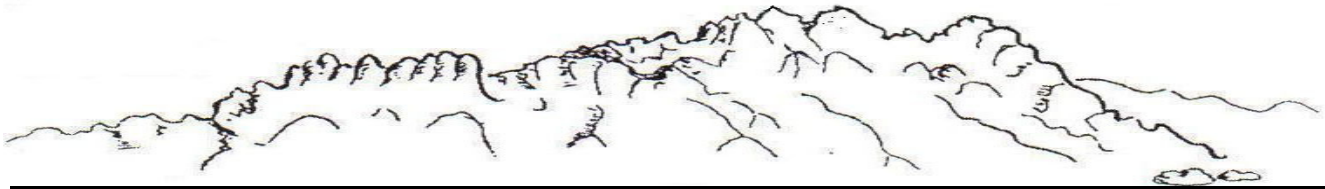


# The VOTER

League of Women Voters  
of Greater Las Cruces  
(575) 524-VOTE (8683)  
Web Site: [www.lwvglc.org](http://www.lwvglc.org)  
September 2011



## *Lunch with a Leader*

Monday, September 12, 2011, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
Good Samaritan Social Center, Creative Arts Room, 3011 Buena Vida Circle

## *EDUCATION STUDY*

### *Consensus - Consensus - Consensus*

Consensus questions will be forwarded to members  
on September 7, after Board approval

**Consensus** is a vital step on the path toward advocacy about an issue that can be resolved by government. After objective study, consensus is the collective opinion of a substantial number of League members, representative of the membership as a whole. The Education Study Committee has created a questionnaire to assist in the discussion that leads to consensus.

*Please plan to attend this important meeting.*

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## CALENDAR

**September 6 (Tuesday) - Deadline for Lunch with a Leader.** RSVP Paula Nielson, Email: [paulanielson@comcast.net](mailto:paulanielson@comcast.net), Tel: 386-7957.

**September 7 (Wednesday) - 10-11:30 a.m., Board Meeting,** Branigan Library, Board Room

**September 12 (Monday) - 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m., Lunch with a Leader, Topic:** Education Consensus Meeting, Good Samaritan Social Center, Creative Arts Room, 3011 Buena Vida Circle. Lunch is \$10.

**Mark Your Calendar:** See Board Highlights, p. 2, for League Calendar Dates.

### **Las Cruces Municipal Election**

October 14 - **Voters Guide** published in *The Bulletin*

October 18 - **Candidates' Forum**, 6-8 p.m., Good Samaritan Social Center  
Main Auditorium, 3011 Buena Vida Circle

### **Notable Dates:**

September 17, 1787 - U.S. Constitution adopted

**The VOTER**

Volume 42, Issue 5 - September 2011  
Published Monthly

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

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Las Cruces, NM 88006-8322  
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Web Site: [www.lwvglc.org](http://www.lwvglc.org)

**President** - Bonnie Burn

**Vice President & Program**  
Paula Nielson

**Secretary** - Martha Duran

**Treasurer** - Bonnie Burn (Acting)

**Director, Membership**  
Roberta Gran

**Director, Voter Services**  
Erika Graf-Webster

**Nominating Committee**  
Chair: Vicki Simons  
Elected Member: Sadie Valverde

**STUDY GROUPS**

**Affordable Housing**  
Vicki Simons - 522-4813  
Christina Little - 373-1882

**Education**  
Bonnie Burn - 526-0013

**Mental Illness Services in Doña Ana County**  
Becky Beckett - 522-8171  
Mickey Curtis - 532-5655

**Metropolitan Court**  
Marjorie Burr - 522-2528

**ACTION COMMITTEE**  
Vicki Simons - 522-4813

**Web Master** - Dale Yeo

**Newsletter Editor**  
Bonnie Burn - 526-0013  
[burnb@comcast.net](mailto:burnb@comcast.net)

**Board Highlights**

August 3, 2011, 10-11:30 a.m., Branigan Library, Board Room

**Membership:** As of July 15, 87 members renewed their membership, eight members have become Friends of the League, and 11 members dropped their membership.

**Voter Service Activity:** The Board approved a quotation from The Bulletin to (1) print a four-page *Voters Guide* for the 2011 Las Cruces Municipal Election and (2) a 16-page *2012 General Election Voters' Guide*. The *Bulletin* also will sponsor the printing of the 2013 *Who's Who*. A candidates' forum for the Las Cruces Municipal Election will be held on Wednesday, October 18, 6-8 p.m., Good Samaritan's Main Auditorium, 3011 Buena Vida Circle.

**League Calendar:** Adopted the following dates and activities:

- October 10 - Lunch with a Leader - Jay Armijo, Executive Director, South Central Council of Governments
- October 24 - LWVUS Education Study Consensus, 10-11:30 a.m., Good Samaritan Conference Room (more details next issue)
- November 14 - Lunch with a Leader - Affordable Housing
- December 10 - League Holiday Social, 2-4 p.m., Home of Carol Jackson.
- January 14 - Legislative Breakfast (location to be determined)



**WE NEED YOUR HELP**



**Treasurer**  
**Public Relations Director**  
Job Description [www.lwvglc.org](http://www.lwvglc.org)

**Legislative Action Committee**  
**Observer Corps**  
**League Telephone**

**VOTER Editor**  
**Voter Writer**  
**Voter Production**

Contact: Bonnie Burn  
526-0013  
E-mail:  
[burnb@comcast.net](mailto:burnb@comcast.net)



**Voter Services**  
**Activities**

Candidates' Forum  
Greeters & Time Keepers

Contact  
Erika Graf-Webster  
521-0600 - [egradwebster@q.com](mailto:egradwebster@q.com)

**Voter Registrars**

Contact: Tom Schmutge  
522-4546 or  
[tschmutge@gmail.com](mailto:tschmutge@gmail.com)



## President's Message

**WE NEED HELP!** As the advertisements on p. 2 indicate, there are a number of opportunities to share your skills and talents. As vacancies occur, the Board may make appointments to fill them. Currently there are two open Board positions: Treasurer and Director of Public Relations



Other volunteer opportunities include:

- **Voter Services Activities.** During **Candidates' Forums**, we need members to pass out and collect 3 x 5 cards and pencils for individuals in the audience to address their questions. We need individuals to review questions for appropriateness and duplication. We need people to time the responses to the questions.
- Becoming a **voter registrar** is very easy. Go to the Bureau of Elections, Doña Ana County Government Building, on Motel Blvd. and tell the clerk that you want to become a registrar. You will be given a package of voter registration applications, and a brief orientation about completing the application. The League holds one or two registration sessions during the year at selected sites. This is about a 2- hour time commitment. Two League members usually register together. Applications have to be turned in to the Bureau of Elections within 24 hours of registering.
- **Legislative Action Committee.** Members interested in political issues at the local, state, and national levels form a committee and take action (e.g., e-mail or call elected officials, write letters, interview elected officials, attend government meetings, provide testimony at hearings). A broadcast e-mail goes out to members when legislative action is required. At a pre-arranged time, there is a teleconference call with the LWVNM Legislative Action Committee to discuss issues that will be part of the NM Legislative regular or special session. This committee sometimes meets once a month during the year and more frequently during the actual legislative session.
- **Observers** are members who are interested in a particular topic, attend meetings, and write up a short report of what happens at those meetings. These reports are published in *The VOTER* under Observer Reports. Two observers are identified so that they can alternate and only one has to attend a monthly meeting. The Observers "listen" and "do not speak" at these meetings unless a clarification question is in order--they "observe."

Let us know how you want to help. Contact the individuals shown in the ads.

*Bonnie Burn*

## Membership Directory Update!

**Email Address Change**  
**Marnie Leverett** has a new **E-mail**  
 james.leverett48@gmail.com

**V**olunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.

Elizabeth Andrew

## Friends of the League

John Ameriks, M.D.  
 Biad Chile Ltd. Co.  
 Joseph P. Camunez, DDS  
 Citizens Bank  
 Dental Associates, PA  
 Doggie Dude Ranch and  
 Cat Farm  
 Donald and Winifred Dresp  
 Adrian and Jackie Edwards  
 Nancy & Ken Hall  
 First New Mexico Bank  
 Edward Jones - Connie Lee  
 Patricia Kratz  
 Lilley Law Offices  
 Louise P. Lockhart  
 Barbara Myers  
 Francisco Mario Ortiz Law Firm  
 Judith Scott and Paul Thomas  
 Wanda Skowlund  
 LaJune Smith  
 Marie Sutter-Sinden  
 Tom Tate  
 Zia Engineering & Environmental  
 Consultants

*Thank You*



# League News



## Education Study Committee

Bonnie Burn, chair

July was Education Month in the 2011 League calendar. The League's two-year education study was completed, and the committee was sharing its findings with members.

First, Superintendent Stan Rounds, as the guest speaker at our Lunch with a Leader general meeting on July 11, gave information about our Las Cruces Public School system.

The "Education Institute," three unit meetings that focused on issues impacting the local school system, followed. These included:

- State and Federal Regulations (July 18)
- Education Reform and Its Relevance (July 25)
- It Takes a Community to Build Good Schools (August 1)

About twenty members attended each session. The presentations by committee members Jane Asche, Sue Cain, Erika Graf-Webster, and Bonnie Burn and comprehensive handouts were well received. The discussion was lively and interesting. All left the meetings with a better understanding of the complexity of the issues and with much new knowledge.

The next step for the committee is to hold a consensus meeting, scheduled for September 12, at the Lunch with a Leader. Afterwards, a new position will be written and presented to the Board for approval. The League will then be in a position to advocate for education issues.

## Voter Services Activities for the Upcoming Las Cruces Municipal Elections

*Erika Graf Webster, Director*

After some hiatus over the spring and early summer, voter services activities have resumed to handle the upcoming Las Cruces city municipal election.

The city clerk has finalized the dates for the election:

- Sept 27 – Last day for candidate filing

- Oct 4 – Candidate certification
- Oct 11 – Last day for voter registration for this election
- Oct 12 – Early voting starts for paper ballots only
- Oct 19 – In person early voting starts (at City Hall only)
- Nov 5 – Early voting ends
- Nov 8 – Election day

This election schedule is actually very tight. Three principal activities need to be accomplished: (1) register new voters; (2) get the *Voters Guide* out to the public, and (3) have a candidates' forum.

Voter registration activities will take place in late September, and will be managed by Tom Schmutge. We currently have a real shortage of certified registrars who can work with Tom. Two people are needed at each registration event. So if you can help us with this by becoming a new "certified registrar", that would be wonderful. It only takes a five-minute session at the Bureau of Elections office to get the needed information and become certified as a registrar. Registration activities will concentrate on the three high schools.

Dale Yeo is the leader for formulating questions for the *Voters Guide*. If any of you have questions for the local candidates, please forward them to Dale. Those that are not used in the *Voters Guide* can be used at the candidates' forum instead. The candidate questions must be finalized by the end of August so that they can be presented to the Board for approval at the September 7 Board meeting. The questions will then be mailed to the candidates in late September, with responses required by October 6. That gives us only three days to get the questions and responses compiled in a Word document that must be delivered to *The Bulletin* by Monday, October 10. We need League members to help with formulating the questions and for proofreading both the document that gets delivered to *The Bulletin* and *The Bulletin's* typeset copy.

During a very cordial session with Mr. David McCollum, publisher of *The Bulletin*, we decided (and the Board approved) to do a four-page *Voters Guide*, that will be a pull-out section of the paper. This allows

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Voter Services *(Continued from page 4)*

a whole page, page 4, to be used as a vehicle for the promotion of the League and League activities. The Voters Guide will be published in the October 14 issue of *The Bulletin*, and about 500 additional stand-alone copies will be available for distribution around the community. This *Voters Guide* will, however, exhaust our Education Fund balance, so some fund raising activities will be required to replenish this account in preparation for the big *2012 General Election Voters Guide*.

Our Candidates' Forum is scheduled for October 18, in the auditorium at Good Samaritan. We do need helpers for this activity – posters and banners must be mounted, the stage needs to be set up appropriately, greeters are needed to greet the candidates and the audience, supplies such as cards and pencils need to be handed out to the audience so questions can be composed for the candidates, and individuals who review the questions are needed. Please offer to help with these activities.

Contact **Erika Graf-Webster at 521-0600** if you can help with any of the jobs described above.

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## League of Women Voters of New Mexico (LWVNM)

Kudos to Cheryl Haaker, chair, Redistricting Committee and committee members for their excellent work on the issue of redistricting that is ongoing at the state level for U.S. Congress, NM State Senate and House, and Public Regulations Commission seats.

LWVNM convention delegates approved an initiative that supported public hearings throughout the state. The NM Legislative Redistricting Committee chaired by Representative Mary Helen Garcia (Las Cruces) and Senator Linda Lopez (Albuquerque) and its 41 members began work on July 20. In hearings held throughout the state, residents have viewed concept maps prepared by Research and Polling, Inc., and have had an opportunity to give their views about redistricting. These sessions have been videotaped by Joe Keefe, Communications Director, LWVNM. The Governor also has assigned a staff member to video the hearings.

Decisions about redistricting will be presented to the legislators at a special legislative session scheduled for September 6.

By logging on to the NM Legislative web site, [www.nmlegis.gov](http://www.nmlegis.gov), information about redistricting is available by clicking on the Redistricting icon.

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**League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS)** announced that its Privatization Study, chaired by Janis McMillen, is underway. Approved at LWVUS 2010 Convention, the scope of study is to identify those parameters and policy issues to be considered in connection with proposals to transfer federal, state, or local government services, assets and/or functions to the private sector. It will review the stated goals and the community impact of such transfers, and identify strategies to ensure transparency, accountability, and preservation of the common good.

The timeline is as follows:

- August-October, 2011 - Information will be provided to local and state Leagues.
- November 2011-May 2012 - Leagues are encouraged to participate in the study and come to consensus.

The committee will provide a history and background of privatization, a glossary of terms, legal issues to be considered when privatizing at different levels of government, current state regulations on privatizing and case studies on successful and unsuccessful privatizing efforts. Finally, the committee will provide suggested policies and parameters to be considered when privatizing.

These resources are recommended:

1. Government Privatization: History, Examples, and Issues
2. Paul Starr, "The Meaning of Privatization," *Yale Law and Policy Review* 6 (1988): 6-41.
3. Privatization: A Seattle League Study

Study Committee members include: Cathy Lazarus (California), Diane Dilanni (Tennessee), Nora Leech (Washington), Carole Garrison (Virginia), Muriel Strand (California), Ann Henkener (Ohio), and Ted Volskay (South Carolina).

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**Report from Affordable Housing Committee, August 2011 - Vicki Simons & Christina Little, Co-**


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The Affordable Housing Committee is concluding its research on affordable housing policies and practices in Doña Ana County. Our last two interviews were with Sharon Thomas, City Councilor, and Erin Quinn, Senior Policy and Program Advisor for the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA).

On July 7, the committee met with Councilor Sharon Thomas, a League member, who was chair of the City Affordable Housing Ad Hoc Committee. This committee was composed of housing providers as well as representatives from the business community. The consultants for the committee were BBC Consulting and Don Elliott, a zoning expert.

The overall vision of the Committee was to provide an adequate supply of housing for Las Cruces residents of all income levels, now and as the community grows. The following were decisions of the committee:

- Support for establishing a land bank and housing trust fund. These have both been established by the City Council this past year, although not yet funded.
- Recommended changes in development policies. The proposal to change zoning to R-4 would encourage a change of zoning to allow higher density. Linking affordable housing policy and transportation (residents with good transportation access spend much less on transportation costs, a major cost for most low-income households) was a major point of discussion of the committee.
- Did not support community land trusts, inclusionary zoning (requirement that a certain portion of a development, usually 15%, be "affordable"), community loan funds, any recommendations about vacant buildings and mobile home parks.

Councilor Thomas then talked to the committee about trends in urban planning that are being carefully watched by council and city staff. Items she discussed were:

- A development in Boulder, Colorado, that includes mixed-use development, accessibility to transportation, parks, a variety of housing types and costs, plus provision of education, social and support services.

- The growing emphasis on linking transportation planning and housing as one of the most efficient ways of increasing the affordability of housing.
- El Paso, Texas, has just won an award for having the "most improved transit system." They have identified four corridors where rapid transit bus routes are deployed. The zoning has been changed to allow higher density, and transit stops have been made very attractive with many amenities (e.g., TV sets and food). They also have changed their zoning to a Smart Code that the developers can choose to use instead of the regular code, thus aiding the building of more affordable housing.
- Sharon mentioned form-based zoning codes that she believes would increase the city's ability to institute mixed-use development. Form-based zoning regulates the form that the land use may take rather than the type of land use.
- In transportation developments, there is now a consultant working to improve Roadrunner Transit. The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a significant player but has a limited budget and staff. There is also a South Central Regional Transit District whose goal is to connect the Mesilla Valley with such counties as Otero with transportation services.

The last interview was with Erin Quinn of the MFA. That report will be in the September Voter.

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### **Look Back - CASA Court Appointed Special Advocates**

Children living in the chaotic circumstances of child abuse and neglect need someone to count on to help them overcome their circumstances. That is what the court appointed special advocates are trained to do. Seventy-seven advocates and five staff work to ensure that children are safe and to protect their interests.

The average age of children involved with CASA is four to nine years old, but ages newborn to 18 years old are accepted. The children may stay in CASA for as long as their cases are open, which

*(Continued on page 7)*



## LEAGUE OBSERVER REPORTS

*The League's Observer Corps can enable greater coverage and information gathering, provide early warning of upcoming issues of concern, increase League's visibility, and assist in networking with other groups. We appreciate the reports that are submitted by Observers. Following the League practice of publishing nonpartisan, objective reports, the information submitted may be edited for content and brevity.*

### **South Central Solid Waste Authority (SCSWA), August 18, 2011, 9 a.m., Conference Room, Transfer Station. –**

*Johnnie Aldrich, Observer*

All Board members were present for this first meeting since June 16, 2011.

Highlights of information gleaned from the meeting, primarily from the report presented by South Central Solid Waste Authority Director Patrick Peck:

- The recycling program continues to grow. Because many Las Cruces are using the blue bins, over 150,000 tons have already been shipped to Friedman Recycling Center for processing this year.
- SCSWA has received numerous requests from users for a second bin.
- A new scrap metal contract in which SCSWA is paid four times the price as in the old contract is providing a new stream of revenue.
- Friedman and SCSWA will collaborate in educational programs in the Las Cruces schools beginning this fall.
- The newly incorporated City of Anthony has requested SCSWA assistance in re-organization and implementation of its own solid waste collection and removal programs.
- Friedman Recycling has sent a Proposed Fee Schedule that the Board discussed at length. Board members had numerous questions that will be answered at the next meeting. Negotiations are expected to continue for several months.

Director Peck also presented to the Board a "Business and Master Plan Update." He and his staff have worked on this inch-thick, spiral bound document for the past 18 months. He asked the Board to read it and send comments on it to him before the next meeting. Board members discussed the possibility of making the document available to the public for additional input.

During the "Closed Session" of the meeting, I continued to "talk trash" with Bonnie Tafoya, director of Recycling for Las Cruces. She assured me that the public dumpsters now in place at K-Mart on El Paseo, Sam's Club, the Wal-Mart on Valley and other locations will not be removed. These receptacles are emptied less frequently (twice weekly instead of daily) now that homeowners in the city have their own blue bins. However, usage is still heavy enough to warrant continuing the service.

Point of clarification from Ms. Tafoya: plastic shopping bags should **NOT** go into the recycle dumpsters unless they contain shredded paper.

Call SCSWA at 528-3800 for additional information about recycling.

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### **CASA** *(Continued from page 6)*

sometimes can be up to 1-1/2 years. Children are returned to their homes if parents complete their treatment plans and the situations for the children are safe.

To become a special advocate, volunteers go through a 30-hour training course that gives them the tools to advocate effectively and to understand the paperwork and bureaucracy involved. The advocates make sure the children are safe by making visits to the foster homes and schools and participating in activities with the children. Volunteers are usually assigned one child; however, if a family of several children is involved, the children are kept together in a foster situation, and one or more volunteers may be assigned to them.

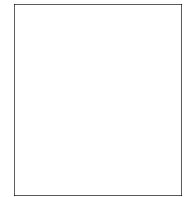
Diminishing resources because of budget constraints, limited number of foster homes, and lack of a children's crises center are some of the problems facing the program.

To volunteer, contact Mesilla Valley CASA, Inc, 119 N. Downtown Mall, Las Cruces 88001, Tel: (575) 527-0035



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**FIRST CLASS**

**September 2011**  
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**Membership Application**

**Membership:** Individual (\$60), 2nd Household Member (\$30), and Students (\$25)

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **2nd Household:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City/State/Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Contribution to the League    Make Check payable to LWV of Greater Las Cruces

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Contribution to the Education Fund (Tax Deductible)    Make check payable to  
 League of Women Voters Education Fund

**All checks should be mailed to**

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

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.