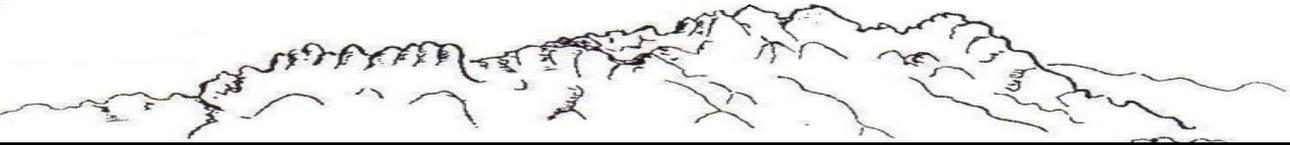


# The VOTER

League of Women Voters  
of Greater Las Cruces  
(575) 524-VOTE (8683)  
Web Site: [www.lwvglc.org](http://www.lwvglc.org)  
July 2016



## *Dinner with a Community Leader*

### **Is Las Cruces a Sustainable Community**

Lisa LaRocque, Sustainability Officer for the City of Las Cruces

Monday, July 11, 2016

5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Good Samaritan Social Center

Creative Arts Room

3011 Buena Vida Circle

Is Las Cruces becoming the city we want it to be? Plenty of great jobs? Awesome schools? Easy to get around without a car? Lots of healthy, local food for everyone? Run entirely on renewable energy? In balance with its natural

environment?

With the help of NMSU, agencies and nonprofits, the City of Las Cruces Sustainability Office coordinated a yearlong certification process to collect data on over 500 metrics to answer these questions and more. CLC Sustainability Officer, Lisa LaRocque, will present an overview of the results and discuss possible next steps.

**Come and invite your friends. Please RSVP with Sharon Shoemaker at [shoemaker714@gmail.com](mailto:shoemaker714@gmail.com) or call Gwen Hanson at 556-9251.**

## *CALENDAR*

### **July—August 2016**

**July 7** – LWVGLC July Board Meeting, 2:00 p.m. Branigan Library Board Room

**July 11** – LWVGLC Dinner with a Leader, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m., Good Sam's

**July 16** – LWVNM Board Meeting, Albuquerque

**July 21** – 3rd Thursday Book Club, 2:00 p.m., at the home of Marjorie Burr, "The Pentagon's Brain: An Uncensored History of DARPA, America's Top-Secret Military Research Agency" by Annie Jacobsen

**July 28** – LWVGLC August Board Meeting, 2:00 p.m., Branigan Library Board Room

**August 8** – LWVGLC Monthly Meeting, "2nd Annual Fiesta Showcase of Priorities", 5:30 - 7:00 p.m., Good Sam's Creative Arts Room

**August 18** - 3rd Thursday Book Club, 2:00 p.m., home of Vicki Simons, "The Black Presidency:

**The VOTER**

Volume 48, Issue 1– May 2016

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

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**President** - Gwen Hanson**Vice President & Events  
and Speakers**  
Sharon Shoemaker**Secretary** - Ardyth Norem**Treasurer** - Ruth Benjamins**Director, Membership**  
Yvonne-Magdalena Flores**Co-Directors, Voter Services**  
Vicki Simons and Dale Yeo**Nominating Committee**  
Chair: Johnnie Aldrich  
Elected Member: Bonnie Votaw**The VOTER Editor**  
leaguewvglc@gmail.com**Web Master**  
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Vicki Simons -522-4813  
Christina Little-373-1882**Education**  
Ruth Benjamins - 527-0204**Election Procedures**  
Ardyth Norem - 522-0780  
Barbara Goedecke - 522-0323**Health Care**  
Vicki Simons - 522-4813**Immigration**  
Sue Cain - 647-8250  
Yvonne-Magdalena Flores 521-3980**Metropolitan Court**  
Marjorie Burr - 522-2528**Quality of Life (Happiness)**  
Cynthia Pelak - (575) 496-3170**Water Issues**  
Win Jacobs - 521-9331**Action Committee**  
Barbara Goedecke - 522-0323**Highlights of the May 2016 Board Meeting***Gwen Hansen, Reporting***Present:** Ruth Benjamins, Yvonne Flores, Gwen Hanson, Ardyth Norem, Sharon Shoemaker, Vicki Simons and Dale Yeo**Business – Ongoing Administrative and Operational Activities:**

Review of the April Board Minutes – approved as read.

Financial &amp; Membership Report: Ruth Benjamins reviewed both the monthly and annual report. The final 2015-2016 annual report will be shared with members at the upcoming May 9 monthly meeting, as agreed at the April Annual Meeting.

Membership Report: Currently 90 members are on the membership list. May 1<sup>st</sup> is the date after which members will renew for 2016-2017 report to LWVUS. Dues can be paid at the May 9<sup>th</sup> monthly meeting.

Membership email listing consistency between Board members - an issue to be addressed by those who directly contact the membership. Report to be offered at the next meeting.

**Voter Services Report – Dale Yeo & Vicki Simons**

Voter Registration – Rosemarie Sanchez is scheduling times at respective registration sites. Liz Taylor and Kim Sorenson will lead coordination of registration. There are approximately 23 members who are registered as VRA's (voter registration agents).

Voter registration training has been provided by the Dona Ana County Bureau of Elections staff in the past. Scott Krahling, Deputy County Clerk will be contacted regarding any future trainings for those members who are interested.

General Election Candidate Forums: Las Cruces City Hall is no longer available as a venue. Alternative venues have been sought.

Dona Ana County candidates: Use of the Dona Ana County Commissioners Chambers has been approved, and the dates of October 4 or October 5 have been requested.

Secretary of State Candidate Forum: KRWG has agreed to co-host with our local League at the suggested date of September 21. Acceptance by the candidates is pending. Invitation and coordination is being handled by Dick Mason, LWVNM Board.

(Continued on page 3)

**Highlights of May Board Meeting Minutes** *(Continued from page 2)***Voter Services Report** (cont.)

NM State Senate and Representative candidates: KRWG has offered to co-host with our local League. Dates are pending.

**Youth Engagement Committee Report** – Yvonne Flores

An organizing meeting for the newly approved League activity was held April 17 with interest being expressed by seven or eight members. There is a hope to institutionalize this youth engagement effort in local schools. This year for the first time 17 year olds can be registered for the primary election if they meet the new general election criteria. By next fall the committee's efforts will be in place in time for the general election.

**New Business** - Gwen Hanson

New Board Member orientation with special emphasis on the League's "non-partisan policy".

Monthly Meeting Planning - brainstorming session to identify topics and presenters for the upcoming year with our local League's priorities as guidance for choices.

Reservations for monthly meetings – Sharon Shoemaker, Vice-President, will be sending and receiving reservations with a new email address.

Phone Service – The current phone messaging system is outdated and not efficient. A motion was made and seconded to investigate terminating and/or replacing it. Ruth Benjamins and Gwen Hanson will follow-up.

League Calendar – a complete calendar of yearly activities was offered, and will replace the current website calendar, as soon as all the dates are confirmed.

**Announcements**

The LWVUS has approved and designated a caucus for immigration at the upcoming National Convention in Washington D.C., to be presented by LWVGLC members, Yvonne Flores & Kelly Burnham, and Meredith Machen, LWVNM President. This opportunity required a great deal of time and effort, and we are very proud of the work of the members of the Immigration Committee, especially co-chairs, Yvonne Flores and Sue Cain.

Public financing of municipal elections continues to be of interest in Las Cruces – check out and attend City Council work sessions, and town hall meetings.

CAFe' Executive Director, Sarah (Nolan) Silva has indicated a commitment to collaborate again on providing translation for a Spanish Edition, 2016 Voter Guide.

Our Las Cruces Sun News contact person has changed from Anita Goins to Jennifer Koslowski. We look forward to our collaboration in producing the upcoming 2016 Voter Guide for the General Election.

**Adjournment**



# League News



## President's Message

Welcome back! Hopefully everyone was able to enjoy some rest and relaxation during June. We are back in July to celebrate summer programming and prepare for the upcoming general election cycle.

The July 11 "Dinner with a Leader" monthly meeting will begin our summer programming with an early dinner at 5:30, followed by an informative presentation by Lisa LaRocque about the topic of "sustainability", as it relates to a recent evaluation of the Las Cruces community by Sustainability Tools for Assessing & Rating (STAR) Communities, resulting in completion of a 3-STAR Certification.



Sustainability (Adopted 2007) is a Position of the LWVNM – "The League of Women Voters of New Mexico believes that potential impacts on sustainability should be considered in formulating new positions and in advocating using current positions. Sustainability is defined as meeting the needs of the current generation without impairing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

The August 8 monthly meeting will offer the **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fiesta Showcase of Priorities**, an opportunity to gather with fellow members and guests to learn more about each other and our local League's priorities and activities. An informal dinner will be offered.

Come join us July 11<sup>th</sup> and help us kick-off an exciting and challenging general election League year.





# League News



## Voter Services

*Dale Yeo and Vicki Simons, Reporting*

June has been a relatively quiet month in Voter Services. Vicki has been continuing to organize members to help with voter registration in the fall.

After the June 7th primary, I began compiling the list of candidates running for office in Doña Ana County and searching for their contact information. Sources for this information are primarily the New Mexico Secretary of State's website, our Who's Who and sometimes other websites.

The list may not be complete yet because Filing Day for Independent and Minor Party Candidates and Write-ins is June 30th. Below are some statistics about the information I have gathered. These statistics should be useful for planning forums and the Voters Guide.

	<u>Number of Offices</u>	<u>Number of Candidates</u>
NM Senate	6	9
NM House	8	14
	-----	-----
NM Total	14	23
NM Contested Offices	9	
Doña Ana County*	5	9

If anyone would like to see my preliminary list of candidates, their offices and their contact information, please email me at: [y.dale43@gmail.com](mailto:y.dale43@gmail.com) and request one. I would like other eyes to examine the list and look for typos and/ or suggest additional information.

\* District Attorney and its two candidates is not counted here



# League News



WE  OUR NEW MEMBERS!

*Yvonne-Magdalena Flores, Reporting*

**Update your membership by June 30. Membership year runs from May 1-June 30. Membership dues are \$60 for the primary member and \$30 for each additional household member. Please mail your checks payable to LWVGLC and mail to LWVGLC, P.O. Box 8322, Las Cruces, NM 88006-8322.**



The League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces (LWVGLC) Scholarship in Honor of Bonnie Burn was awarded to Centennial High School graduating senior, Noelia de la Rosa. The \$1000.00 annual scholarship was presented for 2016 at the Centennial High School Senior Honors Night, Tuesday, May 17, 2016, by Gwen Hanson, President, LWVGLC and Reed (Bob) Burn, Bonnie Burn's husband. Pictured are Reed Burn, scholarship recipient - Noelia de la Rosa, and Gwen Hanson. The scholarship was established and first presented in 2015. It is awarded to a Las Cruces graduating senior who plans to major in Education at NMSU.

## LWVUS 2016 Convention: Immigration and Criminalization of Reentry

### Kelly H. Burnham, Reporting

On June 16, 2016, New Mexico League of Women Voters President Meredith Machen and League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces delegates Yvonne Flores and Kelly Burnham led a caucus on the problem of criminal prosecutions of immigrants at the LWVUS Convention held in Washington, D.C. In keeping with the theme of the Convention, "Making Democracy Work for All," the thrust of the presentation concerned stark inequities in the prosecution of immigrants in the Federal District Court of New Mexico.

The presentation opened with a historical discussion of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Maps of the United States were used to show the width and breadth of the territory claimed by Spain in 1783 and the Estados Unidos de Mexico in 1847. The territory so claimed stretched all along the Southwest Border and as far north as Canada. The maps offered a visual image of the saying, "I didn't cross the border; the border crossed me." Also presented to the Caucus, was the "repatriation" of United States citizens to Mexico by force in the days leading to the Depression, along with the ease with which the people were once used to cross the border for work, for business, family reasons, and education, further illustrated the naturally porous border between the neighboring countries and the struggle for fairness over centuries.

Unfortunately, in the last two decades, immigration policies in both the the civil and criminal contexts have hardened. In particular, criminal prosecution of aliens (legalese for persons from another country) has risen dramatically. Two criminal statutes, 8 United States Code Section 1325, Entry without Inspection (EWI) and 8 United States Code 1326, Reentry after Deportation (Reentry) have been increasingly used to bring a burgeoning number of criminal cases against immigrants. The presentation's aim is to illustrate that the Emperor of Immigration is wearing no clothes.

A discussion of the key elements of these statutes is necessary to an understanding of the foolishness of these prosecutions in the great majority of cases. To be convicted of the misdemeanor crime of EWI, for example, a person from another country need only be shown to have entered or have attempted to enter the United States at a time or place other than as designated by immigration officers. In plain language, if a person from another country crosses our vast border at any place other than a formal port of entry, s/he is guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment for up to six months, and if s/he does so again, s/he is guilty of a felony, punishable by imprisonment for up to two years.

(continued on page 8)

**LWVUS 2016 Convention: Immigration and Criminalization of Reentry  
Kelly H. Burnham, Reporting (continued from page 7)**

Similarly, a person from another country who has previously been civilly deported or removed from the United States and who thereafter comes back and is found here without having obtained the permission of the Attorney General of the United States is guilty of a felony, often called Simple Reentry, and is punishable by imprisonment of up to two years. Other portions of this statute rightly provide for much more serious penalties for people who come back to this country after being deported after the commission of some serious crime, such as murder, rape, armed robbery, drug trafficking, kidnapping, child sexual abuse, and other violent crimes involving the use of force. Such cases are often called Aggravated Reentries. However, the great majority of Reentry cases do not involve such convicted violent criminals.

These two simple statutes, EWI and Reentry, account for the most prosecuted federal criminal cases today. 100,000 such cases were prosecuted in 2013, according to Syracuse University Transactional Access Clearinghouse (TRAC). These cases constitute 53 % of the federal cases prosecuted nationwide. *Id.* This number is striking when one considers the various other federal crimes that need to be prosecuted, including but not limited to health care fraud, drug trafficking (not mere possessory offenses), RICO, violent crimes on Indian reservations, bank robbery, money laundering, human trafficking, bank fraud, and mail fraud.

Concomitantly, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is the largest law enforcement agency in the United States. *Id.* CBP has over 21,000 agents, far outstripping the number of agents in the FBI, DEA, ATF, IRS, BIA, and other federal law enforcement agencies. 85% of CBP agents are at the Mexican border, with 10 CBP agents per linear mile. *Id.*

The LWV position on immigration contains two values that are contravened by these massive numbers. While the League does support increased personnel at borders, it also values family reunification and does not support deporting unauthorized immigrants who have no history of criminal activity. Criminal convictions for EWI and Reentry seem to run contrary to the spirit of League social policy. In addition, a result of conviction for Reentry results in a felony conviction of the type that bars the convicted immigrant from trying to apply for legal entry into the United States for a period of ten years.

Specific numbers are illuminating here. Figures from a United States Sentencing Commission study on Reentry offenders in 2013 revealed that most (67%) had relatives in the United States. Nearly half had children in the United States. The average age at which offenders first entered the United States was 17. Most ( 74.5%) had worked in the United States for more than one year at the time of being arrested for Reentry.

(continued on next page)

**LWVUS 2016 Convention: Immigration and Criminalization of Reentry  
Kelly H. Burnham, Reporting (continued from page 8)**

The average offender had previously been deported 3.2 times; notably, 38 % had been deported and subsequently illegally reentered after being sentenced for a prior EWI or Reentry conviction. So much for deterrence!

A recent article in the Albuquerque Journal (published May 14, 2016) regarding Reentry cases in the District of New Mexico reveals that the wrongheadedness of the use of the Reentry statute. The two federal district judges in Las Cruces have complained that one has sentenced 1800 people for the crime of Reentry, while the other has sentenced 1600. These figure contrast with those of federal district judges in the rest of the country; they average only 75 sentencings a year.

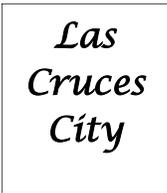
The high number of prosecutions under the Reentry statute results from the policy of the United States Attorney's Office (USAO) policy of prosecution nearly 100% of such cases rather than simply declining to prosecute them at all, charging them as misdemeanors under EWI, or allowing them to be plea-bargained down from a felony to a misdemeanor. The United States Attorney, when questioned about this policy, cited Border security as the reason for the policy. This is notwithstanding the fact that the terrorist attacks on 9-11 were conducted on the East coast and that the public is unaware of any disrupted terrorist attacks along the Southwest border.

What, then, are the reasons behind the numbers? Why concentrate so many resources on these minor, simple-to-prove offenses? The answer is that the statistics generated by these cases have allowed for drastically increasing personnel. In 1990, the USAO generally prosecuted only Aggravated Reentry cases. At that time, the USAO in Las Cruces was staffed by two Assistant United States Attorneys (AUSAs); there was one United States district judge; and one part-time U.S. Magistrate judge. With the institution of the new Reentry policy, however, under which virtually every possible case is prosecuted as a felony, the number of AUSAs has risen to twenty; there are now two sitting district judges; and there are now five magistrate judges. The burgeoning number of CBP agents has already been discussed, and here have been concomitant rises in the numbers of Federal probation and pretrial officers, defense attorneys, U.S. Marshals, jail and prison personnel, all paid by the taxpayer. It must also be remembered that the Canadian border is not similarly situated in any regard, leading to the concern that race may be a factor in this matter.

It is time for the public and our League to realize that the Immigration Emperor in New Mexico is wearing no clothes, despite the high bill the taxpayers are footing to carry out a flawed policy. Once the Emperor is clearly seen for what he is, it is time for Congress to consider decriminalizing Simple Reentry and EWI, or in the alternative, to remove the 10-year civil bar to reapplying for legal entry after conviction for such minor offenses; it is time for the U.S. Attorney to change the policy of criminally prosecution all Simple Reentry cases without more justification than padding the Office's numbers; and to question our own views as League members as our Immigration social policy. •



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**FIRST CLASS**

**July 2016**  
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**Membership Application**

**After November 1 - \$30 for Individual;  
 \$15 for each additional household member  
 Annually: \$60 Individual; \$30 Second  
 Household; \$30 Students**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2nd Household: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contributions:**

\_\_\_\_\_ League of Women Voters Education  
 Fund (Tax Deductible)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ LWV of Greater Las Cruces

