



# UPDATE

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Los Alamos

**League of Women Voters of Los Alamos**

**P. O. Box 158, Los Alamos, NM 87544**

[www.lwvlosalamos.org](http://www.lwvlosalamos.org)

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## ***Calendar***

- August 21 "Women's Votes, Voters' Voices" exhibit continues at the Step Up Gallery in Mesa Public Library through September 21
- September 16 Dinner with a Leader, Deborah Blanche presents "La Nina: The Story of Nina Otero-Warren," Zoom, 6 p.m.
- September 23 Board Meeting, Zoom, noon
- September 28 National Voter Registration Day
- October 6 Candidate Forum, Zoom, 7 p.m.

## ***Dinner with a Leader: The Story of Nina Otero-Warren***

Our usual Lunch with a Leader will be Dinner with a Leader in September. We'll have a special dramatic program to meet Nina Otero-Warren, the leading early New Mexico suffragist who also ran for Congress. Educator, early feminist, public welfare director, politician, author, and businesswoman—Nina was all of these and more. She was recently recognized nationally as one of the significant women who contributed to the advancement of the nation, and will be depicted on the US quarter dollar coin by the federal mint.

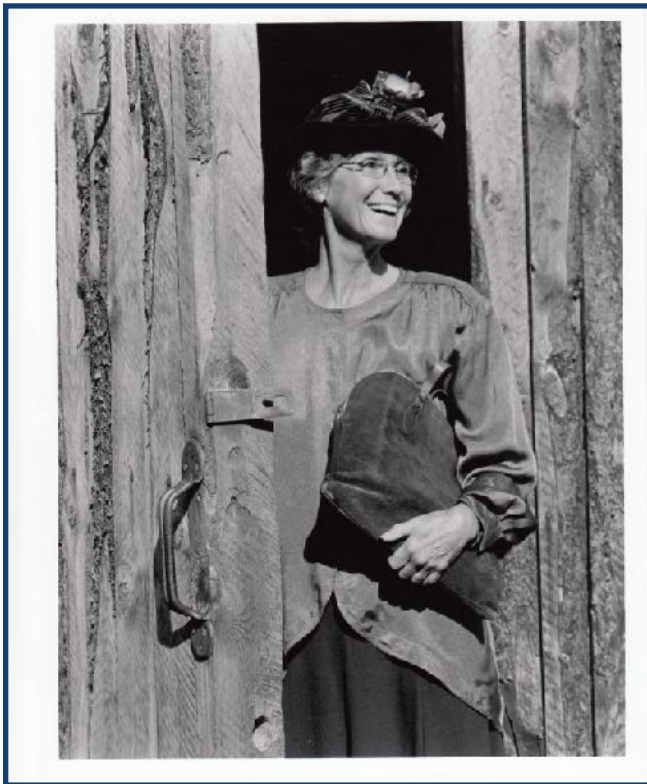
Nina's story will be presented by Deborah Blanche in a Chautauqua program on Thursday, September 16, 2021, at 6 p.m., streaming live via Zoom courtesy of the Mesa Public Library in Los Alamos. This presentation is sponsored by Palomita Productions and is hosted by the League of Women Voters of Los Alamos and the Los Alamos Historical Society. Register at <https://laconm.libcal.com/event/8078774>

"Perhaps Nina is best remembered for her influential role in securing the passage of the women's suffrage amendment by the New Mexico legislature," says Blanche, a veteran Chautauquan, who wrote and plays the role of *La Nina*. In 1881 Otero-Warren was born into two of the most influential and prosperous families of the Rio Abajo – the Baca-Lunas and the Chavez-

Oteros. She was educated in both Spanish and English, and received secondary and college training in St. Louis, but made Santa Fe her home for most of her lifetime. She moved there with her family in 1897, when she was a teenager, upon the inauguration of her cousin, Miguel A. Otero, II, as territorial governor. The family home *la casa grande* on Grant Avenue was hers for most of her life until she died in 1965.

“Nina wasted no time after women got the vote before tossing her chapeau into the ring and becoming the first woman in New Mexico to run for US Congress,” Blanche continues, “and she came very close to winning.

“Her friends included the intellectuals, artists and writers who were among the new New Mexicans



*Nina Otero-Warren (here impersonated by Deborah Blanche) emerges from the family ranch ready to become a leading New Mexico suffragist. See her on Zoom September 16. Courtesy photo.*

that poured into Santa Fe as well as the old guard *patrones*. Her professional work and causes included bilingual and literacy education for the rural residents of Northern New Mexico, improved health and education for Pueblo peoples, and preservation of the arts and customs of her Hispanic heritage statewide. “She’s a real challenge to portray,” Blanche concludes with a wry smile.

The Chautauqua program format is one in which a historical person’s life is researched thoroughly, then presented as a dramatization by the scholar/performer. Blanche’s presentations are like short plays with spaces for the audience to interact with the characters informally. After the character leaves the stage, Blanche returns to answer questions. “Nina’s time was one of tremendous change. Just imagine . . . from New Mexico’s territorial days to the 1960’s.”

Deborah Blanche has been creating one-woman Chautauqua shows since studying theatre in England. In 1988 she received the YWCA’s *Woman on the Move* award for her contribution to the arts in New Mexico.

## ***Co-president’s Message: E Pluribus Unum***

As with the suffragists, the “Women’s Votes” exhibit team found that our strength lay in having a multitude of approaches. The suffragists were skilled as writers, orators, historians, organizers, demonstrators, and hunger strikers.

Our team’s strengths lay in dogged research, unravelling cryptic newspaper articles, ferreting out reasons for strange political behavior, breaking long stories into manageable bites, fitting most items onto 8 ½ x 11 panels with engaging illustrations, writing captivating

headlines, adding appropriate hats, dresses, puzzles, political buttons, ballot boxes, and even a jail for Alice Paul. Visitors are welcome to be photographed in jail with Paul, the originator of the ERA (Equal Rights Amendment).

Our work was not a bit as long and hard as the suffragists' struggles, but we tried to mimic their success.

We learned many remarkable facts:

- Revolutionary ideas take many years to come to fruition. If you count the Declaration of Sentiments of Seneca Falls as the start, then gaining women's suffrage took 72 years.
- Many approaches are needed: work state by state (Carrie Chapman Catt) or push at the national level (Alice Paul).
- Different goals may lead to parallel conclusions: many suffragists were first involved in fighting for the abolition of slavery.
- Women's rights show up in unexpected places: the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) women chose their tribal chiefs.
- Even after the mission is accomplished, unanimous agreement is rare: the last state to ratify the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment was Mississippi in 1984.
- Suffragist Alice Paul introduced the Equal Rights Amendment in 1923...and it still has not taken effect.
- Civil disobedience can draw attention to a cause: Susan B. Anthony voted "illegally" in 1872 and refused to pay her \$100 fine. The "Silent Sentinels" outside the White House, though hardly a threat, were arrested and jailed for obstructing the sidewalk in 1917.

- Humor sometimes helps: to encourage Los Alamos residents to vote in their first New Mexico election, the League built a "Non-Voters' Cemetery" in the middle of town and wrote gravestone rhymes to shame those who didn't vote.

We hope many people will see this exhibit and discover pleasure, facts, and meaning to take away. Various comments in the guest book have reinforced our feelings that it would be nice to give it a longer life--but how?

- Show it elsewhere: Santa Fe, Albuquerque, Las Cruces via their Leagues?
- Compile a book with all this information?
- Share it with middle-school and high-school students?
- Show it in other locations?

We'd love to hear your ideas!

*Becky Shankland and the exhibit team of JJ Mortensen, Hedy Dunn, Adelaide Jacobson, Barbara Calef, Jody Benson, Ellen Mills, Amy Birnbaum, David North, and Akkana Peck*

## **Women's Votes, Voters' Voices**

**August 21 to September 21**

Come check out this exhibit in Mesa Public Library's Step Up Gallery celebrating women's right to vote.

*Exhibit created by*



# ***LWVLA Asks that Los Alamos be Considered a "Community of Interest" for Redistricting Purposes***

The New Mexico Citizen Redistricting Committee (CRC) has begun the process of drawing new voting districts for New Mexico based on data from the 2020 census.

The LWV of Los Alamos has submitted the County as a "Community of Interest," meaning that it should be considered to have common interests for the purposes of drawing districts.

Our argument:

Los Alamos County should be considered a Community of Interest. The county has a single local government, runs its own utilities, and is all one school district. In addition, the county is mostly surrounded by federal lands and is isolated from other communities. The primary employer in



*Akkana created the LAC map with RedistrictR software!*

the county, Los Alamos National Laboratory, plays a major role in determining how we deal with many issues, including utilities, broadband, housing, and environmental impacts.

You can view our entry or add comments on the NM Redistricting Public Comment Portal at <https://portal.newmexico-mapping.org/submission/c4469>.

The second round of CRC meetings will be held in September. The schedule is available on the Citizen Redistricting Committee Info Page at <https://www.nmredistricting.org/meetings-transparency/>. The closest in-person meeting to Los Alamos will be in Las Vegas on October 7, but there will also be a virtual meeting on September 16. Citizens can always submit comments online via the Comment Portal, <https://portal.newmexico-mapping.org/>.

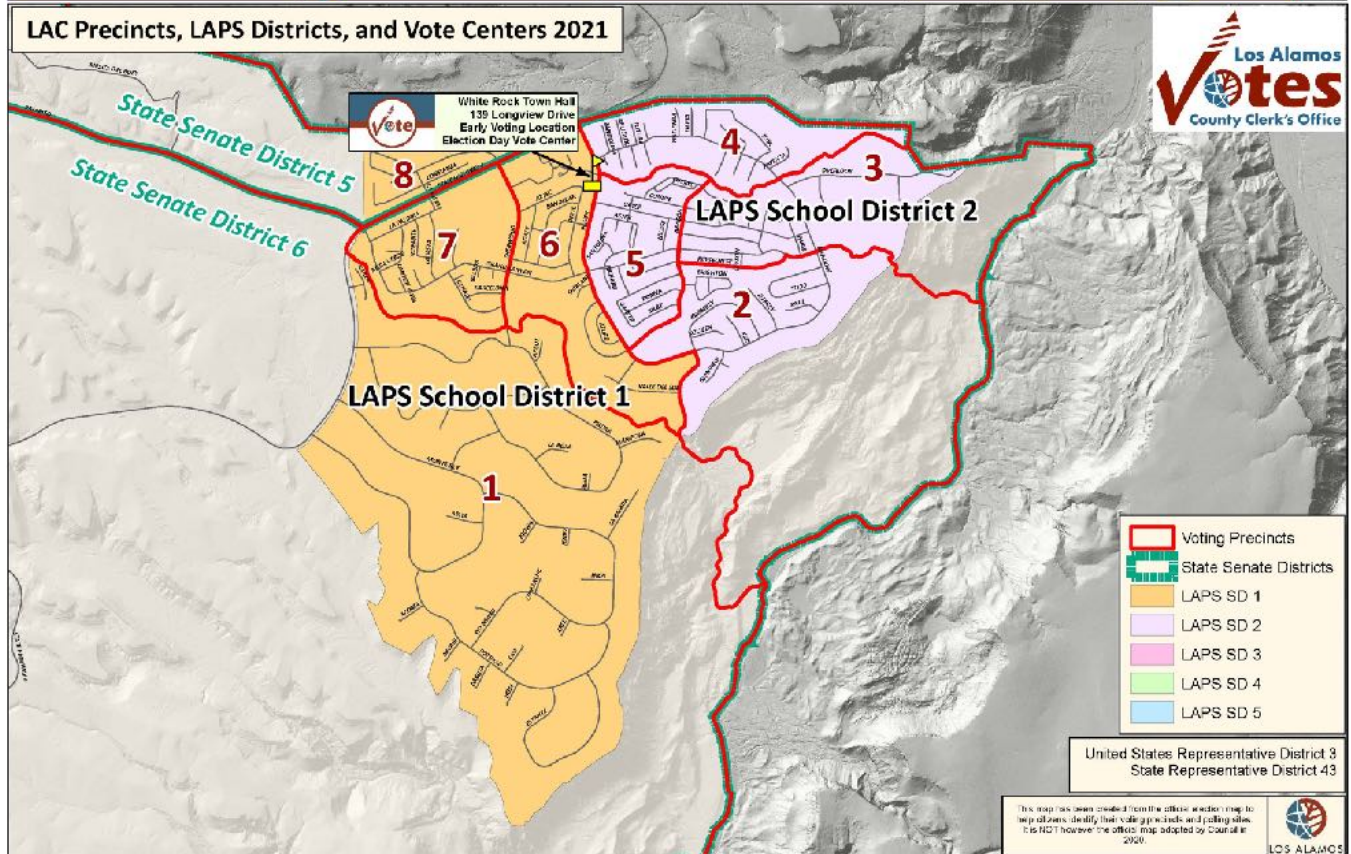
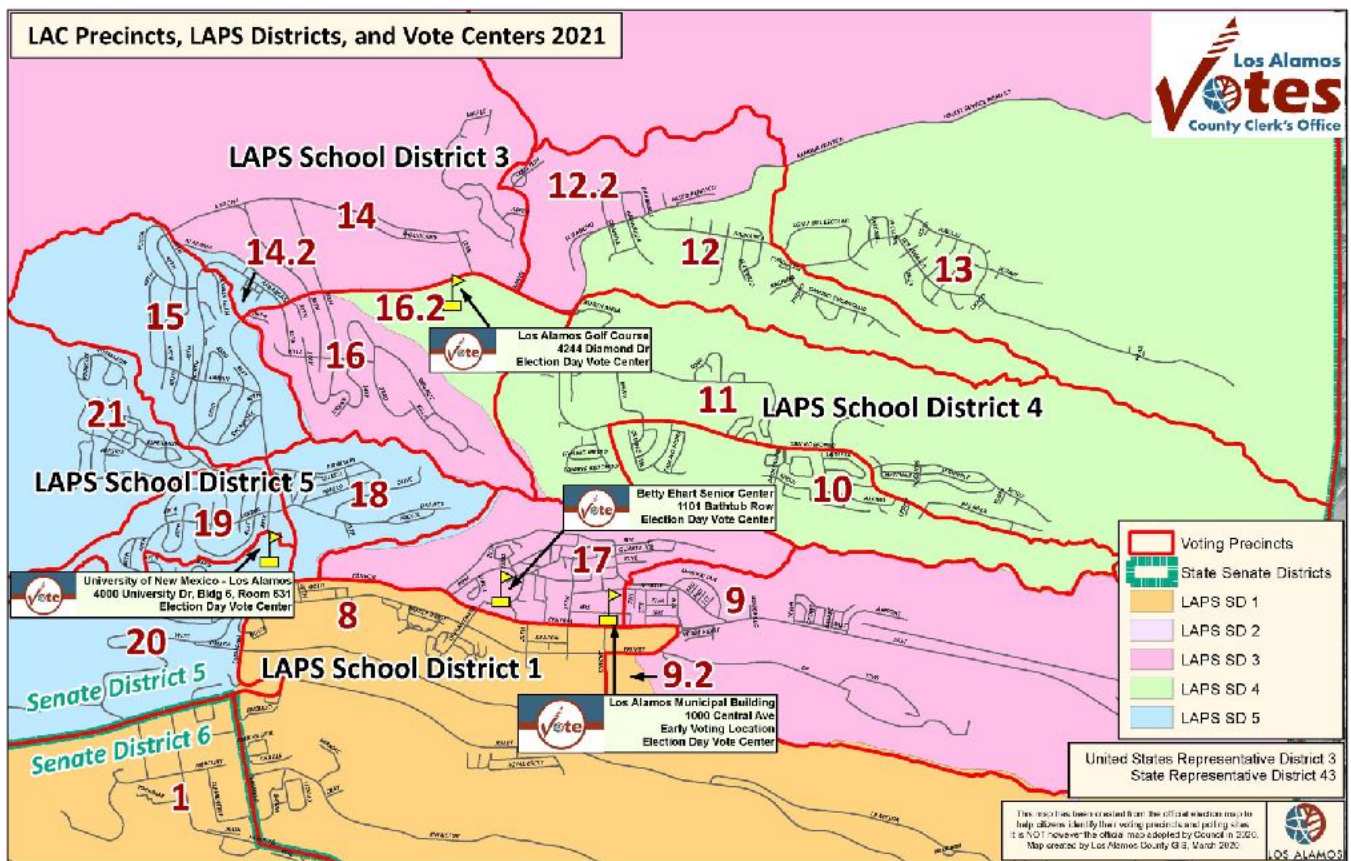
*Akkana Peck*

## ***Early Voting Begins October 5***

November is fast approaching and the election season is upon us. Early voting will begin at the Municipal Building on October 5. Election Day is November 2. Voters may register, change a registration, or request an absentee ballot at <https://www.sos.state.nm.us/voting-and-elections/voter-information-portal/>.

Much of the statute passed during the First Special Session in 2020 expired at the end of the year, so some absentee voting details will be different for this election. Voters will not automatically receive a request for an absentee ballot and the outer envelope for absentee ballots will require more information. However, the absentee ballots will still be tracked.





Los Alamos Public Schools District Maps courtesy of the Office of the Los Alamos County Clerk.

This will be a local non-partisan election; the candidates are running for School Board and UNM-LA Advisory Board. There will also be a mill levy question for the Los Alamos Public Schools. The League will post information and responses to questions on [vote411.org](http://vote411.org) and will publish a Voter Guide in the *Los Alamos Daily Post*. We will also hold a candidate forum by Zoom at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, October 6. Check our website for further information.

#### Candidates for LAPS School Board:

District 1 Ellen Specter  
District 2 Antonio Jaurigue  
Stephen Boerigter  
Paul Jaramillo  
District 4 Melanie Colgan  
Rick Mooday  
District 5 Erin Green  
Nickole Aguilar Garcia

#### Candidates for UNM-LA Advisory Board:

Member 1 Alissa Grissom  
Chris Luchini  
Member 2 Laura Woodring  
Lee Weinland  
Charles McCullough  
Member 5 David Hanson  
David Hampton

## ***Observer Corps Reports***

### **County Council**

#### **August 10**

Two items on the agenda elicited considerable response from the public. The first was a hearing for the ordinance to create a Downtown Pedestrian Retail Overlay Zone, which would limit the use of ground floor space in the downtown to mixed use retail sales,

### **Request an Absentee Ballot Online**

New Mexico does not require an excuse to vote with an absentee ballot.

You can fill out an application for an absentee ballot online at the NM SOS Voter Information Portal:

[www.NMVote.org](http://www.NMVote.org).

The deadline to apply online is midnight on Thursday, October 28th.

entertainment, restaurants, and personal and medical services with residential and professional offices restricted to the upper floors. All but one of the public comments were in opposition to the ordinance. At a town hall meeting for local landowners and business people the previous week, the consensus was opposed to such an overlay. Councilor Sean Williams moved to table the discussion until “Ph.D. economists” had been consulted. After lengthy discussion and two failed motions to table, (one indefinitely and one until December), Councilor Williams moved to withdraw the ordinance. That motion passed 5-1. Councilor Scott was absent and Councilor Reagor voted no.

The second item was a consideration to support signing a letter from Governor Lujan Grisham urging (not mandating) businesses to require vaccination of their employees and suggesting that they also require proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test from patrons. Nearly a dozen members of the public spoke in opposition, many at great length. There were two comments in support of the letter. The Council voted 5-1 to sign the letter with Councilor Reagor voting no.



Another item of interest to League members was an announcement by County Manager Steve Lynne that he had heard from San Ildefonso Pueblo that, while they are not presently interested in a formal MOA (Memorandum of Agreement) about broadband, they are interested in further discussion of a potential partnership.

*Barbara Calef*

## **August 24**

This County Council meeting was held in person and open to the public; it was also available via Zoom.

The Council first heard a briefing from the Art in Public Places Board reporting on the continued purchase and placement of art in our community. New examples of this effort include *Multiverse* at Ashley Pond by Evelyn Rosenberg and *Lizards* at PEEC by Richard Swenson.

This was followed by an interim report from the Resiliency, Energy and Sustainability (RES) Task Force. This Task Force is making excellent progress in identifying ways for the County to reach zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the future. As part of the public comment, our League read the LWVNM Climate Change position, which supports the Task Force's direction. The RES final report is expected in February 2022.

The Council discussed the Regional Capital Projects Fund with one presentation by Councilor Williams and another by Councilor Izraelevitz and Councilor Scott. This fund began with the 2020 budget session, and is intended to help our regional partners with capital projects.

The Council then voted to purchase a Mobile Connectivity Trailer, which will be able to provide cell-phone reception during emergency

situations in areas where no communications are available. The trailer should be ready this fall.

The Council also had an extended discussion on how to address vacant buildings. There is no current solution, but they are considering an ordinance that will require the registration of vacant buildings in order to have a contact name and number for the property. The intent is to get a handle on the magnitude of the problem and have a way to contact owners.

Finally, the Council discussed ways to make the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA) program more accessible and transparent to the business community, including both big and small businesses. LEDA allows local governments to embark on public-private partnerships to promote economic development.

*Lynn Jones*

## **Board of Public Utilities**

The Board of Public Utilities met virtually on Wednesday, August 18, 2021. A plane delay prevented the Board Chair, Utilities Manager, and two Deputy Utilities Managers from attending the meeting. As such, members from the BPU decided to delay endorsement of a contract amendment to the Munis Tyler software until staff would be available to answer questions. Specifically, the amendment would allow County staff to manage and track customer inquiries from start to resolution. Once endorsed, the matter will go to the County Council for approval.

Electric production staff gave a detailed presentation on the condition of the two County-owned hydroelectric facilities, as well as the status of the County's other power production assets and the overall status of the electric production division.

*Julie Williams-Hill*

## ***August Lunch with a Leader: Amanda White***

The August Lunch with a Leader program was advertised as a discussion of watershed monitoring at LANL. However, it began with an introduction by Kate Keenan, the Lead for Regulatory and Stakeholder Interface, who explained the mission of Newport News Nuclear BWXT (N3B), the company currently holding the Los Alamos Legacy Cleanup Contract. The contract includes protecting water quality, shipping out waste from the Manhattan Project and the Cold War Era, and cleaning up the land. Keenan displayed a map of LANL showing the sites where the company is working and listed their website, which has current updates on clean-up activities: <https://n3b-la.com>

Amanda White is the Watershed Monitoring & Technical Services Program Manager for Tech2 Solutions, a subcontractor that supports the N3B Water Program. White noted that the public has heard about the major groundwater concerns at LANL having to do with containing the chromium plume and contamination by demolition explosives. Her work focuses on surface water quality monitoring and compliance, as well as Clean Water Act regulations for N3B.

There are 250 Site Monitoring Areas at LANL. Of those, 135 are currently being monitored. Each requires an individual permit issued by the EPA and certified by the state. The website for reviewing information about the individual permits is <https://ext.em-la.doe.gov/ips/>. The pollutants of concern are specified in the permit along with Target Action Levels (TAL) based on NM State water quality criteria. The contractor has equipped 150 locations with solar monitoring alarms. When alerted, they must quickly collect a sample, which is then tested and the results reported. The contractor is required to take

corrective action to reduce contamination by slowing down erosion and retaining the sediment until the site has been cleaned up. Potential actions include installing straw wattles, rock check dams, earthen berms, or rip rap.

The process must be repeated until the contamination is sufficiently reduced and often requires four to five cycles or loops. The monitors are turned off in the winter because snow melt cannot be used. In 2020 only one sample was collected because of the exceptional drought; most years they collect twelve samples. Seven different watersheds are affected: Ancho Canyon, Chaquehui Canyon, Los Alamos Canyon, Mortandad Canyon, Pajarito Canyon, Sandia Canyon, and Water Canyon.

*Barbara Calef*



*Barbara Calef, Rebecca Chaiken, Karyl Ann Armbruster, and Akkana Peck wait for the rodeo parade to begin. Courtesy Photo.*





*League members gather at the end of the Rodeo Parade : David Izraelevitz, Ellen Mills, Adelaide Jacobson, Karyl Ann Armbruster, JJ Mortensen, Barbara Calef, Becky Shankland, Colleen Olinger, Rebecca Chaiken, Akkana Peck, Hedy Dunn. Courtesy photo.*

## **LWVLA Board of Directors 2021-2022**

### **Officers:**

- Co-president: Barbara Calef
- Co-president: Rebecca Shankland
- 1st Vice-President: *Unfilled*
- 2nd Vice-President: Ellen Mills
- Secretary: Rebecca Chaiken
- Treasurer: Rosmarie Frederickson

### **Directors:**

- BPU Observer: Julie Williams-Hill
- Director at Large: Addie Jacobson
- Director at Large: Felicia Orth
- Director at Large: Akkana Peck
- Fundraising: Ellen Mills
- Lunch with a Leader: Karyl Ann Armbruster

- Publicity: Jody Benson
- Reservations: Amy Birnbaum
- Voter Services: Lynn Jones

### **Off-board Directors:**

- Arrangements: Wendy Swanson
- County Council Observers: LWVLA Board & League Members
- Membership: Jean Dewart & Dotty Reilly
- Newsletter Editor: JoAnn Lysne
- Nominations: Ellen Mills, Leslie Wallstrom, & JoAnn Lysne
- Special Projects: Maxine McReynolds
- Webmaster: Julie Williams-Hill

If you would like to join the League, fill out and submit the membership form on page 10, or visit [www.lwvlosalamos.org](http://www.lwvlosalamos.org).

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LOS ALAMOS

## MEMBERSHIP FORM



Mail to: LWV Los Alamos  
P.O. Box 158  
Los Alamos, NM 87544

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

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

Phone(s): \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Check here to receive our local newsletter Update as an electronic file, saving us postage.

\_\_\_\_ OR Check here if you prefer the newsletter mailed in hard copy.

\_\_\_\_ Check here to receive occasional friendly reminders of upcoming events by e-mail.

**Membership Categories: all checks for memberships and contributions should be payable to LWV-Los Alamos and all are now tax-deductible. Let us know if you'd like a tax-deductible statement. If you prefer to pay via Paypal, visit [www.lwvlosalamos.org](http://www.lwvlosalamos.org).**

\_\_\_\_ Single membership: \$45

\_\_\_\_ Household membership (two+ people at the same address): \$70

\_\_\_\_ Single Sustaining membership: \$75

\_\_\_\_ Household Sustaining membership (two+ people at the same address): \$95

\_\_\_\_ Student membership: \$0 (must be 16 or over)

\_\_\_\_ Contribution to support League work: \$\_\_\_\_\_

### Interests and Ways to Help the League (check as many as apply)

#### Topics of Interest

- \_\_\_\_ Affordable Housing
- \_\_\_\_ Local Government
- \_\_\_\_ Education
- \_\_\_\_ Elections, Voting Rights
- \_\_\_\_ Water Issues
- \_\_\_\_ Land Use
- \_\_\_\_ Health Care
- \_\_\_\_ Money in Politics
- \_\_\_\_ Sustainability
- \_\_\_\_ Living Wage
- \_\_\_\_ Public Transportation
- \_\_\_\_ Environment
- \_\_\_\_ Other topics (please suggest):  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Ways to Help with League Activities

- \_\_\_\_ Set up Refreshments at Forums
- \_\_\_\_ Observer Corps (County Council, BPU, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_ Nominating Committee
- \_\_\_\_ Voter Guides Committee
- \_\_\_\_ Voter Registration
- \_\_\_\_ Publicity
- \_\_\_\_ Website, Social Media
- \_\_\_\_ Newsletter
- \_\_\_\_ Membership
- \_\_\_\_ Fund-raising
- \_\_\_\_ Budget Committee for LWV
- \_\_\_\_ Lunch with a Leader (assistance)
- \_\_\_\_ Fund-raising Committee for LWV
- \_\_\_\_ Participate in board meetings or join board

***The League of Women Voters, 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.***

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