

# UPDATE

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Los Alamos Volume 75, Number 6, October 2022

#### League of Women Voters of Los Alamos P. O. Box 158, Los Alamos, NM 87544

www.LWVLosAlamos.org

Co-Presidents: Barbara Calef bfcalef@gmail.com and

Rebecca Shankland <u>rebecca.shankland@gmail.com</u>

Newsletter: Bob Williams rawbits2@gmail.com

#### Calendar

October 6 LWVLA Voter Guide arrives in the LA Daily Post.

October 11 Early voting begins at the Municipal Building 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

October 20 Lunch with a Leader, LAC Emergency Manager Beverley Simpson,

Zoom, noon-1 p.m.

October 27 Board Meeting, Zoom, noon

#### Lunch with a Leader: Beverley Simpson

The speaker for the October 20 Lunch with a Leader (via ZOOM from noon-1p.m.) will be Beverley Simpson, who is the Emergency Manager for Los Alamos County. Simpson organizes and directs the operations of the Emergency Services Bureau and Consolidated Dispatch Center (CDC). She has over 26 years of experience working in Emergency Response, Homeland Security/Defense and Public Health, with specialized training in Emergency Response, and Public Health Emergencies.

The Emergency Services mission is to protect Los Alamos County through regional and local partnerships, integrating all the activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the capacity to mitigate against and recover from threatened or actual natural

disasters, acts of terrorism or other man-made disasters. Simpson, working with others, coordinates information and resources during a disaster; supports first responders; writes emergency plans; trains public safety agencies; holds exercises on disaster response and recovery; maintains public warning systems; manages Federal grant funds; and educates and prepares our community for disasters.

During the past two years, Simpson has been responding to the COVID-19 pandemic in Los Alamos County. The state Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was started in January 2020 and on February 6, 2020, she sent out the first situation report for the County. A Point of Distribution Plan was developed and approved by Council in preparation for mass vaccination clinics, which began on Dec. 19, 2020.

Simpson is also a Colonel in the United States Air Force Reserves, assigned as the Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer (EPLO) to New Mexico. As the NM EPLO, she advises state and federal entities and civil emergency management leadership, identifying relevant gaps in civil disaster response capabilities.

Karyl Ann Armbruster

\_\_\_\_\_

## Co-President's Message: Rosie the Riveter – Learning from Our Past

"Rosie the Riveter" is an excellent, informative, enjoyable National Historical Park in Richmond, California, located on San Francisco Bay. Rosie became the symbol of the women who went to work out of necessity when working men were drafted into the armed services during World War II.

At this park one can learn the intriguing way many progressive ideas took hold at this time. Some of these concepts were

- health care centers
- the ability of women to do all kinds of jobs and receive decent wages
- professional day care for children
- integration of the work force, including Africans, Hispanics, and Asians
- affordable housing
- · wise use of natural resources

How does one account for this apparent realization of the American dream? Of course, it was the overwhelming need for expedited production of ships, tanks, and jeeps for the war effort. Government fiats or economic necessity led to most of these changes. So, there are vast differences between the changes dictated by the circumstances of Rosie the Riveter and the possibilities for change in our world today.

The changes themselves are often quite dramatic. The Kaiser Permanente (named for a distant creek near a Kaiser plant) Health Plan opened in 1942. Shipyard workers pre-paid 7-cent-a-day premiums covering everything from first-aid stations to full hospitals. Physicians were salaried, not paid by fee-for-service. Eventually this plan morphed into today's Kaiser Permanente health care organization.

Women workers were desperately needed. One slogan read: "Can you use an electric mixer? If so, you can learn to operate a drill." This was the most significant change in women's equality since gaining the right to vote in 1920. However, they were paid roughly 50% of men's salaries, despite doing remarkably tough work such as welding and riveting. Sadly, after the war, the government encouraged a "return to normalcy" and the fraction of working women declined from 36% to 28% by 1947.

To facilitate the women's ability to work, children attended Child Development Centers with staff trained in the new profession of early childhood education. One Child Development Center in Richmond has been preserved with its charming educational toys. I could not discover whether these were free to workers, but I suspect that they had a modest charge (as with the health care fees).

Thanks to the demand for workers, another step toward an egalitarian society was the integration of African-Americans, Hispanics, and Asians. Portraits of workers in the industries of Richmond depict all these people working side-by-side in their helmets, safety glasses, and overalls. Of course, there was one glaring exception: Japanese people were removed to internal concentration camps.

Richmond grew from a town of 23,600 in 1940 to 93,700 in 1943, creating the need for a huge increase in housing, which had to be affordable for middle-class workers. The Lanham Act of 1940 gave defense-related communities money for housing, recreational facilities, hospitals, day care centers, and schools. Sadly, the housing was segregated.

All over the United States, people were urged to recycle crucial materials and forced to ration gas and foods like butter and sugar. One recycling motto was "Use it up – Wear it out – Make it do – or Do without." Our recycling motto now is "Reduce, Re-use, Recycle," which is not so different, but is based not on war needs but on the survival of the planet.

As a pacifist and believer in trying to create a world of justice and equality, I am troubled that the achievements depicted in the Rosie the Riveter exhibit were driven by the exigencies of a war effort. Is that the only way to progress toward our goals of achieving a livable wage, universal affordable health care, child development centers, affordable and integrated housing, equality of sexes and races, and wise use of resources? How much progress have we made since World War II?

One hopes, perhaps in vain, that the similar existential challenge of climate change might move humanity as a whole toward some of these goals. We should reflect on what aspects of social progress are crucial to society now.

Becky Shankland

Figure 1. Poster commissioned by the Westinghouse Electric Corporation 1942.





Figure 2. Under the poster, it says: "With fuel rationed, carpooling to work became commonplace." Photo by Becky Shankland

[Sources: Rosie the Riveter National Historic Park information; websites for Richmond, California; Rosie the Riveter; Kaiser Permanente.]

#### Welcome, New Member! Theresa Cull

Theresa Cull writes: Hi everyone. I've been in the Los Alamos area for over 39 years and have been a member of the national League of Women Voters for some time, but recently found out that I also needed to join the local group. So, I did! I have 2 children who were born in Los Alamos and went through the public school system. My daughter is currently flying helicopters in the Navy and my son is a senior at the University of Vermont. I volunteered for, or participated in, many of their activities, including coaching sports and building houses in Mexico over spring break.

I've also been involved in the community by serving on several boards of non-profit organizations. I retired from the Laboratory two years ago after a career in Environment, Safety, and Health, and management. Now that I've had a couple of years to work through my to-do list, I've also decided to run for Los Alamos County Council. I look forward to getting to know you and being involved in the local chapter.

## 2022 General Election Information

Watch for LWVLA's Official 2022
Voter Guide on October 6<sup>th</sup> in
Thursday's Print Edition of the Los
Alamos Daily Post!

The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos 2022 **Voter Guide** for the **Nov. 8**<sup>th</sup> **General Election** will be inserted in Thursday's print edition of the *Los Alamos Daily Post* newspaper, which is delivered by mail to every home and business in Los Alamos County.

#### **ESSENTIAL DATES**

**Tuesday, Oct. 11<sup>th</sup> –** Voter registration closes unless using same day voter registration (register and vote on the same day), which is available through November 8 at any Vote Center.

### Early In-Person Voting in Los Alamos and White Rock Times and Places –

- Oct. 11<sup>th</sup> thru 21<sup>st</sup> Monday-Friday only, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Los Alamos County Municipal Building.
- Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup> thru Nov. 5 Monday-Saturday only, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Municipal Building and at the White Rock Town Hall.
- Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> Saturday, early in-person voting ends.

### November 8<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday, Election Day – 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Eligible voters may vote at any Vote Center: Los Alamos County Municipal Building, Los Alamos County Golf Course, UNM-LA Building 6, Rm. 631, Betty Ehart Senior Center, or White Rock Town Hall.

The sample ballot is available at the following complex URL:

https://cdn5-

hosted.civiclive.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server\_6435726/File/Government/Elected%200fficials/Clerks/2022%20General%20Election%20Sample%20Ballot.pdf

For additional information on anything related to the 2022 General Election in Los Alamos County, call the Clerk's Office at (505) 662-8010. For candidate information, go to **Vote411.org.** Check for voting updates at

http://www.losalamosnm.us/clerk.

#### September Was National Voter Registration Month

League members were busy preparing for the election last month, but we also took some time to work for voter registration. I joined County Clerk Naomi Maestas and Elections Manager Victoria Martinez to receive the Voter Registration Month Proclamation from the County Council on August 30th.



Fig. 3. From left, Los Alamos County Elections Manager Victoria Martinez, League of Women Voters of Los Alamos Co-President Barbara Calef. Los Alamos County Clerk Naomi Maestas and County Council Vice Chair Denise Derkacs hold up a proclamation declaring September as 'Voter Registration Month' and Tuesday, Sept. 20 as 'Voter Registration Day' during the Council meeting Tuesday, Aug. 30. Photo by Kirsten Laskey/ladailypost.com

On September 17 Voter Services Director Lynn Jones joined members of the County Clerk's office in Bandelier for the naturalization ceremony when 14 people were sworn in as citizens and helped to register as new voters. On September 22 Charlie Sartor and I offered voter registration and election information at the farmers' market.

Barbara Calef

#### Observer Corps Report – County Council September 6<sup>th</sup>

The session was attended by Council Chair Ryti and Councilors Derkacs, Hand, Izraelevitz, Lepsch, Reagor, and Scott. Our observer report is based upon discussion during the meeting and documentation provided in the full agenda packet.

# American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Audit and Transition Plan for Recreational Facilities

The Council unanimously agreed to accept the ADA audit and transition plan prepared by a consulting firm for the County's recreational facilities. The ADA requires the County and the Community Services Department (CSD) to make recreational parks, facilities, and programs accessible to people with disabilities. WT-Engineering conducted a detailed audit of 60 sites, for which it tallied about 2,820 deficits. The phased retrofit schedule outlined in the report to remedy these deficits could cost

about \$4.7M, stretching out over 12 years. Cory Styron, CSD Director, noted that much of these costs would be incorporated into planned capital projects and maintenance activities. The Parks and Recreation Board had recommended acceptance of the report.

#### Community need

John McGovern of WT-Engineering reported that his team held three community meetings to assess the needs and priorities of the County's residents. Twelve percent of households reported having at least one member with a disability. Among people of 65 years or older, the incidence of disability was 41%. The consultant's survey found that, if access were improved, the top facilities that would generate more visits were trails, the aquatic center, libraries, and picnic areas. The most requested retrofits were access to ADA compliant ramps, handrails, automated door openers, elevators, accessible restrooms, and accessible parking.

#### Audit findings

"The County should remove barriers as soon as possible," stated the consultant's report. McGovern emphasized that the ADA does not require every existing site to be retrofitted for access, acknowledging that some fixes are technically infeasible or may create an undue burden. In general, the consultant recommended a target of ensuring that at least one-in-three recurring assets be accessible, and that accessible sites for the most frequently used type of assets (e.g., playgrounds, picnic areas, sports fields) be distributed such that every resident is close to an accessible site.

The consultant's report also included cost estimates of an additional \$4.5 million in a category titled "Department Option" for work at sites where access concerns were present, but which were in a recreational category for which the consultant felt that CSD facilities already met the program access test.

## Implementation of a food waste composting program

The Council unanimously agreed to accept the recommendation of the Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB) that the County implement a municipal food waste composting program to:

- establish food composting in Bayo Canyon using the windrow system,
- provide food-waste drop-off sites for residents at the Eco Station and the Overlook Collection Center and offer curbside collection for businesses, and
- incorporate this program into the revised Environmental Services associated fees and FY2024 budget development.

The program had previously been presented to Council at its work session on May 17, 2022. At that time, Council raised additional questions to be addressed before it would vote to take action (see observer report "Food Waste Composting Feasibility Study overview," in the June 2022 LWVLA *Update*). Specifically, Councilor Scott and others had asked for additional information based on a holistic approach to economic costs that included the costs of no-action compared to the options presented, the effects on carbon emissions, and the shipping costs of unused mulch.

Angelica Gurule, Environmental Services Manager, addressed Council's concerns at tonight's meeting, focusing on making the business case for the composting program. The most cost-effective program option would entail a capital cost of \$2.0M and an annual operational cost of \$581K, including three new full-time employees for a 7-day operation. The program would divert up to 4,500 tons of organic material — consisting of 3,000 tons of yard waste and 1,500 tons of food waste — to an off-site landfill at a cost of about \$60 per ton. The operation would also generate highquality compost that could be sold to offset program costs by about \$70K per year. On the other hand, if the composting program was not accepted, Gurule said the County would have to reevaluate its yard waste program because

there is currently no end use for the 3,300 tons of mulch that are now produced from this program.

Council expressed appreciation for the rigorous evaluation of economic feasibility of the proposed composting program. Noting their initial skepticism, several commented that they were now convinced that the business case had been made for potential long-term economic benefits as well as environmental benefits for the program.

Additional details on the discussions at this meeting are provided in the article by Kirsten Laskey, Los Alamos Daily Post, September 22, https://ladailypost.com/council-greenlights-municipal-wide-compost-program/

June Fabryka-Martin and Craig Martin

#### Observer Corps Report – County Council September 27<sup>th</sup>

June Fabryka-Martin and Craig Martin were out of internet range this week. Here is a brief summary of two issues on the Council agenda.

#### LANL SWEIS

In August 2022 the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) announced its intent to prepare a new Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement (SWEIS) for LANL in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The SWEIS "will analyze the potential environmental impacts of the reasonable alternatives for continuing operations of the Laboratory for approximately the next 15 years." During the meeting the Council voted 7-0 to approve comments drafted by County management and staff in consultations with Chair Ryti and Councilors Scott and Hand. The comments may be viewed at the following Los Alamos Laboratory legislation page:

https://losalamos.legistar.com/Legislatio nDetail.aspx?ID=5851756&GUID=27B874A9-A9FE-47D7-8F64-D9472B1B0F3C&Options=&Search=

#### **NM Constitutional Amendment 2**

The councilors also considered two possible resolutions in support of Constitutional Amendment No. 2, which is on the ballot for the November 8 election. There was general support for the constitutional amendment, which would create an exemption to the antidonation clause "to allow public investment to provide access to essential household services, including internet, energy, water, wastewater, and other similar services...." However, the majority of the councilors wanted more information about the wording of the proposed amendment and the resolutions. They voted 6-1 to postpone a vote until October 18. Chair Ryti voted no because he wanted the Council to speak before early voting begins.

Barbara Calef

# **Observer Corps Report –**Planning & Zoning Commission September 28<sup>th</sup>

Los Alamos Planning & Zoning Commission members approved an application from Columbus Capital for a Special Use Permit to operate a storage facility in the 58,000 sq. ft. former Smith's supermarket in the Mari-Mac Center.

Columbus Capital partners Jeff Branch and Greg Gonzales explained that they have been involved with construction projects in the area for 40 years and were invited to Los Alamos a few years ago by former County Economic Development Director Joanie Ahlers. Branch said the company is excited and honored to be able to present the Mari-Mac Center project to the Commission.

Branch said Columbus Capital has also purchased the 991 Central Avenue building where the Motor Vehicles Department office is located from Gerald Ohlsen as well as the 820 Trinity building currently leased to Los Alamos National Laboratory. They also purchased eight condominiums in the 800 Trinity building where Daniel's Café is located. Branch said

they entered into a contract with Kroger in May and have until next May to close on the property. He said that, unfortunately, the national and world economic changes in the last six months have made things a lot different than they were when they began negotiating back in February and April. Interest rates have almost tripled and inflation is anywhere from 8 percent to 12 percent, he said. He said the company is used to this and it is not something they are afraid of.

Branch explained that Columbus responded to a request for proposals for warehouse space from LANL. He said they were requesting a Special Use Permit from the commission to be allowed to use a portion of the Smith's building and a portion of the rear of the Beall's and Auto Zone locations for storage. He said this part of the project would be phase zero but it gives them hope that they would be able to close on the property and get it out of Kroger hands. Over the last months Branch and Gonzales have had a series of community meetings and they will be coming to P&Z with concepts for the overall master plan of the project. They still have to come back for a preliminary development plan and then a final development plan, which will create a space to live, work and play.

Branch said one of the things that came out of the neighborhood meetings was to put retail space in front of the Smith's store and put the storage area in the rear. The LANL request is for a five-year lease. At the end of that lease the building will be torn down completely. The first phase would be developing part of the parking lot with about 360 apartments, 40,000 sq.ft. of retail, parking, community uses. When the lease for the storage space expires, they would commence the second phase.

Gonzales said Columbus has taken a twoprong approach to the application for the special use permit – meeting the criteria and looking at what the community wants. Within six to eight months of obtaining the permit, Gonzales said some retail space would be provided.

Their attorney, Carl Sommer, clarified that Columbus has purchased properties belonging to Gerald Ohlsen and has invested almost \$5 million in those. He said the project is very exciting for the town because the County's Comprehensive Plan cries out for redevelopment, reinvestment, revitalization, and diversification of the economy, so that it is both supportive of the Lab but also serves the community in a broader sense. He said the storage plan is a stepping stone to allowing the property to be redeveloped with a broader vision that fits what the community is looking for.

Sommer went through the criteria to be considered by the P&Z Commission for the Special Use Permit. He explained that if it was approved, the company would need a permit for demolition and the tenant improvements as well as the required business license. He asked the P&Z Commission to grant a Special Use Permit for five years plus the 180 days the company needs to get the proposed use up and running.

The Commissioners voiced concerns that Columbus would be able to reapply for another Special Use Permit for a storage facility after the time requested is up. However, a business license will be required for the facility to operate even after the permit is granted. Business licenses are renewed on an annual basis. When the self-storage Special Use Permit expires, the initial business license will no longer be valid. There was also concern that LANL, the primary user, would push for a longer lease.

The Commission voted unanimously to approve the Special Use Permit for a period not to exceed 5½ years from the date of approval. Under that approval, Columbus Capital has to apply for a business license and submit a new application for any proposed new use prior to renewal of the business license.

Maire O'Neill

# September Lunch with a Leader: Deputy County Manager Anne Laurent

Anne Laurent has worn four hats over the ten years she has worked for Los Alamos County. Trained as an architect, but also holding an M.A. in Public Administration, she first worked in Los Alamos as Director of Capital Projects and Facilities. She was promoted to Director of Economic and Community Development. When she returned from Utah a few years ago, she became the Director of Public Works and last year she was appointed Deputy County Manager. Laurent commented that she would not serve in that position anywhere else, but that she is passionate about working on things that benefit where she lives.

She summarized recent efforts by the County to improve communications. Julie Williams-Hill has updated the Communications Plan; there will be a new website in the next 6-8 months; and the County is advertising for a social media coordinator. However, a recent survey indicates that people prefer to be notified by email!

Laurent is working with Community
Broadband Manager Jerry Smith on grant
options for improving the "middle mile," the
internet feed coming into the County. A
community survey to acquire information about
broadband availability, affordability, and
accessibility in the "last mile" (the internet cables
coming into our homes) was due to come out
soon. (It has now been distributed.) The survey
will be opened up to everyone online starting on
October 14. It will close on October 28. The
results of the survey will inform the Request for
Proposals to improve internet quality and
availability in Los Alamos.

Laurent also supervises the Community Services Department, one of the larger departments in the County. The services include parks and open space, recreation, the library, and social services. Four boards — Parks and Recreation, Library, Art in Public Places, and the Health Council — oversee the various functions. Many of the County

facilities, including the senior centers, youth activity centers, nature center, and more are administered through contracts.

Two current projects have dominated the attention of many residents recently. Conditions at the golf course had deteriorated significantly over many decades. In the last twelve years a new clubhouse was built and a new irrigation system installed. Now a bid is planned to be issued by the end of this year for Phase 1, which will provide improvements to golf features on Holes 4 through 18, to include tees, bunkers, greens, permanent restrooms, targeted cart path upgrades and deferred maintenance.

Phase 2 includes development of several design concept options for improving Holes 1 through 3, reconfiguring the driving range to improve safety and eliminate the use of safety netting, and other improvements such as practice area and cart path upgrades.

The second project has been referred to as "Pueblo Canyon." Laurent said that it was a conceptual study, not a project with a budget. (Later she said that the consultant was asked to do a conceptual analysis of the existing trails and potential for mountain biking opportunities.) She commented that it got off on the wrong foot because of limitations about hybrid, and that it was perceived to be all or nothing, although it consists of different elements. In response to a question, she said, "I don't think we did a great job of explaining." Most recently the "study" has been sent back to the consultants to coordinate meetings and hire a biologist. Laurent noted that she has a spreadsheet of everyone who has commented and will keep in touch.

Laurent also spoke about some of her other responsibilities. The County Manager's office manages the Council agendas and deals with collective bargaining agreements, four of which are currently open. She has also focused on legacy waste clean-up. It's a big job!

Barbara Calef

## LWVLA Board of Directors 2022-2023

#### Officers:

• Co-president: Barbara Calef

• Co-president: Rebecca Shankland

• 1st Vice-President: Felicia Orth

• 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President: Ellen Mills

Secretary: Rebecca Chaiken

Treasurer: Rosmarie Frederickson

#### **Directors:**

Lunch with a Leader: Karyl Ann Armbruster

Publicity: Jody Benson

Voter Services: Lynn Jones

• Newsletter Editor: Robert Williams

• Director at Large: Addie Jacobson

• Director at Large: Akkana Peck

#### Off-board Directors:

• Arrangements: Wendy Swanson

 County Council and P&Z Observers: June Fabryka-Martin and Craig Martin

Membership: Jean Dewart & Dotty Reilly

• Nominations: Ellen Mills & Leslie Wallstrom

 Website and Facebook: Madhavi Garimella & Helena Whyte

Video Editor: Eduardo Santiago



# 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:
	vsletter Update as an electronic file, saving postage and paper.  have a hard copy of the newsletter mailed to you.
• •	nal friendly reminders of upcoming events by e-mail.
· •	for memberships and contributions should be payable to LWV-ctible. Let us know if you'd like a tax-deduction statement.
Single Sustaining membership	rship (two or more people at the same address): \$95.  at be 16 or over).  a work: \$
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 area of interest:	Ways to Help with League Activities  Voter Registration Organize/provide refreshments at forums Observer Corps: Council, DPU, P&Z, etc. Write newsletter articles Assist in developing the Voter Guide (editing, developing questions, data entry, etc.) Assist with Lunch with a Leader Website/Social Media – Technical assistance and content development Advocate for League positions – Communicate with local, state, and federal leaders Serve on LWV-Los Alamos Board (we need a Treasurer and a Lead for the Voter Guide)

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.

In this issue	
Calendar	1
Lunch with a Leader: Beverley Simpson	1
Co-President's Message: Rosie the Riveter - Learning from Our Past	2
Welcome, New Member! Theresa Cull	4
2022 General Election Information	4
September Was Natíonal Voter Registration MonthMonth	5
Observer Corps Report - County Council September 6th	5
Observer Corps Report - County Council September 27th	7
Observer Corps Report -Planning & Zoning Commission September 28th	7
September Lunch with a Leader: Deputy County Manager Anne Laurent	9
LWVLA Board of Directors 2022-2023	10

\_\_\_\_\_\_

League of Women Voters of Los Alamos P.O. Box 158 Los Alamos, NM 87544