



LWV Whittier VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Whittier serves Whittier, La Habra Heights, La Mirada, Montebello, Pico Rivera, Santa Fe Springs, Los Nietos, South Whittier and surrounding communities.

LWV Whittier
562-947-5818

LWVwebsite www.whittier.ca.lwvnet.org

Editor: Ginny Holloway
562-777-4343

MAY 2010

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MISSION

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.

DIVERSITY POLICY

The League of Women Voters of Whittier in both its values and practices, affirms its belief and commitment to diversity and pluralism, which means there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of the LWV on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

ANNUAL MEETING

LWV Whittier

Thursday, MAY 27

5:30 – 9:30 p.m.

DeLuca's Ristorante

16503 E. Whittier Blvd.

Whittier

Choice of Spaghetti or Penne with choice of sauce, Lasagna, or Fettuccine Alfredo

Complete Dinner includes appetizer, salad, dessert, drink

\$20 per person

Speaker: Sally Seven, LWV Claremont

“Health Care Reform: The US and Other Countries”

RSVP by May 25:

Beverly Walker

949-2010

Margo Reeg 947-5818

Please bring your Annual Meeting Kit (will be sent soon)

President's Message

May is shaping up to be a very busy month for members of LWV Whittier. We will be involved in the **High School Voter Registration Project** at four high schools, funded by a grant from LWVUS., which will yield up to \$900 for the Whittier League's Education Fund. Please read the article on this project to learn how you can help.

Annual Meeting: The all-important business meeting for the League will again be held at DeLuca's Italian Restaurant on Thursday, May 27th, from 5:30 to 9:30 pm. We will be adopting a Budget, electing officers and directors, and deciding on program activities for next year. Be sure to RSVP. See the "ad" on the first page of this VOTER.

Our dedicated crew of **Rio Hondo College Elections** staff will be managing the RHC Student government elections on Wednesday, May 5th and Thursday, May 6th. Hours are from 10am to 2 pm and 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm. Many thanks go to Margaret Snyder, who diligently calls and schedules all of the volunteers in the Fall and Spring. And thanks to all of our members who staff the voting booth and encourage students and staff to vote in the June Primary. Student elections bring \$300 into the League coffers.

We were also asked to staff the Mt. San Antonio College student elections for one day, April 29, to help the East San Gabriel Valley League. We will get \$125 for working on this from 9 am to 5 pm.

In preparation for the June 8th Primary election, the Whittier League will present **Pros and Cons** on the five statewide ballot measures, Propositions 13 through 17 at Whittier City Hall. The program will be taped and played on local cable channel 3. Sally Rivera and I will be doing the presentation. Speakers are available to talk to other groups during the month. Please call Sally to schedule speakers for your group. Thank you to Sally Rivera, Sheila Hartfield, and Ruth Kadota for attending the Ballot Briefing on April 24 at Hollenbeck Palms in East LA. We're happy to be able to enlarge our speaker corps.

A candidate forum for **42nd Congressional District** Republican Primary is set tentatively for Friday evening, May 21, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm at Whittier City Hall. **Congressman Gary Miller**, who has held the seat for 12 years is being challenged by three Republicans—**David Su, Phil Liberatore, and Lee McGroarty.**

Another exciting opportunity for League members is the LWV Los Angeles County/Southwestern Law School event, **Meet Your Judicial Candidates**, on Thursday, May 20, 2010 from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm at the Southwestern Law School, 3050 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, in the former Bullock's Wilshire. All of the candidates for Superior Court offices are expected to attend, to chat with voters. President Appellate court Justice Judith McConnell will speak on judicial campaigning and the need for greater education of the public on judicial races. KCET anchor Val Zavala will interview Justice McConnell also. Do try to attend. It will be worth your time to learn more about our judicial candidates.

Margo

Welcome New Members

(Please add to your roster)

Celeste Zabala 562-965-9175
7353 Loch Alene ckeno@aol.com
Pico Rivera 90660

Gina Wong 562-692-2758
11322 Monte vista Drive fifty9thbridge@aol.com
Whittier 90601

Julie K. Hutchins 562-325-5321
7721 Vale Drive
Whittier 90602
JKHUTCHINS_PRAMHUS@hotmail.com

Roster Change:

Susan Given givensue@gmail.com

Get Well Wishes

Loretta Boyce is presently in PIH with a Staph infection. We send her our best wishes for a full recovery.

MEET AND LEARN ABOUT THE JUDICIAL CANDIDATES

On June 8, Los Angeles County voters will decide among 21 candidates for six Superior Court seats. How will voters make informed choices?

You are invited to a **free, public** and **rare chance to meet the candidates**.

If elected, these individuals will decide civil and criminal cases *as Superior Court Judges*.



The program also will feature a discussion on voters and judicial elections with **Hon. Judith McConnell**, Administrative Presiding Justice, 4th District Appellate Court, San Diego (pictured, left) and **Val Zavala**, Vice President, News and Public Affairs of KCET-TV and anchor/reporter for KCET's weekly newsmagazine, 'SoCal Connected' (pictured, right).

The event is sponsored by Southwestern Law School and the League of Women Voters of Los Angeles County.

THURSDAY, MAY 20

5:30 – 8:00 P.M

The event is free and open to the public, but **reservations are required**.
RSVP by May 17 to advancement@swlaw.edu or (213) 738-6814.

Southwestern Law School
3050 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90010

Parking is complimentary. For a map and directions, visit www.swlaw.edu/directions.

For more information, contact Molly Selvin, Assistant Dean for Interdisciplinary Programs at mselvin@swlaw.edu or (213) 738-6624.

Natural Resources

Charolette Fox, LWVC Director

Protect AB 32

The LWVC strongly supported the enactment of AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. At its March meeting, the board decided that the LWVC will join with the Green California coalition to oppose the initiative effort to suspend the implementation of AB 32 until the state unemployment rate is 5.5 percent or lower for four consecutive calendar quarters.

We believe, along with the LWV of the United States, that global climate change is a real and critical issue facing our planet and needs to be seriously addressed.

The group, Californians for Clean Energy and Jobs, <http://www.noonvalero.com/FactSheet-Biz%203.5.10.pdf> is organizing opposition to the initiatives to suspend AB 32.

See www.ecovote.org/ab32/letter.html for other talking points on this campaign.

Challenge to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

In the special budget session of the Legislature, the Governor proposed that up to 25 projects per year over five years (125 total) should be exempted from legal challenge to their completed environmental review for the purposes of expediting the creation of jobs. The Department of Business, Transportation and Housing would select the projects to be exempted. While this proposal was not enacted, we expect the same or similar proposals to come up. The LWVC will oppose measures to weaken CEQA, such as AB 1805 and SB 1010 in the regular legislative session.

Williamson Act Future

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965 — commonly referred to as the Williamson Act — enables local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of restricting specific parcels of land to agricultural or related open space use. In return, landowners receive property tax assessments that are much lower than normal because they are based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value. Local governments receive an annual subvention of forgone property tax revenues from the state via the Open Space Subvention Act of 1971. The current state budget has virtually suspended these county reimbursements, leaving many counties with huge shortages of funding.

The Senate Local Government Committee held an oversight hearing on March 3, 2010 on the background of the Williamson Act, the status of how it is faring within various counties, and options to keep it alive. A background paper is available at http://www.senate.ca.gov/ftp/SEN/COMMITTEE/STANDING/LOC_GOV/_home/3-3-10BriefingPaper.pdf

Senator Fran Pavley's News

Landmark California clean car law victory Due to recent action by The California Air Resources Board (CARB) my legislation (AB 1493) which caps greenhouse gas emissions for passenger vehicles, is one step closer to becoming a national standard. CARB unanimously passed the regulations necessary for full implementation. This is wonderful news for consumers, the auto industry, and the environment. This regulation will reduce air pollution, dependence on foreign oil, and consumer costs at the pump, and will create new jobs.

This action was made possible by the hard work and cooperation in a joint rule making process between staff at the California Air Resources Board and the Obama Administration's Environmental Protection Agency. Automobile companies will have certainty on rules that will apply all across the country.

LWVC Legislative Priorities

Priority Issues for Action in the Legislature

- **State and Local Finances/State Budget**
Support reform of the state budget process
Support equitable and adequate generation and distribution of tax revenues

Other Legislative Issues, As Time and Resources Permit

- Support requests from local Leagues for advocacy on bills specific to their areas
- Take action as appropriate on core issues: Redistricting, Elections, Voting Rights, Campaign Finance Reform, and Reproductive Choices
- Consider Program Director recommendations for action on priority bills in their program areas such as Health Care, Education, and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Statewide Ballot Measures

- Review all statewide ballot measures and recommend a position or neutrality on each one to the LWVC Board of Directors

HIGH SCHOOL VOTER REGISTRATION

The Whittier League has received an Ed Fund grant from the LWVUS to conduct this voter registration project in four high schools in the Whittier Union High School District. The LWVUS is partnering with Project Vote to do the research, analyzing the methods used by Leagues in several states to register voters at high minority high schools.

Our League has been assigned to register students at La Serna and Cal Hi through classroom presentations. We will walk students through the registration form, and also demonstrate a polling place using actual equipment. We will also be registering seniors at Whittier High and Santa Fe by making presentations in Senior assemblies.

Sally Rivera, Jan Baird, Joan Ewing, and Margo Reeg are working on this project. We welcome the help of more League members who can assist students, collect forms, tally forms, and help with presentations. Please contact Sally or Margo if you are able to participate.



The 2010 High School Voter Registration Project is a nationwide effort to bring more young people – especially young minorities – into the democratic process. Through a joint collaboration with Project Vote, the League of Women Voters is working in several key states to encourage voter registration in high schools with a high percentage of minority students.

Goals of the Project:

- Work with 100 high schools in five states (TX, AZ, CA, FL and VA) to help **27,000 17- and 18-year-olds apply to become registered voters.**
- Conduct groundbreaking research on youth voter registration trends
- Determine the most effective strategies for engaging high school students
- Develop a training manual for organizations and educators to utilize in planning their own high school voter registration activities.
- Develop lasting partnerships with educators, youth groups, and community leaders

PROS AND CONS

The Whittier Voter Service team will be presenting Pros and Cons on the five State Ballot Measures this month. The date has not been set for the public presentation at Whittier City Hall. The Pros and Cons will be recorded and played on Whittier Channel 3 and the DVD will be available at the Whittier Library AV desk for checkout. We will notify members of the taping date via email.

Mon. May 17th

Hollenbeck Palms Srs.

Wed. May 19th

Whittier A.M. Kiwanis

We will try to accommodate requests by other groups during the month. Please call Margo at the League phone, **562-947-5818**, to schedule.

RIO HONDO COLLEGE ELECTIONS

May 5 and 6

Whittier League volunteers will be staffing the Polling Place at Rio Hondo for the Student Body Elections on **Wed. May 5th and Thurs. May 6th.** **Margaret Snyder** has assembled the teams who will be working. This effort by the League in the Fall and Spring brings in \$300 per election to our coffers.

It is a great way to spend several hours with a friend or a new member to help the students and to share League experiences. We also register students to vote in California and distribute **Pros and Cons** pamphlets.

Thank you to **Cathy Butler** at Rio Hondo Student Activities, who invites us to work each semester.

Mt. San Antonio College Elections

The Whittier League was also asked to help the East San Gabriel Valley League staff the polling place at Mt. SAC on **April 29.** For our one-day of service from 9 am to 5 pm. We will get the stipend that ESGV usually receives for that day.

We really appreciate the hours that members give to earn money for our League and to make the elections at our community colleges function smoothly.

GAINING GROUND IN THE MIDDLE GRADES

Lessons From California

By Trish Williams & Michael Kirst

As expectations for a more highly educated American citizenry rise, what happens in the middle grades matters more now than ever. The middle grades are the last, best chance to identify students at risk of academic failure and get them back on track in time to succeed in high school. Moreover, success in key subjects in the middle grades is a prerequisite to being able to enter high school academically prepared for a college- and career-ready path.

In recent years, educators and policymakers have debated about what should be done to improve performance in the middle grades. In the absence of solid research evidence about what works, school districts have reshuffled grade configurations (for example, extending elementary school to K-8, or beginning middle school in grade 5), bolstered their focus on “academic rigor,” and worked to ensure that their 11- to 14-year-old students are engaged in school while they go through the turbulence of puberty. Educators have argued for these and other approaches—all based on theory and philosophy, because there has been little student-outcomes-based research available.

That’s why a team of researchers from our respective institutions, EdSource and Stanford University, decided to look into the “black box” of middle school performance, to systematically analyze what district and school policies and practices are linked to higher student performance. With funding from Reed Hastings, the founder of Netflix and a former president of the California state board of education, we spent 18 months conducting the most extensive study to date of middle grades.

The work included detailed surveys of nearly 4,000 California teachers, principals, and superintendents about a wide range of middle-

grades practices. To see what higher-performing schools did, we then analyzed the responses against school-level 2009 student outcomes on standards-based state tests in English/language arts and mathematics, controlling for student background.

Our findings were surprising in their consistency. What is startling was how absolutely coherent the results were, no matter which analysis we ran. Districts and schools with practices that reflect an intense focus on improving middle-grades student outcomes are higher-performing, whether they are serving primarily low-income students or primarily middle-income students.

In higher-performing middle-grades schools, an intense focus on improving academic outcomes is reflected in two ways. The schools are oriented to the future and take every opportunity—and an all-hands-on-deck approach—to get all of their students on track to succeed in high school and prepare for college. In addition, they place a high priority on ensuring that every student does well on the state’s standards-based exams in math and English/language arts. Doing well on these tests helps ensure that the students can easily pass the state’s high school exit exam, and also prepares them to begin a college-prep curriculum as they enter high school.

To accomplish this intense focus on improving student outcomes, higher-performing schools establish a shared school-wide culture with the following strategies as driving forces:

- Set measurable goals for improving student scores on standards-based tests for all students, at all levels, in every grade and subject;
- Evaluate superintendents, principals, and teachers, based in part on student outcomes; and
- Communicate to students and their families that they, too, are responsible for student learning and outcomes by attending class, turning in homework, trying hard, and asking for help when needed.

The research shows clearly that higher-performing districts and schools commit to this priority by including student outcomes in evaluations and asking families and students to accept their share of responsibility. The district's role is to set the standard and provide the resources; the principal's role is to drive the focus on student outcomes and manage and orchestrate the school improvement process; the teachers' role is to improve their own practice, but also work collectively to identify the students needing help and get them the intervention they need.

With a focus on the state's academic standards, the district and the school make sure that curriculum and instruction are tightly aligned with those standards. They also focus on diagnostic and benchmark assessments aligned with the standards, and use their common planning time to review student progress and either adapt instruction or develop interventions. This is an example of "what gets measured gets done." At the same time, these higher-performing schools also maintain a school environment that is safe and orderly and have a high proportion of students participating in a wide variety of electives and extracurricular activities. Higher-performing middle-grades schools implement comprehensive and targeted programs—both required and voluntary—to intervene with students who are two or more years behind grade level, English-language learners, and students at risk of failure in the current year. They also work proactively to review the cumulative folders (test scores, course grades, attendance reports, and behavior reports) of every entering student, flagging those with warning signs, talking with the elementary teachers, and setting up plans to get struggling students back on track.

While new federal policy initiatives are fueling a vigorous national debate about how best to evaluate teachers in ways that reflect student performance, this study suggests there should be a similar debate about education leadership. We found, for example, that principals and superintendents in the higher-performing middle-grades schools serving both lower- and middle-income students reported that improvements in student outcomes were factored into their evaluations. And in the higher-performing schools that served primarily low-income students, teachers reported that improving student outcomes was part of their evaluations as well.

What our research did not show, however, was that grade configuration and internal organization of instruction had much impact on improving student outcomes. Of the 303 schools we studied, half were grades 5-8, one-quarter were grades K-8, and one-quarter were organized into grades 7-8. There was no consistent and clear association between higher student performance and any one of these grade configurations. Similarly, our study did not confirm that any particular school organization of instruction was superior to another in its association with improved student outcomes. There may be other good reasons for a district to choose a particular grade configuration or a particular way to organize its teaching and instruction, but improvement in student outcomes is not one of them. We can improve student outcomes in low-performing middle-grades schools, whether they are in middle- or low-income communities. With strong leadership, the effective practices found in our study can be implemented by any middle-grades school, regardless of the grade configuration or the organization of teaching and instruction.

Trish Williams is the executive director of the Mountain View, Calif.-based EdSource and Michael Kirst is a professor emeritus of education and business administration at Stanford University. Ms. Williams served as the project director and Mr. Kirst was the principal investigator for the study "[Gaining Ground in the Middle Grades: Why Some Schools Do Better.](#)"

What does the right to vote mean to me? (Just a few response submitted at the 90th Birthday celebration)

The right to vote means that I am equal to other citizens.

It means I have a voice in everything good.

Voting means equality, access, liberty and freedom.

Voting means I have a say in the government.

OUR ADVERTISERS

This space is reserved for members and friends of the League who want to advertise in the VOTER. The people and businesses that do so help make our education projects possible. Please support them. To place an ad in the VOTER, please call Margo Reeg at 562-947-5818.

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Beverly Walker, Membership Chair
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Membership in LWVW includes membership
in all levels of League: Whittier, California,
Los Angeles County, and United States.

Dues:

Member	\$55.00
2nd Household Member	\$25
Suffragist Member	\$80
Student	\$20

Please make check payable to LWV Whittier

INTERNET RESOURCES

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 California Budget Project www.cbp.org

Many Voices, One Vision



CALENDAR

April 30 Legislative Interviews with Sen. Calderon, Assem. C. Calderon, and T. Mendoza

May 1 Doo Dah Parade in Pasadena 11 am March for Prop. 15—CA Fair Elections
(on Colorado Blvd. between Altadena and San Gabriel Blvd.)

May 3 Board Meeting at Margo Reeg's, 7 pm

May 5-6 Rio Hondo College Elections 9 am-1pm and 5:30 pm- 7:30 pm

May 10 - 21 High School Voter Registration Project

May 14 **Last day to Register to Vote**

May 14-16 LWVC Council in Sacramento

May 17, 18 Pros and Cons Whittier Voter Service Team

May 20 Meet the Judicial Candidates SWLaw School 3050 Wilshire 5:30 – 8:00p.m.

May 27 Thursday LWV Annual Meeting 5:30 pm-9:30 pm

DeLuca's 16503 Whittier Blvd. Whittier

Speaker: Sally Seven, LWV Claremont Health Care Reform

June 8 Election Day Partisan Primary



League of Women Voters of Whittier
10011 Melgar Drive
Whittier, CA 90603-1458