



The Voter

August 2011

League of Women
Voters
of San Bernardino
1955-2011

August 2011

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To become involved in the Local Study on Charter Schools contact Susan Nieblas, Program Chair.

To help plan the 100th anniversary of women winning the right to vote in California contact Bert Fox, Membership Chair.



Final redistricting report and maps available at <http://wedrawthelines.ca.gov>

President's Message: Planning and Getting Involved

In September and October we are planning meetings on our local Charter School Study and a celebration of the 100th anniversary of women getting the right to vote in California.

We are discussing the feasibility (in terms of resources and time) of participation in the national study of Privatization and the state update of our Initiative and Referendum position; both have deadlines next spring.

There will be community education on State and Local Finance in California. It is sorely needed. It will include how we got here, where the money comes from, where it goes, current California budget reality, taxes, and who pays for our education system.

This is where you come in. **We need members to get involved in these studies and**

educational efforts. Will you help?

Back to **Redistricting**: The final maps of the Citizen's Redistricting Commission were released on August 15, and as anticipated, not everyone is pleased by the results.

However, as LWVC president Jennifer Waggoner pointed out in a press release "The League of Women Voters of California applauds the work of both the commissioners and the public. Unlike redistricting in the past, this process has been open, transparent and participatory – a true citizen-driven process. We are confident that this first-ever commission will be a model for the entire nation."

As far as county redistricting is concerned, the Board of Supervisors gave tentative approval to the map recom-

mended by its consultant by a 3-2 vote. The final version will be presented to the Board as an ordinance. Perhaps the most controversial part of the plan that was presented at the August 9 hearing was that it puts the mountain communities into two supervisorial districts despite at least 30 mountain residents asking to be in one district and only 3 asking that the mountains be in more than one district.

The San Bernardino League did not take an official position on any of the maps, but individual League members were encouraged to make their opinions known. As was reported in the July **Voter**, several of us visited the Redistricting Assistance site in San Bernardino.

A final word: **Democracy is not a spectator sport** – we invite you to get into the game!. *Gloria Anderson,*

Redistricting: links for a closer look

Interview with two of the redistricting commissioners about the completed task. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EpKmsJ06c8g&feature=related>

Information from LWVSB Board members Shirley Harlan's and Bert Fox's visit to our local Redistricting Assistance site:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zd1UrkoMaM>

Background: follow the history through earlier stories. Interviews with commissioners and representatives from *California Forward* and *Common Cause*.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ToSuwISsDNk> (pt.1)

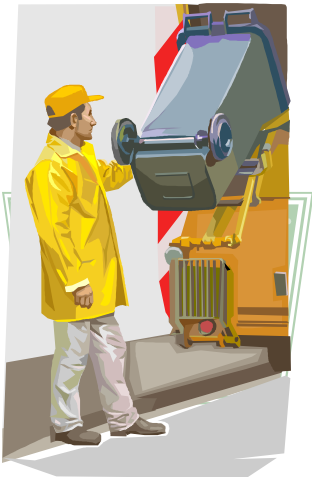
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYL-7q1lpts&feature=related> (pt.2)

Jill Vassilakos-Long—LWVSB Webmistress



Do charter schools add up? Come to our Sept. 24 meeting to hear about Charter Schools in SB.

Contact Susan Nieblas if you are interested in the Charter Schools or the Privatization Study (or both!)



What are the pros and cons to privatizing basic services?

Local Study on Charter Schools

Do you want to know more about Charter Schools in San Bernardino?

So do other members of the League. At our last annual meeting, members asked for a local study on Charter Schools.

On **September 24** we will have our kick-off meeting for this study.

We are fortunate to have as our guest speaker Edwin Gomez, recently appointed Director of Charter Schools for SBCSD. He will give us an overview of the Charter School movement and bring us up to date on the status of the 11 charter schools in the city.

When: Saturday, Sept. 24, 2011

Where: Feldheim Library
555 W. 6th Street
San Bernardino,

Time: 2:00 to 4:00 PM

Charter schools have become a critical factor in education today.

Are they the answer to what ails schools in San Bernardino?

Are they effective in offering alternative learning environments for our students?

What do we want to find out about charter schools as we proceed with our study?

This meeting will be an excellent starting point as we seek to increase our understanding of the role of charter schools

Our local League has been a staunch supporter of public schools over the years. Let's continue that tradition as we embark on this first in-depth look at our schools since we supported local school integration back in the 1970's.

See you on September 24!

*Susan Nieblas
Vice-president, LWVSB*

League Launches Privatization Study

LWVUS will undertake a study of the privatization of government services (federal, state or local).

The study will review the stated goals and community impacts of privatization and will strive to identify strategies to ensure transparency, accountability, and the preservation for the common good.

Governments desperate to cut costs are exploring privatizing services from supplying our troops (at the federal level), to education (at the state level), to trash collection (at the local level). The question of whether creating a middle-man with a profit motive improves or diminishes

public services is one that should be explored.

Background information for the study will be posted on the LWVUS site. Organizers recommend beginning with these documents:

1. Government Privatization: History, Examples, and Issues
http://www.ilga.gov/commission/cgfa2006/Upload/2006Gov_Privatization_Rprt.pdf
2. Paul Starr, "The Meaning of Privatization," Yale Law and Policy Review 6 (1988): 6-41. <http://www.princeton.edu/~starr/meaning.html>

3. Privatization: A Seattle League Study
<http://www.seattlelwv.org/sites/default/files/privatization2009.pdf>

In a few weeks it will be possible to sign up for the Privatization [email] List to keep current on the League study.

The study will take place between November 2011 and May 2012. Would you be interested in seeing the San Bernardino LWV take part in this study? If so, (and particularly if you would be willing to work on the study) please contact Susan Nieblas.

*Jill Vassilakos-Long—
LWVSB Webmistress*

Rachel Clark: Modern Day Renaissance Woman

A major milestone takes place when San Bernardino City Clerk Rachel M. Clark retires from office in 2012, leaving behind a 36 year legacy seldom seen in any California city. Born in San Bernardino at Saint Bernadine Hospital in 1946, Rachel Mendoza was the oldest of seven children. She graduated from San Bernardino High School and began working for the City of San Bernardino in 1966 at age 19 as a typist-clerk for then Mayor Al Ballard.

Through the years Rachel's personality was forged by the unexpected occurrences of life including a bus ride with Bobby Kennedy the day before he was shot and killed at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, a Citywide walk alongside United Farm Worker's leader Cesar Chavez, the vicious stabbing death of her own husband, the political strife of five mayors of San Bernardino, and her own reelection campaigns as Elected City Clerk

In 1967, Rachel was promoted from typist-clerk to Executive Secretary by Mayor Ballard. When a new Mayor by the name of William R. "Bob" Holcomb was elected, he asked Rachel to stay on and promoted her to Executive Administrator of the Mayor's office. This began a lifetime friendship and professional relationship that resulted in her employment in the Mayor's office for 14 of the 18 years Bob Holcomb served as Mayor. Tears well-up in her eyes today as she speaks of the man who she reveres as the

most influential Mayor in her life. "As a person, it was always about helping other people, not himself", Rachel said reverently about Mayor Holcomb who passed away in 2010. "He would call people and ask for money for worthy causes and he could raise thousands of dollars with just ten phone calls."

Rachel married Phil Krasney in 1972. 14 years later on March 12, 1986, her husband was viciously stabbed to death in a supermarket parking lot at Baseline and Arrowhead after stopping to buy groceries. That crime has never been solved. After taking time off to grieve for her tragic loss, Rachel worked for then Congressman George Brown as a caseworker in 1988.

In 1989 Bob Holcomb was once again elected Mayor of San Bernardino and he asked Rachel Krasney to come back to work as his Executive Assistant. A year later in 1990, then City Clerk Shauna Clark was named City Administrator and Rachel was appointed to fill Shauna's unexpired term as City Clerk. Thus began a 22 year run as the Top Clerk in San Bernardino. She has won every election since her appointment in 1990.

Rachel became Mrs. Rachel Clark when she married Ken Clark in 1992 and they have walked hand-in-hand ever since. Never having children, Rachel and Ken share a love of the youth of San Bernardino and a special love for Little League Baseball. This year Rachel traveled back to Williams-

port, Pennsylvania to the Little League World Series where she threw out the first pitch of the 65th anniversary of the series before 15,000 people. "I stopped as I approached the pitcher's mound and made the sign of the cross and threw the pitch for my mom and dad, who both died recently", Rachel said.

A series of "firsts" have occurred under Rachel's leadership in the City Clerk's office. One of the first tasks she undertook was acquiring a grant to restore and preserve the old "minutes" books of the City dating back well over 100 years. The books, now bound in leather and protected with plastic sheeting are locked in the Clerk's vault and one can see the handwritten minutes of the City Trustees meeting from 1888. Rachel opened the first passport acceptance office in City Hall in 1999. As a strong advocate for the electoral process, she started the first "mail in" ballot elections in the City, with a special election in 2007. As she leaves office, Rachel Clark is most proud to have worked the last 15 years on an "Agenda Management Program" that will totally computerize and streamline the agenda process. The program was approved by the City Council in March of this year and will take affect this October, 2011.

Rachel Clark is adamant when she says "I love my City, look at all the positive things we have, Cal State University San Bernardino, Valley College, The California Theater, (cont. p.4)



Rachel Mendoza, age 3.

The hand-written minutes of the 1888 S.B. City Trustee meetings have been preserved so that they will be available to our grandchildren and great grandchildren, thanks to Rachel Clark.



Rachel Mendoza Clark, 1967.

**League of Women Voters
of San Bernardino 1955-2011**

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**The League of Women Voters:
Because Democracy is not a
spectator sport.**

We're on the web: [http://
lwvsanbernardino.ca.lwvnet.org/](http://lwvsanbernardino.ca.lwvnet.org/)

October 11, 2011—100th anniversary of women's right to vote in California

The Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 served to organize the U.S. women's suffrage movement.

It took almost 50 years (until 1896) for suffragists to get a measure giving women the right to vote on a California ballot. The referendum was defeated.

They did not give up! Grass roots women's organizations of every type, in every community worked towards women getting the right to vote.

In the early 1900s women wrote pamphlets, such as "Why Wage-Earning Women Should Vote"; founded suffrage newspapers such as *The Yellow Ribbon*, published editorials, organized parades and rallies, made speeches in public forums, canvassed door-to-door... they worked to

reach every voter (all male) in California.

On Oct. 11, 1911 the question went to the voters once again. This time it passed!

LWVSB will commemorate the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage in California! So far we've planned a presentation on Oct. 10 (Monday) from noon—1pm. at California State University San Bernardino, Pfau Library PL4005. All are welcome, parking is \$5.

We are working to create an evening or weekend celebration in cooperation with the Native Sons of the Golden West. To volunteer to help contact Bert Fox.

*Jill Vassilakos-Long—
LWVSB Webmistress*

Rachel Clark (cont.)



Rachel Mendoza Clark, 1968.

The Symphony, The Sinfonia Mexicana, Santa Clause Incorporated and more!"

As to retirement, "I am leaving because it's time and I want to spend more time with my husband and my faith in my family... they are all important to me". Rachel emphasizes that she will remain involved in the San Bernardino Community, her active involvement in her Church, Our Lady of The Rosary On Arrowhead at 25th Street, her Rotary Club, where she is Past President, Mary's Mercy Center and of course she will continue to work with the Little League Western Regional Center in San Bernardino. It was Ra-

chel Clark who single-handedly started the Little League Monument Project in 1995, the signage and garden area that greets all world wide visitors to the Baseball Headquarters. "I feel very connected to that site", Rachel said as she spoke about her love for the children of San Bernardino and recalled the many hours spent creating that monument.

Rachel Clark, a true renaissance woman, we are proud at the League of Women Voters to call you one of our own. We laude your mentorship, and leadership in the community, your strength and your integrity, your patience

and your grace. Your energy and good will, the way you work in concert with others, the courage you show in speaking the truth, your ability to collaborate in creative endeavors, innovate, and inspire have contributed enormously to "Your City", San Bernardino. May the love and enthusiasm you project continue as an example to all who participate in the future of San Bernardino.

Dennis Baxter—LWVSB Board Member, who interviewed Rachel Clark for this article on Wednesday, August 31st, 2011.