



Voter

League of
Women Voters of
Bellingham/
Whatcom County

December-January 2008-09

You are Invited to

"Conversations With Elected Officials"

1st Annual Wine & Cheese Event

League of Women Voters Of Bellingham/Whatcom County

Saturday, January 3rd, 2009 from 5-7 PM

In the newly refurbished, historic YWCA Ballroom at 1026 N. Forest Street

Get your questions answered and share your concerns-please join us!



Please RSVP to:

Phone: 360-734-2366

E-mail: league@LWVbellinghamwhatcom.org

From Co-President Tanya Baumgart



Dear Leaguers,

Happy New Year! Hope this note finds you recovering well from all the festivities and the challenges of our white winter weather.

We are sending out our newsletter a bit early to remind you about our first event of 2009 on January 3rd, from 5-7 PM— our first annual, "Conversations with Elected Officials." See additional details elsewhere in this newsletter. It will be a fun and interesting event and we hope that you will join us and help quiz our legislators, both local & state, on matters of importance to you.

Our January 17th general meeting is unfortunately postponed. We are working with Leadership Whatcom and Dumas & Associates on a workshop for "Productive Public Conversations", but the details are not finalized yet and we will keep

you posted as to the rescheduled date of this meeting. This will be to replace our planned workshop on "Civil Discourse on Hot Button Topics."

We will be celebrating our new members with a potluck for all members, entitled "Potluck for the New & the Old". This special luncheon will be on **February 14th, from noon to 1:30 PM. Please mark your calendars!** We will be having a fun discussion, and interested members can stay after to give additional input on Program Planning. Please see the article on Planning on page 2 of this newsletter.

February 21st will be our next General Meeting where the focus will be on International Health Care Education. We will take a look at how the top ranked (for health) countries run their health care systems. Many members on the Health Care Study Committee are helping produce this meeting. For more information please contact Judy Corliss, Health Care Committee Chair.

(cont'd next page)

From Tanya, cont'd

Our website: www.LWVbellinghamwhatcom.org has new updates in the Current Issues Section. Please check out the new papers written on National Popular Vote of the President and Global Climate Change.

Our League received a donation as a tribute to Co-President **Elsie Heinrick** from Kulshan Community Land Trust in honor of Elsie's past service to their organization. We were pleased to accept it, and acknowledge Elsie Heinrick's considerable leadership assets that she now shares with the League. Bravo Elsie!

As I write this, a foot or more of snow is stacked outside my window. I hope that you all have made it safely through the storms of 2008, and look forward to clear skies in 2009!

Warm regards,
Tanya

"Illegal People: How Globalization Creates Migration and Criminalizes Immigrants"

Nationally recognized author and photo-journalist David Bacon will be at the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship (BUF) on Monday, January 26 at 6:45 p.m. for a discussion of immigration issues in our community, a slide show including Bacon's photos, and signing of his book, "Illegal People."

The Social Justice Committee of Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship is the main sponsor of this event. Community to Community Development and Village Books are co-sponsors.

A dinner with Bacon will proceed this event at 5:30 p.m. Dinner reservations are required by January 22 via Kara Black at 676-2300 or BUF at uubellingham@nas.com The suggested donation for both the dinner and the program is \$5. The suggested donation for the program alone is \$5.

"Award-winning photojournalist David Bacon spent twenty years as a labor organizer and immi-

Program Planning

At the biennial convention (May 29-31, Tacoma), League members will determine areas of study for the next two years. This process begins with what is called "program planning." Each local League discusses those issues that we feel are vital to the membership--issues that the League could take action on at the Legislature "if we had a position." We did this just recently on the subject of early childhood education. (That position should be announced in Jan.)

For those new to the League, we have positions about Representative Government, State Tax Policy, Education, Port Districts, Transportation, Resource Management, Energy, Global Climate Change, as well as many subjects under the heading of "Social Policy". A publication: "Program in Action 2007-2009 - A Leader's Guide to State Program" is available from the LWVWA. It can be found on our website at www.LWVbellinghamwhatcom.org - Click on "Positions on Issues" then "Positions of the League of Women Voters of Washington". We will talk more about Program Planning at the February 14th "Potluck with the New and the Old". If you need a copy of the positions sent to you please call Tanya at 671-5172.

Take a few minutes to jot down 3 or 4 issues that are "near and dear" to you—issues that you really wish "state government would do something about!!!" Check with the summary to see if we already have a position or if we need to study a new area of the subject. If we come up with some ideas that really interest us, we can also lobby other Local Leagues to support our suggestions.

P.S.: With the convention in a city that is easy to get to, we could also plan to have a car or two visit the convention in addition to our delegates.

grant rights activist. His articles appear in 'The Nation,' 'The American Prospect,' the 'Los Angeles Times' and the 'San Francisco Chronicle.' Bacon also hosts a weekly radio show on KPFA-FM in Berkeley, California." - *Excerpt from book jacket of "Illegal People."*

For more information, contact Kara Black at 676-2300 or BUF at uubellingham@nas.com.

LWVUS Study on the National Popular Vote Compact

The Bellingham/Whatcom County League of Women Voters is undertaking a study as to the advisability of using The Compact for the National Popular Vote to Elect the President. The Compact would not replace the electoral college but instead would cast all the electoral votes for the candidate who wins the popular vote.

In 2008 the electoral vote correlated with the popular vote, although there are many instances when it did not. For instance, the outcome of the 2000 election between Bush and Gore did not represent the popular vote. This can lead to voter apathy in states that are typically 'blue' or 'red'. The League's role is to educate and motivate people to vote. This is an important issue for us to be examining.

The March meeting will be devoted to this study with information as well as a consensus meeting for members. Our website <http://lwvbellinghamwhatcom.org/Studies.html> and the LWVUS website <http://www.lwvus.org> both have background papers and a resource list as well as the wording of the compact and the consensus questions. You are urged to look at the available materials.

Selection of the President - The League's History

A League study of the presidential electoral process culminated in its 1970 position supporting direct election of the President by popular vote as an essential element of representative government. The League also has supported national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections to ensure equity for voters from all states and to facilitate the electoral process.

At the 2002 Convention, the League voted to expand and update its position. The League came to concurrence on a new position in June 2004. The new position takes into account the entire presidential selection process and supports a process that produces the best possible candidates, informed voters and optimum voter participation.

At the 2008 Convention, the delegates voted to adopt a new study, "The Advisability of Using the National Popular Vote Compact among the States as a Method for Electing the President."

Enroll Early for the February 2009 Digital National Voter

Beat the enrollment deadline of January 5, 2009 (5pm ET). If you enroll before 1/5/2009, the first issue of the digital National Voter you will be eligible to receive is the February 2009 issue. If you are already enrolled, there is no need to enroll again. To enroll, (1) login to www.lwv.org; (2) when you get to your "My League/Welcome" page, click on "(Update your information)" at the bottom of the page; (3) Scroll to the bottom of the "Your Profile" page, click on the box "I wish to receive The National Voter electronically" and then click on "Submit Changes." Please note that you will no longer receive a paper copy in the mail once your enroll.

Launch of *TeachWithTVW.org*

TeachWith TVW.org is a new civics education website for teachers and students that connects Washington State classrooms directly to the legislative process. It offers short clips of TVW programming, organized by teaching topics and linked to Washington's civics education standards. The site also features civic education videos designed for classroom use as well as "gavel-to-gavel" video of youth and student events. It is available publicly, as well as on Washington's high-speed, high-capacity K-20 Network. The network links K-12 school districts, libraries, colleges, and universities—across 476 locations in Washington. You can visit TWV's new education website at www.teachwithtvw.org.



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Early Childhood Development – Birth to Five

Those of you who missed the League meeting on early childhood development from birth to five missed out on an exceptional meeting!

Our thanks to Kelly Lewis, chairwoman, and her committee of Jayne Freudenberger, Lorene Lewis and Jo Morgan. Panel participants were Dr. Frederic H. T. Braun, M.D.,C.M.; Sally Holloway, M.Ed.; and Senator Harriet Spanel.

Dr. Braun's special interest is in children. He emphasized the need for a newborn through second year to be cuddled – *very important*. Sally Holloway calls herself "a professional early childhood educator." She knows that early childcare workers do not have equal or fair wages. If nothing else was to be remembered: take away the TV time; instead, read aloud to your child (and snuggle at the same time). Television is no substitute for "baby-sitting."

And our own League member who became Senator Harriet Spanel has always championed women and children's issues. She laments that good bills are passed, but the funding does not adequately sustain good legislature.

Theresa A. Parakh



Ooops !! Membership Handbook Correction.

The phone number listed for Margaret Woll on the address list is incorrect. Please correct it to read (360) 734-8427.