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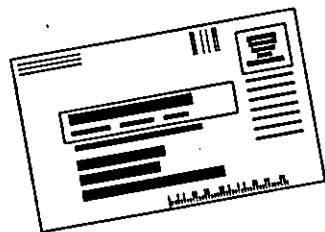
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OUTREACH

Winter 1999



NEW VOTER REGISTRATION FORM



The Secretary of State's office in conjunction with the California Association of Clerks and Election Officials have redesigned California's Voter Registration Card (VRC) to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the registration process. Sally Walker, of the Secretary of State's office and Jerry Neeley of the Sacra-

mento County Elections Department co-chaired the project for the past two years.

The new VRC utilizes form-processing technology that will allow elections officials to scan the new card to capture information, rather than to manually input data, which could result in substantial cost savings. Specifically, the new card is designed to:

- provide additional access to data information for county elections officials;
 - to accommodate future enhancements, such as digital technology.
- Several counties have participated in a pilot program to test the feasibility of the new form. Results have been extremely positive. For information regarding the results of these pilot programs or additional information regarding the new VRC itself, please contact Sally Walker at (916) 657-2166 or e-mail at swalker@ss.ca.gov
- increase efficiency and accomplish more work in less time using less human resources
 - improve recognition of critical information for the potential voter

OUTREACH MATERIALS CLEARINGHOUSE



The Voter Outreach and Participation Advisory Committee to the Secretary of State is in the midst of establishing a voter materials catalogue/clearinghouse. Dawn Mehlhaff of the Secretary of State's office is compiling a list of organizations and materials that deal with

voter registration and participation. This catalogue/clearinghouse will serve as a "one-stop" guide to finding materials and organizations that deal in voter related activities. If you have, or know of, any materials or organizations that should be included in the clearinghouse please contact Dawn Mehlhaff at (916) 657-2166 or e-mail at dmehlhaf@ss.ca.gov.

OUTREACH

California

OUTREACH *California*

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<i>Outreach California</i>	
New Voter Registration Card	1
Outreach Materials Clearinghouse	1
Civic Education Program	2
Hall of Fame Inductees	3
Bulletin Board	4

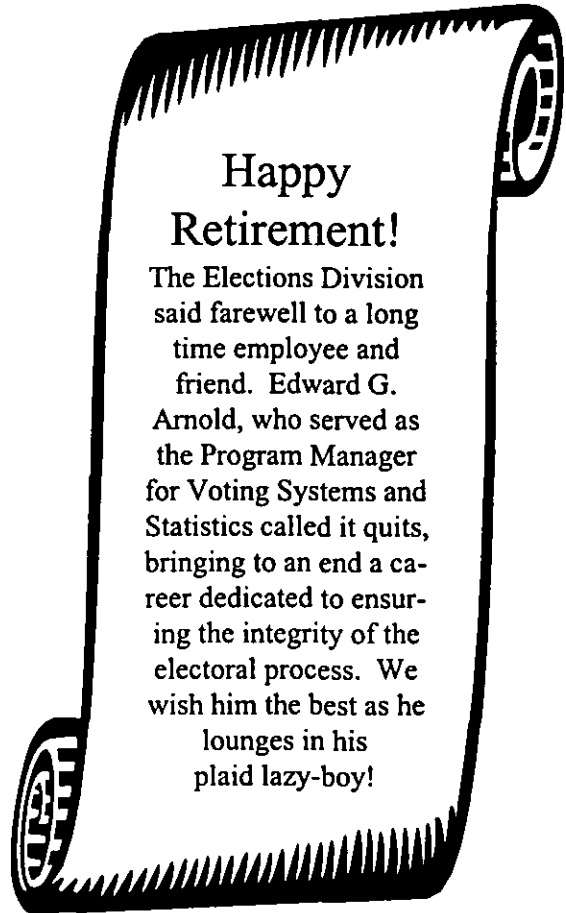
CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAM



The Voter Participation Unit is designing a statewide high school education program to address the issue of declining civic participation. This new program is based on our observations of the decline in voting, particularly among young people. However, the greater issue of participation

in civic processes goes beyond the single act of voting. Participation in elections is only one way to get involved. The new program will encourage students throughout California to engage in the civic life of their schools, their homes and their communities. All in the hopes that these interactions will renew elections as a meaningful event in democratic life.

The program is still in the development stages but is on track to be launched statewide in September. As part of the program, we are looking for organizations or individuals who have an interest in helping us make a difference. The main role that we are trying to fill is that of interested organizations or individuals who would be willing to offer opportunities for civic participation to high school students. If you are interested or would like more information, please feel free to contact either Dawn Mehlhaff or Waldeep Singh, Co-Directors of Voter Outreach Programs at 916/657-2166.



Happy Retirement!

The Elections Division said farewell to a long time employee and friend. Edward G. Arnold, who served as the Program Manager for Voting Systems and Statistics called it quits, bringing to an end a career dedicated to ensuring the integrity of the electoral process. We wish him the best as he lounges in his plaid lazy-boy!

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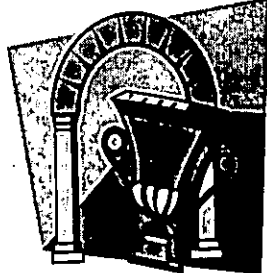
Welcome to the 6th edition of **OUTREACH *California***. For those of you who have just been added to our distribution list, let me briefly describe what this newsletter is all about.

This quarterly newsletter chronicles the general subjects of voter registration and participation. It serves as one of the many ways that the Secretary of State's Office is sharing new and innovative ideas with other elections officials, community groups and businesses throughout the state and country.

OUTREACH *California* has two essential purposes:

- (1) We want you to share your thoughts and suggestions with us. If you feel there is something that others should know regarding elections, voting, registration, etc., let us know and we will include it in our next issue.
- (2) We want to share with you some of the ideas and programs that we are currently working on here in our office.

Together we can achieve our goal of 100 percent voter participation in all elections!



THE HALL OF FAME

The Voter Participation Unit of the Secretary of State's office has reviewed the 15 nominations submitted for this year's Voter Participation Hall of Fame Awards. There were four categories in which to nominate: 1) individual; 2) community-based organization; 3) business; and 4) local government entity. The nominations were solicited to county elections officials, members of the Legislature and voter outreach organizations. Of the 15 nominations, the Participation Unit has recommended that each of the following be inducted to this year's Hall of Fame:

Category: Individual

Nominee: Ethel Irish Coplen

Nominated by: Rosalyn Lever, Orange County Registrar of Voters

For more than 66 years Ethel Coplen has been giving her time and talents each election year to work in her polling place. She became involved back in 1932, the year Franklin D. Roosevelt defeated President Hoover. Over the years, Ethel has been involved in many different community activities, but she says now most of her civic duty goes to staffing the polls on election day. She says, "I am dedicated to doing this because I think everybody should vote. No one should complain about government if they don't vote."

Category: Individual

Nominee: Sister Ethel Mary Timmeman

Nominated by: Brad Clark, Alameda County Registrar of Voters

For more than twenty-five years Sister Ethel Mary Timmeman, an educator at Holy Names College, has consistently been the backbone of voter registration in Alameda County. Long before it was fashionable, Sister Ethel Mary was working in the most impoverished areas of Oakland, walking alone in the housing projects, going door-to-door in the neighborhoods and setting up tables in front of supermarkets to register voters. Sister Ethel Mary has also imbued in her students the need to get involved in the community, especially with voter registration. She was the driving force in recent years behind developing the candidates forum for the Oakland League of Women Voters.

Category: Community-Based Organization

Nominee: Bell Gardens High School Staff.

Janet Johnson, Assistant Principal. John O'Hara, Government Teacher; Bill Mayoral, Student Activities Director.

Nominated by: Conny B. McCormack, Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters & Ron Hart, City Clerk, Bell Gardens.

For the past three major elections Janet Johnson, Assistant Principal, John O'Hara, Government Teacher and Bill Mayoral, Student Activities Director, have actively and enthusiastically promoted Bell Gardens' participation in three voter participation programs: "Election Night Volunteers," "Student Pollworker Program" and "In-School Elections." More than 200 Bell Gardens students and teachers have participated in the "Election Night Volunteer" program in the last two elections. Furthermore, the Bell Gardens High School staff conduct a variety of "In-School Election Programs" that mirror real world elections. Students and staff simulate the real election by registering, voting on paper ballots, and in fact, they even have "I voted stickers."

Category: Community-Based Organization

Nominee: Unique People's Voting Project - Shawn Casey O'Brien

Nominated by: Secretary of State's Voter Participation Team

The Unique People's Voting Project is an on-going non-partisan voter registration/education project of disabled citizens and their families. It has been instrumental in registering more than 15,000 citizens (disabled and otherwise), many of whom live in the daily realities of developmental or physical disabilities. Working closely with a number of Area Boards and Self-Advocacy Groups, it has also developed strategies that turn people into instant organizers. Its aim is to give all citizens with disabilities non-partisan educational materials - on issues of concern in their communities - in an easy to use "question and answer" format. As part of its 1998 effort, Unique People's Voting Project and thousands of disabled citizens held the first ever Permanent Absentee Ballot Day on October 23, 1998. The objective was simple, to get tens of thousands of citizens with disabilities to cast their votes via Permanent Absentee Ballots and then mail them in on the same day.

THE BULLETIN BOARD

PLEASE keep those articles and suggestions coming and remember to send them to:

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Contra Costa County: Absentee Voting

Stephen Weir, Contra Costa County Clerk-Recorder, has issued a report on the November 3, 1998 General Election. The report highlights the county's observations on various election related issues, in particular on absentee voting. In fact, Contra Costa County has made great progress in improving the processing of their absentee ballots. They have reduced the occurrence of late absentee ballots by 60.7 percent. They have also reduced their "rejected" category of absentee ballots by nearly 57 percent and reduced the occurrence of no signature absentee ballots by 43 percent. If you want to know how, we encourage you to call the Contra Costa County Elections Department at 925-646-4166.

1999 Mechanism for Change Conference: Character Education

The Citizenship and Law-Related Education Center (CLRE) in conjunction with the California Department of Education, the Sacramento County Office of Education and California Partnerships in Character Education are sponsoring their fifth annual Mechanism for Change Conference, "Building Communities & Schools of Character." Nationally recognized educators, parents and political and corporate leaders, who are committed to character education, will be on hand to educate youth about basic traits such as respect, trustworthiness, responsibility and civic virtue. The Conference is set for Thursday March 11, 1999 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Sacramento. For more information contact the CLRE Center at (916) 228-2322.

THE BULLETIN BOARD

Secretary of State: Outreach Almanac

Throughout the year, county and city elections officials, as well as voter outreach organizations, have shared their voter outreach programs with the Secretary of State's office. The Secretary of State's office, in return, has shared on a weekly basis these voter outreach/participation suggestions with county elections officials throughout California. The 1998 Outreach Almanac is a compilation of these projects and programs designed to stimulate voter participation. If you would like a copy of this almanac, would like additional information regarding this program, or have a successful outreach idea to share with the election community, please contact Sally Walker at (916) 657-2166 or e-mail: swalker@ss.ca.gov.

City of Stockton: Voter Outreach

Katherine Gong Meissner, City Clerk of the City of Stockton, along with her talented staff, conducted an intensive voter registration drive during the last week of September. Not only did the City include register to vote inserts in their local utility bills, but they also flooded the airwaves with register to vote messages. City clerk Meissner, secured air-time on the local government cable channel, and encouraged everyone to register to vote. The city clerk's office also conducted voter registration drives on several local college campuses, using eligible high school students to staff the registration tables. Furthermore, staff decorated booths all over City Hall complete with informational fliers and bookmarks. **Way to go City of Stockton!**

City of Norco: Voter Outreach

Debra L. McNay, City Clerk, City of Norco utilized her department's existing technology to spread the word regarding voter registration. City Clerk McNay posted voter information on the city's web page (www.norco.ca.us/election.htm) but also sent employees e-mails on election day encouraging them to participate. The City of Norco has also coordinated a "Birthday Card" program with Norco High School to send a Birthday Card/Registration Card to students turning 18 years of age. Yet another example of Cities Taking Charge!

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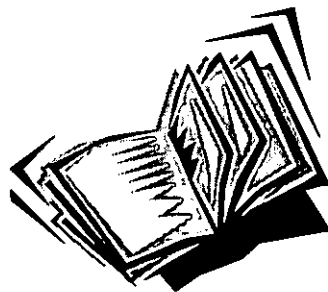
California



In this issue:

- ⇒ New Voter Registration Card
- ⇒ Voter Materials Clearinghouse
- ⇒ Civic Education Program
- ⇒ Hall of Fame Award Inductees
- ⇒ Bulletin Board

FRANCHISE TAX BOOKLETS



The Secretary of State's office has teamed up with the **Franchise Tax Board of California** to help provide additional avenues for Californians to register to vote. For the first time the new California Tax Booklets, more than 15 million of them, will include information on voter registration. The article is located in the "Additional Information Section" of several different booklets for various types of tax

requirements. This is the beginning of a new program and we look forward to possibly bigger and more informative programs with the Franchise Tax Board in the future. If you would like more information regarding this program, or similar programs conducted by the Secretary of State's office, please contact Sally Walker at 916/657-2166 or e-mail at swalker@ss.ca.gov.