

Benchmark

A PUBLICATION BY TRUCKEE MEADOWS TOMORROW

Fall 2004

Community Responsibility and Voter Turnout

"How convenient!

What a great idea, voting at my library.

This really is a time saver."

These are a sampling of the comments Washoe County Library staff members heard from people who came into the public libraries for early voting. This is the first time that the libraries have been selected as early voting sites.



Primary early voters at the Sparks Library

The Library System joined with the Registrar of Voters, the Nevada Museum of Art and the New Voters Project to provide locations for early voting as well as voter registration sites. These organizations have entered into a TMT Community Compact designed to measurably improve the quality of life indicator, **voter turnout**, in the economic vitality category.

The Registrar's office is providing the staff and voting machines. The New Voters Project is providing volunteers that have been trained and certified to register voters. The Library is providing suitable sites and distributing voter information and schedules in both English and Spanish.

Compact partners hope that these efforts will contribute to an increase in the number of registered voters and an increase in voter turnout for the elections here in Northern Nevada.

"One of the goals for the September 7th primary was a minimum of 500 voters at various library locations and the

museum. We are way beyond that! At the Sierra View Library alone, 596 people voted early. The Northwest Library had approximately 1,000 voters, and the South Valleys had over 500. And that represents just three out of the six library locations."

*Nancy Cummings, Director
Washoe County Library System*

The November 2nd General Election is almost here and TMT wants to remind everyone to exercise your civic responsibility and pledge to vote today!

The last day to register for the General Election is October 12th. Early voting will be conducted mid-to late-October. Visit a library in your neighborhood, or for more information log onto the Washoe County Registrar of Voters website www.washoecounty.us/voters for the complete schedule, locations, absentee ballot, candidates, and list of ballot questions, or call 328-3670.

Not only is 2004 a presidential election year, but studies indicate that people who see voting as an important civic responsibility also invest time and effort to improve the overall quality of life in their community.

See **Voter Turnout** on page 2

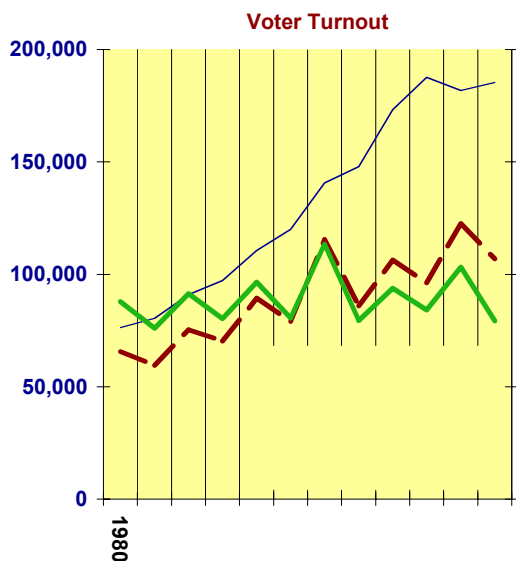


Voter registration at the Northwest Library

Voter Turnout/ Focus of October 26th General Membership Meeting

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According to the Washoe County Registrar of Voters, 57.96% of registered voters in the county voted in the 2002 General Election, but this number was only 39.62% of those eligible to vote, as illustrated below.



Although the number of registered voters continues to rise in Washoe County, this table also shows the growing gap in voter turnout as a percentage of eligible population, even with the spikes in presidential election years.

The Registrar's website reported 211,352 registered voters for the September 7th Primary Election with just over 27% voter turnout. These numbers are

expected to rise in the November General election.

TMT's newest compact was designed to measurably improve voter turnout. Early voting for the September 7th Primary Election was about 9,000, or about 15% of just less than the 59,000 turnout.

More information about TMT's new voter turnout compact will be presented by Nancy Cummings, Director, Washoe County Library System at the October 26th general membership meeting (see box inset for details). Learn more about the 2004 ballot questions and meet Dan Burk, Washoe County Register of Voters.

For more specifics, visit the compacts page on TMT's website www.quality-of-life.org, as well as the communications page for meeting details.

TMT Fall Membership Meeting
October 26, 2004
7:30 – 9:00 AM

Washoe Professional Center
 Remedees' Meeting Rooms
 (behind Remedees Restaurant)

Preliminary Agenda

- Feature: November 2nd General Election
- Proposed bylaws changes (2nd vote)

Complementary continental breakfast and free parking in the garage off Second Street

Affordable Housing Workshop

Community Investment Programs

Wednesday, November 17, 2004

8:00 AM to Noon

**Washoe County Commission Chambers
 1001 East 9th Street, Reno, NV**

**To register for this free workshop call
 Charles Schwab Bank at 775-689-6830.**

Be proactive!

*Don't let a lack of information become
 a barrier to affordable housing.*

See the enclosed flyer for details.

As part of Charles Schwab Bank's compact commitment with Truckee Meadows Tomorrow, Schwab Bank and the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco will be hosting a workshop highlighting programs created to spur more affordable housing opportunities and economic development activities in our region. Washoe County has donated the use of the Commissioner's Chambers and The Media Center will broadcast and record the workshop for further distribution.

This is a must attend workshop for any non-profit, developer, public and private sector business or individual interested in capacity building and understanding some of the resources available that can make affordable housing happen in northern Nevada.

Emerging Leaders Adopt Community Indicators

Congratulations to the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce for again partnering with TMT to show 2004 LEAD (Latino Empowerment & Advancement Development) program students what quality of life indicators actually mean in our region.

These future leaders spent a day walking downtown Reno, riding Citifare buses to parks and arts destinations, and learning about various community indicators from water use to lifelong learning to public safety, by interacting with business and community leaders from diverse sectors in northern Nevada. In turn, they demonstrated their commitment to the region by adopting TMT's quality of life indicators in the following categories.

Economic vitality

- Manuel Berroa
- Chelin Garcia-Vargas
- Jesus Gutierrez
- Martha Scheuermann
- David White

Land use & infrastructure

- Jaime Edrosa
- Robin Martinez

Natural environment

- Laura Blanco
- Susan Jimenez
- Liz Ortiz
- Carolina Pareses

Public safety & welfare

- Chelin Garcia-Vargas

For information about the LEAD program, visit the Hispanic Chamber's website www.hccnn.org.

Education

- Laura Blanco
- Chelin Garcia-Vargas
- Ignacio Medrano
- Carolina Pareses
- Amparo Cabral
- Jesus Gutierrez
- Liz Ortiz
- Maria Trujillo

Adopting TMT's quality of life indicators is free, easy and open to anyone. Visit the indicator's page on TMT's website www.quality-of-life.org.



TMT and the Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) would like to remind everyone that the region is in the fifth year of a drought. **Use water wisely.** If you have questions about the current drought situation, call TMWA at 775-834-8000 or email info@tmwa.net.

TMT Calendar News & More ☆ ☆ ☆

- Mark your calendar for the next **Accentuate the Positive, Friday, October 14, 2005**, TMT's community luncheon celebration to salute the positive aspects of life in the region. **Silver Star** awards are presented to individuals, organizations and businesses working to make a significant and measurable difference in our community. Look for nomination forms on-line later this year, on the *Accentuate the Positive* page of TMT's website www.quality-of-life.org.
- TMT will again be measuring the 30 quality of life indicators with the latest data tables posted to the website later this fall. TMT will then take the prime step to engage a **Blue Ribbon Task Force** of community representatives to revisit and update the indicators, to ensure they are outcomes-based measurements relevant to our region today. The task force will kick-off this January and is expected to accomplish its work by the end of June. Those interested can contact TMT via info@quality-of-life.org or 775-323-1518.
- The annual membership meeting will change from January, to the end of TMT's fiscal year this December. Mark your calendar for **December 14, 2004**, and look for more details in the next *Benchmark*.
- Starting later this year, you will be able to **renew your TMT 2005 membership on-line**. Watch for TMT's announcement in the next *Benchmark*.
- **Thanks** to Brett Kandt for his in-kind contributions to TMT.

Welcome New & Renewing Members

Visionary

- Washoe Education Association, Lynn Warne

Vanguard

- Washoe County, Kathy Carter

Corporate

- Regional Transportation Commission, Greg Krause

Nonprofit

- Leadership Reno-Sparks Alumni Assoc., Jane Gilbert
- YMCA of the Sierra, Mark Lieske

Individual

- Jeff Fisher
- Daniel Inouye
- Bonnie Saviers
- Estela Gutierrez
- Toni Sandler

NEW ADDRESS

PO Box 33504
Reno, NV 89533-3504
www.quality-of-life.org

NOVA Community Service Award for TMT Partnership

Washoe Medical Center (WMC) has been honored with the prestigious NOVA Award from the American Hospital Association (AHA), for its commitment to TMT. Each year, the AHA honors five of the brightest stars in the health care field for their collaborative efforts to better their community, its health and quality of life.

This winning partnership began in 1996, thanks in large part to TMT's founding president, Lynn Atcheson. WMC adopted every health category indicator: **leading causes of death, health care costs, immunizations, prenatal care, at-risk behaviors, and teen pregnancy.** Although improvements are still needed in some health indicators (local healthcare costs continue above the national average), WMC's efforts certainly added to improvements in others. For example, according to the most recent state data available from *Kids Count 2004*, www.kidscount.org, improvements were made in the percentage of Nevada children (78%) under age 2 immunized in 2002, and Nevada's teen birth rate declined from 43 to 30 per 1,000 girls ages 15-17 (1996 to 2001), bettering the 2001 state ranking to 38th.

Washoe Medical Center further provided TMT with a generous \$750,000 grant over five years, starting in 1996. Nearly \$500,000 was used as program grant funding to support dozens of measurable grassroots efforts that made meaningful improvements in our quality

of life. Diverse nonprofits collaborated in this program, which ended in 2001, from the Young Masters Chess Club to the Nevada AIDS Foundation, from Artown to the YMCA Neil Road Youth Sports Coalition, and many more. The remaining \$250,000 supported TMT's other programs long past the end of the grant period (Adopt an Indicator, Community Compacts, membership meetings, and Community Well-Being Reports).

As Gayle Hurd, Best Practices Administrator for Washoe Medical Center and TMT board member recently said, "*WMC and TMT are in good company and innovation is the child of challenging times!*" WMC continues to provide in-kind contributions to TMT. Collectively, their investment in TMT has enhanced WMC's reputation in the health care industry, and provided tangible returns in health performance for northern Nevada. TMT offered WMC a way to measure outcomes from their community investment, through the measured improvements in community health indicators.

TMT further encourages all employers to generate value for their own company through similar corporate, social and civic responsibility. Join TMT today and let your business adopt performance objectives for community investment.

Congratulations to WMC for this very special honor!

Editor's note: Thanks to TMT Vanguard member Washoe County for printing this issue of Benchmark