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January/February 2009 VOLUME 49, NUMBER 5

Saturday January 31 - "Coastal Issues" Featuring Lois Capps, 11:30 - 1:30
Madonna Inn, Garden Room

Monday, February 2 - Board Meeting, Creekside - SLO 9:30 - 11:30

Wednesday, February 11 - Lunch and Learn, "Immigration Revisited" - Creekside, SLO
11:00 to 1:00



Monday, March 2 - Board Meeting, Creekside, SLO 9:30 to 11:30

Thursday, March 5 - Lunch and Learn, "Water Issues Panel" Location TBD... 11:00 to 1:00

Saturday, January 31 - Special "Coastal Issues"
Featuring Congresswoman Lois Capps
11:30 to 1:30 Madonna Inn, Garden Room
Luncheon Reservations Required



Thursday, Feb. 11 - Lunch & Learn
11:00 am - 1:00 pm (Brown Bag Lunch)
Immigration Revisited - Vera Wallen, speaker
Creekside Center, SLO

Thursday, March 5 - Lunch and Learn
"Water Issues Panel"

For more information please contact emilypenfield@yahoo.com

For more information or to RSVP, call 543-2220

The League of Women Voters of San Luis Obispo County PO Box 4210 San Luis Obispo CA 93403



President's Message

Ann Garfinkel

From the President's Corner:

Can you believe the State of California still has no Budget!!! In my October message I worried that my report would be obsolete by the time you got to read it, but such was not the case. Here we are in 2009 and from my reading we are no where near a solution. This is truly a terrible state of affairs. Exactly what is it going to take to end this debacle? Unlike the Federal Government, California is unable to print money to cover the shortfall, so the fear of financial collapse is becoming a possibility. Please take a moment and write to your elected representatives and urge round the clock negotiations to solve this impasse.

Locally, your League Board has an exciting agenda planned for the coming months. We are thrilled that **Lois Capps** will be in San Luis Obispo on the 31st of this month! You won't want to miss this opportunity to hear the latest developments on off shore drilling, and alternative energy. I want to thank **Jean Holmes** of the Environmental Task Force and our own **Arlene Powers** for putting this together.

February 11th join us for an update on Immigration. The date is a Wednesday, so mark your calendar! Creekside Center has taken away our access to the large conference room on the 1st Thursday of every month, so **Emily Penfield**, Program Director, is scouting new sites for our popular Lunch and Learn meetings. While we sort this out, please be patient, flexible, and check the website for the most current information!

Let me take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a Great New Year! Looking forward to seeing you in the near future,

Yours in League,
Ann

Membership Memo
By Marlys McPherson

We welcome the following new National members to our League, and we invite them to join us at our local League activities.

Mr. Frederick W. Clegg
1367 Diablo Drive
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

Ms. Beth B. Garner
P.O. Box 369
Arroyo Grande, CA 93421
Phone: (805) 489-9665

Ms. Elaine Guillot
P.O. Box 15634
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

Ms. Grace Rusnak
3193 Shearer Ave.
Cayucos, CA 93430
felixgrace@yahoo.com

Dr. Thomas G. Schumann
630 Perkins Lane, #3
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
Phone: (805)544-2370
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Ms. Mona Tierney-Lloyd
P.O. Box 378
Cayucos, CA 93430
mpetrochko@yahoo.com

Mr. Stephen M. Wayne
1081 Hillcrest Dr.
Cambria, CA 93428
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cwyllm@sbcglobal.net



**REP CAPPs TO SPEAK ON COASTAL
ISSUES AT JOINT MEETING, JAN 31**

On Jan 31st the SCCETF is joining with LWVSLO as host of a Coastal Issues meeting in San Luis Obispo at the Madonna Inn, featuring Congresswoman Lois Capps. We are most excited about this opportunity and hope to see a big turn out representing our local league. This is your chance to hear, and ask questions about, the issues that effect our county. **BE THERE!**

**Central Coast Environmental
Task Force (SCCETF) Report**

Arlene Powers, Planning and Land Use

Emily Penfield and I traveled to Santa Barbara on November 21, 2008 to join League members from the coastal communities of Santa Barbara and Santa Monica to discuss current legislation and environmental issues that are directly affecting our coast.

Jean Holmes, the SCCETF chair, reported that no energy bill successfully cleared Congress this session. There is a possibility of new offshore oil leasing where the adjacent states agree but the West Coast is excluded from that proposal at this time. One bill in the CA Legislature supported by LWVC, an oil spill bill, which in part deals with special attention to the protection of sensitive habitats, did pass. A second bill, also supported by the LWVC passed the Legislature but was vetoed by the governor on the grounds that the grant program to evaluate technologies was redundant to existing programs.

Amy Dunbar, LWV Santa Monica, distributed several print outs from her City website that list opportunities for citizens to practice a more sustainable life style. Amy sees League as a distribution point for innovative concepts that could benefit the community. Her league is currently talking to high school students about worthy ideas for the environment. Amy has volunteered to investigate setting up a link on the LWVC website where Leaguers could exchange ideas on environmental innovations.

Joan Leon, LWV Santa Maria reported by mail that the proposed ethanol plant may switch its feedstock from corn to molasses from the Caribbean. The applicant is searching for ways to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions from the plant

Connie Hannah, LWV Santa Barbara updated us on a development proposal for Naples. League is part of a coalition, which in part is appealing to the coastal commission over the citing of large houses on the bluff top of Naples. For more information on this coalition and the development go to infor@savenaples.com. Jean Holmes, LWV Santa Barbara reported that Santa Barbara County has also cut beach monitoring but a local non-profit is planning to expand its own water-testing program to the affected beaches. Jean has proposed that the joint leagues in the task force write a letter to the governor protesting his elimination of beach testing funds. Leagues will report to Holmes by January 15th what their decisions are about a participation letter. Linda Phillips shared with us a link to a newsletter from the California Coastal Coalition, steveaceti@alcoast.org. This organization is committed to restoring California's shoreline

LWVSLO Reported on the three proposals for solar power plants in the Carrizo Plain, the status of the Santa Margarita project, and the application to the Federal energy Regulatory Commission for wave energy production offshore in Morro Bay.

Greg Helms, Program Manager at the local Santa Barbara office of Ocean Conservancy, briefed us on the process for designation of marine protected areas (MPAs) in the state waters off the California coast. These MPA are "revolutionary" in that they seek to preserve and restore whole habitats and their ecologies. Greg gave us a CD Titled "A Sheltered Sea, the Journey of the California Marine Life Protection Act". I would be happy to share this CD with anyone who might be interested in viewing it. I can be reached at 534-1139

The next scheduled Task Force meeting is March 27th. Interested members are welcomed to join us!





OBSERVER CORPS
Elinor Kogan

While we wait for our January-February rainy season to begin, our county agencies wrestle with the other concerns about our water supply. Donna Sullivan, Dawn Williams and Bill Warren describe them in their reports.

Water Resources Advisory Committee

The WRAC meets on the first Wednesday of each month, usually in the community room of the SLO City/County Library, from 1:30- 3:00. The public is welcome to attend. The purpose of the WRAC is to advise the SLO County Board of Supervisors concerning all policy decisions relating to the water resources of the SLO County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. They also recommend to the Board specific water resource programs as well as methods of financing available for those programs.

At the November meeting James Caruso presented a report on the Water Resources Section of the Open Spaces Element of the Master Plan, currently being reviewed by the SLO County Board of Supervisors. Long and energetic discussions followed regarding various sections of the draft document. Ongoing concerns include the Santa Margarita Ranch Ag Cluster EIR. This is a proposed gated community of vineyards and private residences. The original plans submitted included up to 500 residences. There are strong concerns about future water resources for such an ambitious project. The matter will come before the Board again on November 18th.

Invasive mussel species in our county lakes are the subject of ongoing preventive measures by the County Parks Department, but Christine Mulholland reported that Southern California lakes are not being monitored or controlled for this invasive species. This means that boats being transferred from these and other lakes can potentially import the mussels in their engines or on other parts of the boats or trailers. She also mentioned that there are bacteria currently being investigated that may destroy the mussels.

Also of concern are the land application of bio-solids ordinance and district efforts to acquire a sufficient allocation of State water.

The December meeting will include a report from the representative from the Cambria Community Services District (CSD) and updates on ongoing concerns. The meeting date is December 3rd, 2008, in the usual location and at the usual time.

Dawn Williams, for the Observer Corps of the SLO County League of Women Voters

SLO COUNTY HEALTH COMMISSION

An important issue discussed at the November 17th meeting was the Proposed Ordinance to Establish Regulations for Land Application of Biosolids/Treated Sewer Sludge (sorry about this, Elinor – just doing my job). The presentation was made by **Rich Lichtenfels**, Supervising Environmental Health Specialist.

Some of the requirements in the proposed ordinance include the following:

- Only exceptional quality biosolids could be land applied in unincorporated areas of the County.
- Land application of sludge could be applied in agricultural-zoned areas (on farms or ranches), and not to crops intended for human consumption.
- There would be limits to the amounts applied.
- A specific parcel of land could have only 5 applications in its lifetime.

The Commission had a number of concerns about the proposed ordinance. They unanimously moved to send a letter to the Environmental Health Division highlighting the areas where they think the proposed Ordinance is inadequate.



Congresswoman

Lois Capps

Madonna Inn

Saturday, January 31

11:30 to 1:30



Join us in making democracy work

Jan. / Feb.

CAMBRIA MEETINGS WELL ATTENDED BY RESIDENTS

November-

Our Cambria County Community Service District held its monthly meeting on November 17. It was attended by all five of the directors as well as all the staff. The meeting appeared well organized and sufficient agendas and reports were available for the 60 - 75 residents who were present.

Our Fire Chief, Bob Putney, is retiring and was honored for his service. Mark Miller was introduced as the new Fire Chief.

An informative presentation concerning our Cambria Forest Management Plan followed, detailing the history, future plans and problems of our area.

December-

The monthly Cambria CCSD meeting, held on 12/15/08 at the Veterans Center, began on time at 12:30 PM. Only 4 of the 5 directors were present as one was out of town. Two new recently elected directors were sworn in, so now all 5 directors were present.

There were about 50 members from the public in attendance, all were able to obtain agendas and other papers. The CCSD staff was present and all seemed well prepared.

Cambria's new Fire Chief gave a Powerpoint presentation on the fire dangers in Cambria by showing the devastation from the Montecito fire. Cambria is more forested than Montecito. This was followed by a water conservation report and conservation proposal as we are short of rainfall so far this year. We need at least 5" of rain in 1 or 2 storms to fill our water recharge wells. There were many public and director comments on why we need to conserve now and why we can't wait until Jan/Feb to decide to conserve as well as the need to consider surcharge rates.

Next, there was a presentation on Capital Improvements and Projects, their priorities and financing.

During public comment about eight people spoke. The entire meeting was very well handled with a new chair person and everyone seemed patient and respectful. A condition we lacked during the previous 6 -12 months.

There seems to be no Brown Act violations and our legal counsel reminded all the directors, including the new ones, to make sure they abide by the Brown Act rules.

The meeting ended at 4:55 PM with about 15 residents still in attendance.

Bill Warren

PLANS FINALIZED FOR WATER ISSUES PANEL

Plans have firmed up for the March 5th Natural Resources Lunch and Learn on water issues. **Sharon Whitney** will moderate the event.

Panelists include:

- 1) **Courtney Howard and Jill Falcone** of SLO County Public Works, who will jointly give a 10 minute Powerpoint presentation on supply and quality issues as these relate to regional planning for watersheds, ground water storage, and recharge capacities;
- 2) **Bill Bianchi**, who will discuss the idea of a county-wide master water plan with periodic review and update, including climate change impact, recharge and water quality trends, and historic and projected water resource balance inventories;
- 3) **Bill Garfinkel**, who will discuss countywide wastewater treatment plans, including water quality impacts, sludge disposal, and plant capacity trends and performance;
- 4) **Merilee Hyman**, who will discuss protection of estuaries, marshlands, and other transitional zones from pollution and degradation by opposing any attempts at ocean disposal of out-of-county wastes; and
- 5) **Mary Bianchi**, of UC Extension, who will discuss agricultural irrigation issues.

The location of the Lunch and Learn will be P.G. & E. Community Center, located at 6588 Ontario Road (off Hwy 101 and San Luis Bay Drive), at 11 am-1 pm. The presentations are expected to occur between 11-12, followed by lunch and a question and answer period. A pre-ordered box lunch from Utopia Bakery for \$15 will be available. Please contact Emily Penfield if interested. If not, you may bring your own brown bag lunch.

Happy President's Day



INVITE A FRIEND TO

JOIN UP!

JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
...and make an INFORMED difference!

- **STAY INFORMED ABOUT THE ISSUES AND GOVERNMENT** and decisions that directly affect you and your community.
- **MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD** as an advocate for change and community problem solving.
- **SHARPEN YOUR SKILLS** in leadership, communications, networking, public speaking and more, as you organized and act on local, state and national issues.

I want to sign up or renew:

- Individual, \$60.00 \$ _____
- Household, \$85.00 \$ _____
- Student, \$25.00 \$ _____
- 40-49 years of continuous membership, \$50.00 \$ _____

I would like to donate to the League's...

General Fund to support the League's action and advocacy efforts

\$ _____

Educational Fund (tax-deductible) to support the League's efforts to promote an informed citizenry. To ensure compliance with IRS regulation, contributions to the Ed Fund must be separate.

\$ _____

Make checks payable to **LWVSLO**

Name _____

Address(city, state, zip) _____

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LWVSLO 2008 - 2009
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