

(WHAT'S NEW! continued from 1st page)

Ag Futures Alliance (AFA) - Promoting Sustainable Agriculture in Santa Barbara County

This summer SB CAN joined with the Environmental Defense Center, Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau, and other environmental and agriculture advocates to form an Ag Futures Alliance. We will be working together to preserve and promote agriculture in ways that are environmentally and economically sustainable. Our Alliance is modeled after several successful AFA's across the state. See <http://agfuturesalliance.net> for more AFA info.

SB CANNES "Movies with a Message" Film Series

In March SB CORE joined with SB CAN to host a film series that previews current commercial films with a social justice or environmental edge to highlight pressing local issues. Each film is followed by a panel of local advocates who discuss the issues, and each is co-sponsored by a sister organization working in the problem area bearing on the film's theme. Our first film, the Santa Barbara Premiere of "Open Window," related to the devastating effect of rape on families and communities. Our second film in August presented the Santa Barbara premiere of "Resurrecting the Champ," which raised issues relating to chronic homelessness. We hope to continue our series into 2008, including showings in both the south and north county.

SB CORE, A Partner in Research & Education

SB CORE, the Santa Barbara Council on Research and Education, is a 501c3 organization dedicated to research and education on a wide variety of progressive social justice and environmental issues in Santa Barbara County. As an all-volunteer organization, SB CORE contracts with the staff of SB CAN to research issues and promote fact-based, public dialogue on important issues. SB CAN is proud to partner with SB CORE in providing public forums, skills workshops, and leadership development in Santa Barbara County. Many thanks to the donors, funders, and event sponsors that make this work possible, including the McCune Foundation and Fund for Santa Barbara.



David & Cathy dancing with the stars at the 2007 Oscar Party. Join us for the 2008 Oscar Party on February 24 at the home of Susan Rose and Allan Ghitlerman.

SB CAN - Making & Breaking News

SB CAN contributes regular columns to the Santa Maria Times & Lompoc Record, providing progressive viewpoints on local issues. We will now be writing columns for the new online publication Noozhawk at www.noozhawk.com. You can read our columns at our website.

As part of our Government Watchdog program, SB CAN monitors city and county government and speaks out on pertinent issues. Often SB CAN is sought out by local media for commentary on breaking news. Here are a few quotations from SB CAN staff.

May 8, 2007 - Santa Barbara Newsroom, "Town of 21,000 Proposed Near Orcutt"

"There's a lot of neat features in North Hills that we would be very happy about if they were inside the urban limit line," said Deborah Brasket, a Santa Marian and the executive director of SB-CAN. "We don't need another bedroom community out there."

June 13, Santa Maria Times, "County Rejects 'Villages'"

"You will open up other agricultural lands to similar, city-sized developments," predicted Deborah Brasket, executive director of the Santa Barbara County Action Network (SB CAN). "It would be unfair to give these developers false hope, and have them spend millions of dollars (trying to get approval) of a project we know is a bad idea."

September 26 - Santa Maria Times, "Supes OK Land-Use Changes"

"We agree that many of these rules are absolutely necessary" for keeping agriculture viable, but some "would open up too much land for uses other than agriculture," said Deborah Brasket, executive director of Santa Barbara County Action Network.

October 23 - Daily Sound, "County Provides Transit for Agricultural Workers"

Olivia Uribe, associate director of the Santa Barbara County Action Network praised the program and spelled out the real-life difference to the board between a farm worker who can make it to work and farm worker who cannot. "If you have a ride you have a job," she said.

THE Santa Barbara COUNTY ACTION NETWORK NEWSLETTER



FALL 2007 Vol.4 / No. 1 www.sbcan.org mail@sbcan.org

IN THIS ISSUE

What's New

New Staff & Directors
New Coalition Partners
New Program: SB CANNES

What's HOT

Housing:
The "Fiscalization of Land Use"

Open Space:
Defending Rational Planning

Transportation:
Lanes, Trains, & Vanpools

**SB CORE,
A Partner in Research
& Education
SB CAN -
Making & Breaking News**

WHAT'S NEW!

"Double the pleasure, double the fun"

SB CAN Doubles its Staff and Welcomes 4 New Directors

2007 has been a year of growth and productivity for SB CAN. In January we welcomed new Executive Director, Deborah Brasket, a strong progressive advocate from Santa Maria. And in July, Olivia Uribe joined us as Associate Director in our new office in Santa Barbara, thanks to funding provided by SB CORE. While SB CAN has always been a county-wide organization, with new staff and offices based in both the north and south, we have been able to double our activity throughout the county.

Deborah comes to SB CAN with a background in community organizing and nonprofit training. Olivia is a Political Science graduate from UCSB currently pursuing a degree in law. You can visit Olivia at our new Santa Barbara office located in the exciting Tech Ventures Building at 402 E. Gutierrez.

SB CAN has a strong working board with Directors drawn from across the county who are leaders in their communities. We are pleased to welcome four new Directors this year: Emily Allen from Santa Barbara, Dulcie Sinn from Lompoc, and Gale McNeeley and Jerry Connor, both from Santa Maria. The Board meets at 5:30 on the last Wednesday of each month in Solvang. Members are always welcome at our meetings.

New Coalition Partners: Building Community & Bridging Differences

One of SB CAN's important goals is to encourage dialogue and alliances among the county's many highly focused progressive environmental and social justice organizations. One way we do that is by hosting Progressive Roundtables that bring together activists and organizations to examine specific issues. Another way is by joining with others to form Coalitions. In 2007 SB CAN helped to found two new important coalitions.

The Santa Maria Community Coalition - Providing Progressive Leadership In the North County

Through our Leadership Development Series, bi-weekly columns in the Santa Maria Times and Lompoc Record,

public forums and monthly networking meetings, SB CAN has been helping to build a strong, progressive community of activists in the North County. Last November, SB CAN helped to elect the first progressive candidate, Hilda Zacarias, to the traditionally conservative City Council in Santa Maria. A month later, we joined with other progressive organizations to found the Santa Maria Community Coalition. This Coalition meets twice a month to monitor city government and take action when needed to promote public participation and good government. It's safe to say that Santa Maria and other areas of North County are turning from "red" to "purple"!

(continued on page 4)



SB CAN / PO Box 23453, Santa Barbara CA 93121 / 805-879-1768 / mail@sbcan.org / www.sban.org



SB CAN DIRECTORS

- Joann Marmolejo, *President*
- Jon Williams, *V.P. South*
- Vibiana Saavedra, *V.P. North*
- Selma Rubin, *Treasurer*
- Carol Mosely, *Secretary*
- Emily Allen
- Vicky Blum
- BL Borovay
- Michael S. Brown
- Jerry Connor
- Dick Flacks
- Greg Helms
- Gale McNeely
- Robert Potter
- David Pritchett
- George Relles
- Dulcie Sinn

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Deborah Brasket

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Olivia Uribe

SB CAN Supports Progressive Candidates and Issues.

Congrats to Helene Schneider and Das Williams, founding SB CAN board members, on their re-election to the Santa Barbara City Council.

Many thanks to David Pritchett & Emily Allen, current board members, for their leadership in putting Measure A on the ballot.

What's Hot!

HOT Principles: The Heart and Soul of SB CAN

At a board retreat in 2006 SB CAN re-examined its mission. We found that most of our advocacy for environmental and social justice values focused on what we came to call our "HOT" issues—the need for building more affordable and workforce HOUSING; preserving OPEN SPACE, agricultural lands, and sensitive habitats; and creating alternative TRANSPORTATION systems that reduced congestion and pollution. We realized that Housing, Open space and Transportation (HOT) are interconnected issues that must be considered together rather than separately. Addressed holistically, they are key to the future of Santa Barbara County. We developed a set of HOT principles that examine how these issues are inter-related and that guide our advocacy in these areas. You can find these principles detailed on our website at www.sbcan.org.

Here are a few HOT projects we've been working on during the past 12 months.

Affordable and Workforce Housing

Solving the County's Housing Crisis - SB CAN recognizes that the County is facing a crisis with respect to the availability of affordable housing for low income residents. That's why we support the state's housing mandate that requires enough high-density zoning to meet the county's need for affordable housing. However, we also recognize that affordable housing needs to be built across the county, near job sites and transportation centers. That's why we opposed the County's plan to locate all of the affordable housing rezones needed to satisfy the State's Housing Mandate in the North County, with five of those sites in Orcutt. That's why we also have serious concerns about the County's new plan to satisfy South Coast affordable housing needs in Isla Vista. Finding a solution to the housing crisis will not be easy, but quick fixes such as the County proposes, — technically satisfying the State's mandates but failing to supply the housing where it's needed — are unacceptable. The low-income families that support our local tourist, service, and agriculture industries need and deserve better than that.

"North Hills" and the "Fiscalization of Land Use"- Another of the County's quick-fix plans to solve the affordable housing crisis and bring in needed revenue is the cultivation of "Village Centers"—that is, building brand new towns in the middle of nowhere that include mixed-use housing, commercial districts, and a hotel. "North Hills," a proposed development in the hills south of Orcutt, exemplifies the "village" concept. If approved, it would have created 7500 new housing units on agriculturally-zoned land that also boasts dozens of operating oil wells. SB CAN opposed the development of this project, which would have threatened agriculture, contributed to urban sprawl, and created safety hazards. That development is now on hold, but plans for new "villages" are popping up all over the county, including a proposed development east of Lompoc and another east of Santa Maria. Creating urban sprawl and threatening agricultural resources are not good strategies for solving a housing crisis or padding the county's coffers.

Finding Common Ground: Last year SB CAN joined with other environmental organizations and developers to create a Common Ground Coalition in Santa Barbara. The policy statement adopted by Common Ground was strongly influenced by SB CAN's HOT document. Since then we have been working to create sound policy for increasing affordable and workforce housing on the South Coast, near job and transportation centers. Common Ground will be hosting a series of workshops that will examine how housing, open space, and transportation (HOT) issues are intimately related and require sound planning. Stay tuned for more details.

Harvey Molotch speaks on "Santa Barbara as the Hinge of History" at the July SB CAN Annual Membership meeting in Santa Barbara. A video of his speech is posted on the Off-Leash Public Affairs website at <http://offleash-publicaffairs.blogspot.com/2007/10/episode-007-santa-barbara-as-hinge-of.html>



Preserving Open Space & Protecting the Environment

Defending Rational Planning in Santa Barbara County - In October 2006, SB CAN hosted a Progressive Roundtable to discuss proposed changes to the Uniform Rules that govern development on agricultural lands. As a result of that meeting, a coalition was formed to oppose the changes that would have allowed development that could threaten viable agriculture. We advocated delaying voting on the changes until more public workshops were held. The Coalition also pressured Supervisor Firestone to recuse himself from voting since he owned land that would benefit economically from those changes. After a good deal of lobbying effort, in August the Board of Supervisors voted unanimously on the passage of the Uniform Rules changes, which excluded most provisions we opposed, and made compromises on others, coming to what we believe to be a fair and sound decision, environmentally and economically.

SB CAN Hosts an Environmental Summit - In May SB CAN hosted an Environmental Summit in Orcutt, bringing together environmental organizations and activists from across the county to examine critical environmental needs. The wide variety of issues we examined included leapfrog development and threats to open space, sensitive habitats, and agriculture; the import of contaminated sand from San Luis Obispo to a Santa Maria landfill near a crumbling river levee; water quality, quantity and carrying capacity; proposed new off-shore oil development; food safety and pesticide use in agriculture. SB CAN will be examining some of these concerns in more detail at our Progressive Roundtables, working with other environmental organizations to develop strategies for protecting our natural resources.

Advocating for Alternative Transportation

Renewal of a Fair and Balanced Measure D - As a participant in the County's Advisory Committees to renew Measure D in 2008, SB CAN has been advocating for more funding for alternative transportation to help alleviate traffic congestion and reduce air pollution. On the South Coast, we support funding for a commuter rail system to reduce traffic during peak hours, and in the North County, which traditionally spends little on alternative transportation, we are advocating for more funding for Safe Routes to School programs, Class II bike lanes, and more effective and efficient public transit systems.

Santa Maria Farmworkers Van Pool Program SB CAN has been a strong advocate for the creation of a pilot vanpool program in Santa Maria that will help to transport agricultural workers to their work sites in a safe and reliable way. After many delays, this program was finally approved by the Board of Supervisors. The program is due to start early in 2008.

SB CAN 2007 Photo Album.



SB City Councilmembers Helene Schneider and Grant House give "On-Trac" presentation at HOT Committee meeting



2007 SB CAN/SB CORE North County Awards Dinner. Award recipients: (top clockwise) Don Ward, Francisco Sanchez, Bess Christensen, Nancy Joahnson, Lansing Duncan



SB CAN's new staff - Olivia & Deborah



"SB CANNES at the Metro"