

A Thank You to Our Sustainers

By Diane Schulz

As the manager of SCCA's very successful Sustainer Program, I am happy to report that this program, begun in the Fall of 2003, has grown from a handful of donors to more than 600 donors. The definition of the word "sustain", from the Oxford English Dictionary: "to support the efforts, conduct or cause of the given subject."

The staff here at SCCA is profoundly thankful that so many of you are willing to become ongoing sustainers of the organization. With a certain reliable source of revenue each month, we can continue to upgrade our operations and engender new and innovative programs to involve the grassroots participation of Sonoma County citizens. We have, with your help, expanded our office venue (in 2004) by twice as much floor space, upgraded our computer system and software, and expanded our Know Your Neighbor program by hiring a full time KYN coordinator for the past year and a half.

The response of the public to our efforts is heartwarming, to say the least. Helping us to help Sonoma County remain a beautiful, green

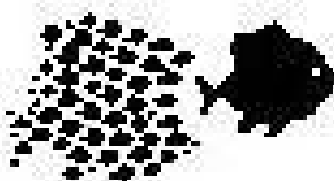
place to live is the greatest thing you can do. Thank you, from me and all of us here at SCCA. ◇

Phone Canvass Report

By Josh Stithem, Phone Canvass Manager

Sonoma County Conservation Action's rapidly growing phone canvass has been working hard this season! Our crew is calling six days a week, keeping in touch with our members and reaching out to people who are interested in protecting the quality of life in Sonoma County. As we contact more people with greater frequency, we become a stronger voice in the upcoming election!

We've been working on the campaign to keep our state parks open, and have been supporting our early endorsed candidates for Santa Rosa City Council. The phone staff has been reaching out to some non-members as well, with some productive initial results. There's a lot of areas in the County that we can't get to, and those people vote too! ◇



Front page continued.

There's an election quickly and quietly approaching in the Sonoma Valley, for a hospital bond for the Sonoma Valley Hospital District. Conservation Action has endorsed the "Yes on F" bond measure campaign, due in large part to the commitment of the district to build a city centered hospital adjacent to the existing hospital and medical infrastructure.

Conservation Action canvassers walked much of the district in the Summer of 2007, generating letters of support to the Hospital District for the reuse of the existing hospital and a city centered approach. The benefits of this proposal are clear for the environment. By utilizing the existing hospital and building the new hospital building(s) nearby, we prevent additional pressure being placed on the

Urban Growth Boundary, passed by 64% of the public of Sonoma just in the year 2000. We also allow the existing network of medical offices and businesses to continue to exist around the current hospital zone. These businesses would likely move to whatever new location the district chose, hence keeping them in town or near the existing site is critical when evaluating the overall impact of moving the hospital.

The bond is the first part of a two part bond strategy to finance the seismic upgrade to the existing hospital which will be used for offices, and the construction of a the new hospital. Measure F will fund the purchasing of the land that is needed, and will upgrade the existing hospital site. The district is being very prudent and

Solar Sonoma County

By Marty Roberts

Solar Sebastopol founder Marty Roberts and other members, along with interested people from throughout the County are in the process of forming a new organization called Solar Sonoma County. Sebastopol received a grant from the Bay Area Air Quality District to begin to implement this new program.

An interim group has been meeting to determine the best way to move forward and to solicit interest and membership from the county's nine cities and the County itself. The group has set a temporary goal of installing 25 megawatts of solar electricity over the next three years.

There are three main elements to the proposed project:

I. Form Solar Sonoma County (SSC)
Expand Solar Sebastopol to a county-wide membership organization consisting of Sebastopol and eight other cities, the County, and interested stakeholders. Use this organization as the vehicle to promote solar power and to implement sustainable solar incentives countywide.

II. Create a countywide Solar Implementation Plan with the following elements:

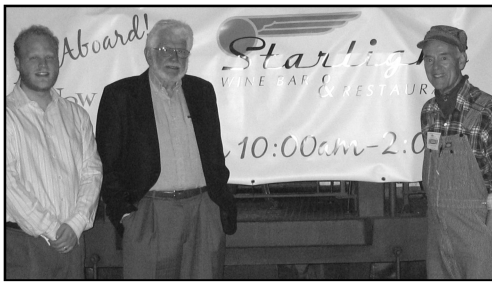
a. *Financial incentives to address market barriers and to encourage solar installation*

b. *Research and recommend countywide standardization of the planning and building permitting processes, building code standards for solar photovoltaic and thermal systems, and the use of energy conservation elements in General Plans for cities and the County.*

III. Provide outreach and education
Perform outreach via a website, a public relations campaign, a countywide Solar Fair, and the promotion of solar installations on municipal buildings.

Solar Sonoma County will soon have its own web site. Meanwhile, visit www.solarsebastopol.com for more information. ◇

Marty Roberts is the founder of Solar Sebastopol, and is an active SCCA member and Web-mistress.



Above: Denny Rosatti, Bill Kortum, and Steve Birdlebough, our 3 presenters at Starlight in December. Right: At our 2nd Annual KYN Benefit, plenty of fun was had in the beautiful restored train car at Starlight.



Know Your Neighbor (KYN) Upcoming Events:

February 23, 2008: Public Speaking Workshop

10am-3:30pm, \$50

Learn how to prepare and deliver effective speeches and other presentations to any audience. The instructor is Edward Segal, a former speechwriter to members of Congress and a public speaker who conducts presentation skills workshops across the country.

Location: Environmental Center, 55 Ridgeway Ave Ste A, Santa Rosa

Reservations required. Please bring your own lunch.

March 13, 2008: Film, The Future of Food

7pm, \$5-10 suggested donation

This insightful documentary "offers an in-depth investigation into the disturbing truth behind the unlabeled, patented, genetically engineered foods that have quietly filled U.S. grocery store shelves for the past decade." Of course, we'll have GE-Free popcorn!

Location: Sonoma County Conservation Action, 540 Pacific Ave, Santa Rosa

March 22, 2008: Compost Workshop

10am-4pm, \$50

Taught by experienced gardener and compost queen BJ Avery. Come learn the ins and outs of a variety of ways to compost. Reduce your waste and feed your garden! Reservations required. Location: Laguna Farm, Sebastopol. Please bring your own lunch.

April 5, 2008: Mycoremediation Workshop!

10am-2pm, \$35-65 Sliding Scale

Fun with Fungus! Laguna Farm, Sebastopol. Details on page 7.

April 19, 2008: Earth Day Homescale Garden Workshop

1pm-5pm, \$35-65 Sliding Scale

Join us in Sebastopol for a celebration of Earth Day with our hands in the Earth. Learn how to plant and plan your Summer garden. Taught by experienced gardener and instructor, the lovely Wendy Krupnick! More details to follow.

Ongoing: Precinct Organizing for the Environment!

Facilitated by Jenna Brager, SCCA is working to build precinct teams in every City and Supervisorial district in Sonoma County. Call Jenna to find out more!

Look forward to our upcoming local government series and the continuation of our sustainability series. We'll see you in the garden or at city hall!

KYN is Hiring!

Our program is finding success, thanks in large part to your participation, and to the dedication of SCCA's staff involved in the project. In fact we've been so successful, that we need more help! We're looking for an excited, organized individual to fill the role of **KYN Associate**. The position will be a part-full time job, with responsibilities that include planning and follow through for SCCA sponsored events, organizing precincts through the KYN program, general KYN support, and others. Candidates can fax resumes to (707) 571-1678 Attn: KYN or email to jenna@conservationaction.org.

From the Heart of KYN

SCCA's living breathing Know Your Neighbor (KYN) Program is excited to be welcoming more precincts, more people, and more fun events! We just had a wonderfully successful time with SCCA Movie Night at the Rialto Cinemas Lakeside on January 31. Nearly 200 people turned out to see the inspiring film "Baraka," hear from Santa Rosa City



The Crux at Rialto Cinemas

Council candidates, and listen to local band The Crux on a rainy night in

Santa Rosa.

We are looking forward to upcoming workshops and films in February and March. Please be in touch to sign up for the following workshops: Public Speaking (Feb 23), Composting (March 22), and Mycorestoration (March). Future films to be seen at SCCA's office are "Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Prices" on Feb 21 and "The Future of Food" on March 13, both at 7pm.

As we move closer to local elections in June and November, KYN teams are meeting with SCCA-endorsed candidates, learning about our future elected officials, and planning for neighborhood outreach to support these candidates for City Council and Board of Supervisors. We are also inviting presenters on the SMART Train and other relevant issues to KYN meetings in preparation for teams to walk their neighborhoods.

More participation is always welcome and needed! Please be in touch if you'd like more information or let us know how you'd like to be involved. Contact Jenna: 707-571-8868, jenna@conservationaction.org ♦



Gabrielle Albright, KYN intern, shows off loads of raffle tickets given away at Rialto!

KYN Mycorestoration Workshop this March at Laguna Farm in Sebastopol *By Mia Rose*

'Mycorestoration' is "the use of fungi to help repair and restore ecologically harmed habitats." Mycorestoration strategies will be utilized in a local project, taking place at Laguna Farm on April 5, 2008. Laguna Farm is located on 30 acres adjacent to the Laguna de Santa Rosa, northern California's largest freshwater marsh. In addition to a photovoltaic system that powers all the farm's needs, Laguna Farm boasts an insulated straw bale walk-in cooler, wind generation, bio-fuel and veggie-oil-fueled vehicles and generators, time-of-use meters and energy-thrifty farming methods. Laguna Farm is leading the way, again, this time by partnering with local professionals to construct a living bio-filter around the on-site vegetable oil, bio-fuel, and ethanol fueling station. This is a preventative measure to keep possible contaminants in the fuel production from entering and degrading the Laguna watershed.

Frequent oil spills, such as the 'Cosco Busan' that occurred in San Francisco Bay November 14, 2007, cause lasting ecological degradation. These catastrophes have raised awareness of the necessity for developing

earth-friendly strategies for preventing, responding, and mitigating the damage caused by oil spills.

Our team of biologists, mycologists and educators are taking the initiative to explore various approaches to the bioremediation of petroleum contamination. Bioremediation is a process ac-



Beach remediation in Bay Area

complished by natural living systems that detoxify polluted water and soil. The living systems include plants, fungi and microbes (bacteria).

Locally, in order to mitigate watershed pollutants flowing from farms or businesses that enter the Laguna de Santa Rosa, our team designs living bio-filters composed of fungi and other organic materials. These bio-filters are capable of filtering and breaking-down the contaminants

found in run-off (effluent) into harmless substances.

Fungi, particularly Oyster mushrooms (*Pleurotus ostreatus*) were shown to be effective in detoxifying the Bunker C Fuel, which was the type of fuel that spilled in the San Francisco Bay. This process is called 'Mycoremediation.'

The project will take place within a workshop format on April 5th, taught by the above-mentioned team. It will begin at 10am and end around 2pm. Topics to be covered include: Water Harvesting, Mycorestoration (Mushroom Remediation), Rock and Reed Systems, Erosion Control, Reforestation Techniques, Microbial Bio-filters, Watershed Restoration, Site Assessment, and Permaculture Design.

Please join us as we explore healthy pathways towards watershed health!

To register please contact: Jenna at SCCA's Know Your Neighbor Program at 571-8868. ♦

Mia Rose is an expert on fungal remediation, has extensive training in Permaculture design and is resident of Forestville.

THE SCCA NEWS SCOOP

By Denny Rosatti

Santa Rosa Green Building

The city of Santa Rosa has adopted a Green Building ordinance that will require new residential and commercial construction to meet a minimum of 50 points under the Build it Green building tool for residential, and a minimum of 20 points under the LEED building tool for commercial. The new guidelines go into place in June of 2008.

This policy adoption was based off a consensus recommendation by the City's appointed Green Building Committee, which Conservation Action has 1 of 19 seats among the table. There is a wide representation of community interests participating in this committee, including other environmentalists, business leaders, builders, architects, and bankers.

The committee is now looking at ways to ramp up the requirements of the green building ordinance over time, and at ways to address the existing buildings within the city, to make them more environmentally friendly as well. With finding ways to address and reduce global warming on the rise, the work of this committee is none too late.

SMART Campaign



Another committee of diverse interests is coming together around the SMART Rail and Trail measure that will appear on the ballot in November of 2008. The campaign has filed pa-

pers with the state, and has begun to collect funds. You can find updates at www.gosmarttrain.org especially as the time for the election nears.

SCCA's Know Your Neighbor teams have been talking about SMART, and are going to start doing preliminary outreach to friends and neighbors about the Rail and Trail. Contact Jenna at 571-8868 to get plugged into the KYN effort.

Sonoma County General Plan

On Tuesday, April 1st the County Supervisor's will be making final decisions on climate, water resources and open space in the County General Plan Update. Please write your Supervisor's to tell them to support the Community Coalition Platform that SCCA helped collect 1700+ signatures for. We need you to write letters! Go to our website for details, and see page 4 for the Supe's emails! www.conservationaction.org ♦



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KYN Coordinator

Jenna Brager

Canvass Report

by Tim Dixon, Canvass Field Manager

Unlike the last few winters, this one has been very wet!

While it is comforting to know that our thirsty county is finally getting a good drink, SCCA's canvassers have been trudging through the rain organizing the grassroots in preparation for the big June and November elections. For the last few months we have covered the east side of Santa Rosa, and have not let the rain hinder our excitement. With the potential to win an environmental majority on the city council for the first time in history, walking Santa Rosa precincts has been more rewarding than ever. We have big hopes for Santa Rosa with candidates like Michael Allen, Marsha Vas Dupre, and Gary Wysocky running for council seats.

We recently have moved on from Santa Rosa and are making our way through Rohnert Park collecting letters to stop the governor from shutting down 20% of our State Parks, including Armstrong Redwoods and Austin Creek State Reserve! We cannot afford to lose treasures like Armstrong Woods, so get involved! To write a letter yourself, go to www.conservationaction.org

SCCA's 13th Annual Dinner and Auction
May 3rd 5:00-9:30 PM

SCCA is Off to the Races!
Grassroots Gourmet Gala
Showcase Cafe at the Fairgrounds

To Purchase Tickets Call: 571-8566,
or visit us online at
www.conservationaction.org

Silent Auction, Local Wine & Food, Good Times
We Look Forward To Seeing You There!

and click on "Get Involved" and then click on "Action Alert."

Remember, the canvass is what makes SCCA so effective, last year we knocked on over 70,000 doors! So when we come you your door, please support us in continuing this work by renewing your membership! ◇

SUPPORT CONSERVATION ACTION!

SCCA is sustained entirely by the contributions of local concerned citizens. Please sign up or renew today. Thanks!

Name: _____

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Contributions to SCCA support our advocacy and grassroots Organizing work. They are not tax-deductible.

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*Please join our growing list of **Sustaining Members** who give Regularly-scheduled donations via credit card. Call us at the office at 571-8566 for more information*

Please share this newsletter with your neighbors and friends! Thank You!