

SBWPC NEWSLETTER • Fall 2011 Edition

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

WHY HAVE A FEMINIST PAC?



Photo: © Randall Lamb

"At times, established traditions need to be explained. This month is one of those times. It is a simple question for this organization, but one that goes to its heart. Why give money to the Santa Barbara Women's Political Committee, a political action committee, when you can just give money to the candidates?"

In its 23rd year, the SBWPC has followed a very purposeful path, electing feminist-thinking women (and sometimes like-minded men as well) to office to represent the interests of our members. That has been the core of our strategy from the very beginning and remains its foundation.

Our aim is to demonstrate our strength in elections at all levels. Collective action is vital to preserving women's rights and to ensuring that policy has the potential to improve the lives of women and their families whatever their economic and social circumstances. Our strength lies not only in our numbers, by representing the interests of hundreds of people,

but also in our ability to provide financial backing to our endorsed candidates.

SBWPC is an independent, political force. We endorse candidates who take strong stands on issues that matter to us and to our community—women and men of any political affiliation.

Our issues are the ones reflected in our position papers [http://sbwpc.org/?page_id=25]. No other PAC on the South Coast of Santa Barbara County expects its candidates to take stands on such a wide range of issues as those represented in our position papers.

(continued on p. 2)

★ HUNGRY FOR GOOD FOOD AND A GOOD SPEAKER? ★



Join us on **October 2**, for our **SBWPC Anniversary Dinner** with EMILY's List President **Stephanie Schriock**. Stephanie was highlighted in 2010 by *TIME* magazine as one of America's 40 "New Civic Leaders" under 40. She's been described as "inspirational," a "star in American politics," and "a spectacular campaign manager." During Howard Dean's 2004 presidential campaign, Stephanie led the team that revolutionized political fundraising; later, she managed Al Franken's campaign in Minnesota. You won't want to miss this fantastic event! Reserve your tickets online at our website: sbwpc.org

President's Message continued...

SBWPC continues to build on more than two decades of work through its board, active members and support by you, our members, to increase the presence and the clout of candidates who support women's legal, economic, social and political rights. We continue to endorse strong candidates early in their political careers and look for and develop new leaders to represent our—and your—interests in the future. Success comes through outreach, voter alerts, financial support, and candidate development efforts. Financial support is central to asserting an explicit feminist presence in the community, a presence represented through membership and event contributions.

These monies are given to our endorsed candidates. After elections, the board members of the SBWPC follow up with our endorsed and victorious candidates to discuss their commitments to our principles and how best they can honor them. We have a "living endorsement" to ensure that once

in office, our elected officials continue to be principled and representative of the issues that matter.

It is in this important work that I ask you to continue your support. Come to our free events in this season and please join us for our **Anniversary Dinner on October 2** at the **Hyatt Santa Barbara**.

By attending our informative events and our October 2 dinner, you will be contributing financially and collectively to the work of the SBWPC—your SBWPC—in support of our endorsed candidates.

At the Anniversary Dinner, you will hear how a new generation of leadership at **EMILY's List** continues to showcase how political action committees remain necessary and viable to feminist social change. We look forward to seeing you.

—Beth Schneider
SBWPC Board President

COFFEE WITH LOIS CAPPS June 4, 2011 at the Contemporary Arts Forum, Paseo Nuevo

Lois Capps, 35th District Congresswoman, annually hosts this very special event for SBWPC Members only. If you were not there, you certainly missed a great opportunity to network with other SBWPC members and to have a conversation with Lois. Over coffee, not only did we get to hear about the most important and current events and happenings in Congress from an insider, but Lois also shared her very candid thoughts on the process and her on-the-job excitements as well as her and disappointments.

This year, Lois spoke about healthcare reform, war, and clean energy, among other things, to a packed house where there was literally standing room only. During a very dynamic exchange, she discussed the challenges for collaboration between Democrats and Republicans, and she listened to the audience opine on a variety of issues, which she confirmed, she would represent in Congress.

Toward the end of the event, one of our members asked Lois if it was difficult to remain true to her own beliefs and values under so much pressure. Without hesitation, she responded, "It is not easy, and for that, you need to have



around you people you trust, people who share your values. They will not let you drift away."

Those precious two hours went by in the blink of an eye. Thanks to all who attended. We missed those of you who could not attend and we hope to see you all in 2012.

—Silvia Uribe
SBWPC Board Member

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POLITICALLY SPEAKING...

by Emily Allen



HOMELESSNESS: A FEMINIST ISSUE

The “Feminization of Poverty” is the worldwide phenomenon in which women represent a disproportionate number of the world’s poor. In the United States, we are familiar with “The Gender Gap in Earnings.” The Santa Barbara Women’s Political

Committee position on Pay Equity reads: “The wage gap between women and men is one of the oldest and most persistent symptoms of gender inequality in the United States.”

In looking at homelessness in our community, there are also reasons to consider gender. In studies, including the most recent Common Ground survey, men represent a larger percentage of people who are homeless.¹

Long-time local Social Worker Ken Williams remembers when it was rare to see homeless women living on the streets of Santa Barbara. He writes: “In my professional career, I have gone from experiencing absolutely no women on the streets and very few mentally ill to State Street becoming an open-air asylum, with trash cans as cafeterias. Bushes, bus benches, alleyways, parks and alcoves have become our new low-income hotels, while street drugs have replaced the psychotropic medicines that should take care of the terrors that haunt the deep canyons of these women’s minds.”²

In addition to a rise in the numbers of single women living on the streets, family homelessness impacts women in higher numbers. Adults in families that are in emergency shelters or transitional housing are predominantly women (79.6%).³

Homelessness is often linked to physical or mental trauma. “Approximately 63% of homeless women have experienced domestic violence in their adult lives.”⁴ One clear example of this is the rise in the number of female homeless veterans. The reasons are also linked to physical and mental trauma.⁵

Domestic violence coupled with lack of affordable housing explains much of the homelessness in our own community.

While doing legal outreach at Casa Esperanza, I met two women who illustrate these sad statistics. One was an older woman who had left her husband to escape domestic violence. Now her boyfriend on the street was abusing her. I assisted her in applying for a restraining order and informed her of options for counseling and support. The other was a young woman who came into the shelter with her father. She was still housed and was there to inquire about the Rapid Re-housing Program. She was bruised and battered by her boyfriend. Without this assistance she would have no way to afford the security deposit and first months rent required for her escape.

In addition to confronting gender inequality, violence against women and the lack of access to affordable housing and adequate mental health services, what else can we do to address these issues? In this election year, I encourage you to vote for Santa Barbara City Council candidates who do not use their position to demonize people who are experiencing homelessness. We need leaders who will do research and look for real policy solutions. I also encourage you to get involved to combat homelessness in all our communities.

Emily Allen is a public interest lawyer working with the Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County.

RESOURCES IN OUR COMMUNITY:

Casa Esperanza: 805-884-481 or <http://www.casa-esperanza.org/cm/Home.html>

Transition House: 805-730-3848 or <http://transitionhouse.com/services>

Volunteer or contribute to the effort to house and support the most vulnerable people experiencing homelessness identified in the recent Common Ground Survey <http://www.commongroundsb.org>.

Support continued legal outreach by contacting the **Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County:** 805-963-6754 or <http://www.lafsb.org>.

¹ “Individual adults without children are predominantly men (72.7%).” Data sources: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *The 2009 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress*

² “Ken Williams: The Women of Mental Illness” Noozhawk, March 7, 2008

³ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *The 2009 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress*

⁴ Domestic Violence and Homelessness. National Coalition for the Homeless, July 2009

⁵ “U.S. seeing more female homeless veterans.” CNN. September 25, 2009

SBWPC Endorses Cathy Murillo, Deborah Schwartz and Iya Falcone for the Santa Barbara City Council 2011 Election

After an exhaustive interview process in which the SBWPC Candidate Assessment Team (CAT) interviewed five candidates for City Council, all women, the Board of Directors of the Santa Barbara Women's Political Committee voted to endorse **Cathy Murillo, Deborah Schwartz** and **Iya Falcone** for the Santa Barbara City Council at its noticed Endorsement Meeting on July 13, 2011. Endorsement recommendations and votes at the July meeting were preceded by a CAT presentation and complete report on the five candidates, Deborah Schwartz, Michael Self, Cathy Murillo, Blanca Benedict and Iya Falcone, interviewed between June 6 and June 22, 2011.

Among the attendees at the endorsement meeting were Supervisor **Janet Wolf**, Former Supervisor **Susan Rose**, Former Supervisor **Naomi Schwartz**, SB City Council member **Michael Self**, Santa Barbara City College Trustee **Marty Blum**, Santa Barbara School District Board Member **Monique Limón**, the endorsed candidates, and other members of the SBWPC general membership..

The SBWPC CAT and Board members were pleased with the high quality of the candidates who were interviewed. They also noted that each of the endorsed candidates will

bring unique histories and competencies to the hard work of governing the city. Endorsement by the SBWPC of these candidates is accompanied by financial and other support during their campaigns.

The SBWPC encourages you to **get involved** in the campaigns of our endorsed candidates. Contact information for each of the candidates can be found below:

Cathy Murillo for City Council 2011

PO Box 91034, Santa Barbara CA 93190

www.cathymurillo.org

805-252-3012

Deborah Schwartz for Santa Barbara City Council

315 Meigs Road, Suite A435, Santa Barbara, CA 93109

deborah@schwartzforcitycouncil.com

805-613-7106

Iya Falcone for City Council

PO Box 22557, Santa Barbara, CA 93121

www.iyafalcone.com

IyaFalcone2011@gmail.com

805-965-3952

SBWPC also wants to remind you that this election is an all mail-in ballot election.

★ **PLEASE VOTE—AND VOTE EARLY!** ★

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more than rape, not only crisis

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SBWPC WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

by Janet Wolf

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A COUNTY SUPERVISOR

A day in the life of this County Supervisor is interesting, intriguing and while it is incredibly exciting, it can also be challenging and sometimes frustrating. No day is ever the same...constituent contacts, attendance at community meetings and of course the most important event of the week, our Tuesday BOS (Board of Supervisors) meeting.

In the days leading up to the BOS meeting, I carefully review and study agenda material, speak to staff and get input from the public. For me, every meeting is like taking a test. On any given Tuesday, I must be prepared to “ace” that test... it is too important to expect anything less given the decisions we make and the impact those decisions have.

The “final exam” takes place during the month of June, or as we call it, Budget Week. For this article, I want to focus on this most important process: budget deliberations. As a feminist, environmentalist, previous business owner and active community member, the budget document sets the tone and funds the programs that are important to those whom I represent. Indeed, the budget is a “moral document” reflecting our values. This year, the process took on a heightened importance given our extensive budgetary challenges.

What used to be a mostly perfunctory exercise during “the good times”, the budget process took on heightened significance this year, controversy and, at times, conflict. The hard truth is that with diminished resources and increased expenditures we had to make decisions on what programs, services and ultimately the number of staff to reduce or eliminate.

In early June, the Board was presented with the CEO's budget that reflected many months of discussion within and between departments. Severe cuts were proposed to a multitude of programs with a corresponding impact eliminating over 200 County employees. Many of these programs impacted women, children and the most vulnerable in our communities—cuts to Children's Protective Services, Adult Protective

Services, Children's Health Insurance, Protective Pay programs and other safety programs. After extensive study and deliberation, I and other Board members put forth our priorities and ultimately the Board was able to find some common ground (need 3 votes) to fund some but not all of those programs and positions.

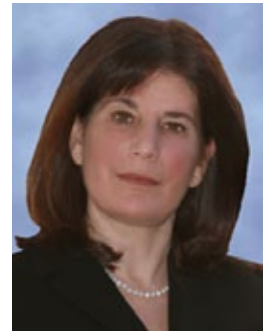
Unfortunately, during this time of serious debate, negative rhetoric made its way into our chambers with anti-public employee comments. In response to some of those outrageous statements, I spoke out from the dais reminding people of the importance of our public employees and the valuable services they provide...many which go unseen, but serve our community well.

While the BOS did not have a pre-budget workshop this year, I have advocated for a post-budget public hearing. This is necessary because after all the decisions and the furor died down, many employee groups made additional concessions, some departments “found” money, and now many of the services previously cut are being reinstated. In addition, our last fiscal year had an ending balance with a surplus that was more than expected, adding to our strategic reserve. This post-budget meeting is important to inform the public of our current situation as we move forward.

My job as a Supervisor is to ensure the health and welfare of our County residents, maintain fair and equitable wages and safe working conditions for our employees, preserve, and when necessary, upgrade our infrastructure and ensure fiscal stability.

This is a job I am honored to do and work that is so incredibly satisfying.

Janet Wolf is Santa Barbara County Supervisor for the Second District.



Join us on **Wednesday, November 26, 2011**, from 6-8 pm at the Faulkner Gallery, Santa Barbara Public Library, for an **SBWPC Leadership Series Event** to learn about elected and appointed Boards and Commissions.

★ See the “Save the Date” on the back of this newsletter for more information.

PLEASE JOIN SBWPC IN WELCOMING TWO NEW BOARD MEMBERS

In July, 2011, two phenomenal women joined the SBWPC Board of Directors. They have already become active members of our sub-committees, and we look forward to working with them for years to come.



Suzan Garner is VP and Director of a consulting firm, Stonemark Construction Management, started by her husband, which specializes in planning and management of large-scale design and construction projects.

She also serves as President/CEO and Director of Siddhartha Foundation International, whose aim is to “establish a contemplative center on the Central Coast to create positive change in ourselves, our communities and the environment.”

Suzan is overseeing the development of this nonprofit venture. Prior to moving to Santa Barbara, she was the co-founder, President/CEO of a privately-held biotechnology company. Suzan received a MBA from UCLA's Anderson School of Management. She is currently serving on two of our sub-committees: Fund Development and Media.

Anne Schowe worked in the computer industry for 30 years. Prior to her retirement, she was a Vice-President in the server business of Sun Microsystems.

She is on the Advisory Boards of the John Hopkins Center for Talented Youth and the Purdue University Global Policy Research Institute. Anne volunteered on the primary campaign of Hillary Clinton in Texas, Indiana, and Kentucky. She is married and has a daughter who is studying public policy at Northwestern.



Anne is a new member of the board of the SBVSLO Planned Parenthood Action Fund. For the SBWPC, she is currently serving on two of our sub-committees: Elections and Appointments and Fund Development.

Are YOU considering placement on a County or Citywide Board or Commission?

The SBWPC is interested in talking to members about placements. Please contact us at: info@sbwpc.org or call us at 805-564-6876 so we may contact you or add your name to our list.

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How Federal & State Redistricting Impacts the Santa Barbara Area

Federal and State laws require political district boundaries to be examined and adjusted every ten years following the US census so that population is evenly divided into districts that are represented by elected officials. This includes the US House of Representatives, state legislature, County Board of Supervisors, and cities and school districts where members are elected by district. Redistricting ensures every person has equal representation by drawing districts with an equal number of people, implementing the concept of “one person, one vote.” Here are some of the changes that impact southern Santa Barbara County:

Federal & State Redistricting

In 2008 and 2010, California voters passed Propositions 11 and 20, which established a 14-member commission to draw the district maps for Congress, State Board of Equalization, State Senate and Assembly. The Independent Commission's final maps were adopted on August 15, 2011.

24th Congressional District: This new district is similar in shape to the district ten years ago, to which **Lois Capps** was first elected in 1998, and re-elected in 2000.¹ It now consists of all of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties, and a small portion of Ventura County including a small portion of the city of Ventura, and much of the national forest north of Ojai, Fillmore and Piru. The new district is considered a “swing” district with 39.2% Democrats, 35.6% Republicans, 20.2% Decline to State, and 5% Other. **Lois Capps** has announced her intention to seek re-election, and her likely opponents at this point are former State Senator and Lt. Governor **Abel Maldonado**, businessman **Tom Watson** (whom she defeated in 2010), and actor **Chris Mitchum**. On August 30, 2011, Republican activists submitted the text of a referendum to challenge the new Congressional Districts. As of this writing that measure is being reviewed by the State Attorney General.

19th Senate District: This new district consists of Santa Barbara County and western Ventura County, including the cities of Ventura, Oxnard, Ojai, Fillmore, Santa Paula and Piru. This is a Democratic-leaning seat (with a 12-point Democratic advantage), and no resident incumbent. Announced Democratic candidates are former Assemblymember **Hannah-Beth Jackson** and Firefighter/Harbor Commissioner **Jason Hodge**. Former Supervisor **Mike Stoker** (R) is rumored to be exploring a campaign as well. Republican activists unhappy with the Independent Commission's districts have already initiated a referendum to challenge the State Senate districts. They have until November 13, 2011, to obtain 504,760 valid signatures to force a vote on the new districts.

37th Assembly District: The newly-drawn Assembly District includes southern Santa Barbara County, to Point Conception on the Gaviota Coast, and then moves inland to include the area east of Lompoc, including Los Alamos and the Santa Ynez Valley. The Ventura County portion includes Santa Paula, Fillmore, Piru, and areas north of Camarillo. The district also includes the northern and western portions of the city of Oxnard, including Channel Islands and Oxnard Shores. The district has a 15% Democratic voter registration advantage. Assemblymember **Das Williams** is expected to run for re-election.

—Mary Rose

*Political consultant **Mary Rose** is a member of the Board of the Santa Barbara Women's Political Committee. She has studied redistricting extensively and has been involved with state and local redistricting in California for the past four redistricting cycles.*

¹ In 1998, the 22nd Congressional District included all of San Luis Obispo County and all of Santa Barbara County, except for the City of Carpinteria.

Is your SBWPC Membership current?

Stay involved and don't miss out on all that an SBWPC membership offers! Use the form on the back of this newsletter to renew, join a sub-committee or make a donation. Or, go to sbwpc.org for online access.

Welcome, New SBWPC Members!

Jean Alexander • Jazmin Gomez • Bonnie Hope • Diane McQuarie
Dinorah Isis Molina • Nina Soares • Pam Flynt Tambo

Thanks for helping to make Santa Barbara a better place for women!