



VC COLAB Celebrates our One Year Anniversary

By Lynn Gray Jensen

It has truly been an amazing year for our Coalition, far out performing our expectations with respect to membership and fundraising.

We are proud of our accomplishments in our first year including the following:

- Building our organization to over 275 members
- Eliciting over \$200,000 including 54 Memberships of \$1000+ with 19 Benefactors (donations of \$5000+)
- Organizing stakeholders at public meetings to gain access for representation of our member’s issues
- Contracting scientists, engineers and attorneys to analyze regulations and actively negotiate for more reasonable language in county guidelines and grading standards
- Allied in a lawsuit against the County for their revision of Biology Initial Study Assessment Guidelines which, as written, will lessen opportunities for new and continuing business in the County
- Raising the awareness of relevant

issues to affected members.

- Providing a resource for many companies who are seeking advice for their regulatory concerns

Our organization is growing due to increased awareness of the inequity and consequences of current and proposed legislation. Joblessness has become chronic. Business and consumer confidence is low. Individual freedoms are shrinking. Poverty is increasing. New policies are threatening the core of rural America. It is essential that we organize, get involved and challenge the rule makers.

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ANNUAL MEETING

Our first annual meeting was held at the Limoniera Visitor’s Center in Santa Paula (1140 Cummings Road) on Tuesday, September 27th, 4:30 to 7:30pm. Our featured speaker was Tom Nassif of Western Growers. Stay tuned for our October newsletter where we will summarize the points of his speech including Immigration, Water, Overregulation and the EPA.



Lawsuit Update

When reading the article in the Ventura County Star by Rachel McGrath published on September 1st about the VC COLAB joint lawsuit against the County of Ventura, there was blatant bias in the article written by a seemingly conscientious freelance reporter. Is it unusual to have a reporter insert an extra word in a direct quote taken in a phone interview? The word “development” was added to her quote to explain to the obviously uninformed public that applicants must be developers when working through the cumbersome and expensive County permit process. In the interview, Lynn Jensen explained that our members “are pretty much all farmers and ranchers and businesses who have gone through the process, and are finding it difficult to stay in business because of what the county demands.” The Ventura County Star added a blatant bias by inserting the word “development” before process in

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The “Sustainability” Factor

By Lynn Gray Jensen

How many times in the last month have you heard the term “sustainability” in a conversation with friends? Sustainable energy, buildings, development, agriculture, transportation, population, consumption, communities . . . This all sounds positive right - and politically correct - but is it really? How do we determine whether a “sustainable” product or policy is truly better for mankind or just another sales tool for governmental control or corporate profitability? Remember the “natural” foods craze? Did we ever determine the meaning of natural? Were natural products proven to be healthier in retrospect?

I have to admit I own a hybrid vehicle. Originally, the sales price of these cars qualified for a government subsidy. The sustainability factor of these cars, however, is up to much debate as they certainly reduce gas consumption and CO2 emissions; however, they require the manufacture and disposal of additional batteries. These arguments are common and important in discussions of the sustainability factor.

According to Wikipedia, **Sustainable agriculture** is the practice of farming using principles of ecology, the study of relationships between organisms and their environment. It has been defined as "an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will last over the long term:

- Satisfy human food and fiber needs
- Make the most efficient use of non-renewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural

biological cycles and controls

- Sustain the economic viability of farm operations
- Enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole

Sounds reasonable, however, the reality for farmers, ranchers and all rural businesses is that the sustainability movement is not about encouraging agriculture; it is about “sustainable development”.

Sustainable development is a concept that was defined in a conference of the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 where it was defined as “Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” The implementation of this doctrine requires the prediction of what future generations will need and is based entirely on a particular world view that is hostile to private property rights. In this view, land is too precious to be controlled by individuals and private land ownership is a principal instrument of accumulation of wealth and therefore contributes to social injustice. This world view is entirely contrary to our nation’s founders and the U.S. Constitution.

The result of this world view is seen in many of the policies being adopted by local, State and Federal agencies which are encouraged by well-funded environmental organizations. These policies are packaged to sound perfectly reasonable. Who can argue against saving wetlands, preserving natural and scenic resources, clean air and water, preventing urban sprawl, creating wilderness, bike trails, light rail systems etc.?

The problem with these policies is that there is no limit to the severity of the restrictions proposed to implement them and no financial accountability to the citizens who must fund the programs through taxes. The regulatory

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her direct quote.

After calling to inquire, Ms. Jensen determined that the word was added, not by Rachel McGrath, but by Senior Editor Jim Medina. After being confronted with this, Mr. Medina admitted his misunderstanding and agreed to print a retraction – now there’s a fair resolution. So the options are: refuse to comment or be misquoted - both losing positions.

In fact, the Star entirely missed the point. We are fighting against unreasonable and unscientifically proven biology guidelines which will harm agricultural resources and will cause unnecessary hardship to the 3,500 landowners who farm, ranch, live and run small businesses on private property in the County open spaces. Our members do not want tract housing developments on or near their property, however, they are tired of the red tape and negative attitude when applying for permits to improve their farms, homes and businesses on their land. This land does not belong to the public, it is not National Forest and has been maintained for generations by those who produce food for the world and cherish their way of life.

While the judge ruled in favor of the County’s demurrer and upheld that although the County itself called the Biology ISAG a “Project” under CEQA, they do not have to be true to their own findings under pressure and can now change their mind, finding that it was never a project. Our new complaint, which is due to be filed by September 30th, will plead that the Biology ISAG is a “project” and will cause a significant negative impact to agricultural resources in this County.

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restrictions have caused a breakdown in our ability to manufacture goods to generate revenue. The lack of accountability has caused the cost of these programs, mostly hidden from the public, to spiral out of sight adding to our public debt crisis.

While these restrictions are sold as necessary to “save” open space and agriculture, they will ultimately lead to the eradication of the individual right to live on rural lands and in suburban communities. “Smart growth” land use policies ultimately seek to move rural and suburban residents to high density urban housing.

In Ventura County, these policies are seriously impacting the quality of life of rural residents and business owners with increasingly restrictive general plans and zoning codes, endless building design review, aggressive code enforcement tactics, unnecessarily high standards for CO2 emissions, septic systems and storm water runoff, water restrictions, biological mitigation, deed restriction of properties for minor permits, wildlife and scenic corridors, new agricultural grading, fire and road restrictions etc.

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When it comes to “sustainability”: beware! Question the validity of policies using this newest of buzz words. Challenge the fear mongers who predict disaster from every human action and use this as justification to take away your land, your business, your future. We must sustain our individual freedom and pass this inalienable right along to future generations of Americans. Freedom cannot be sacrificed in the movement to become “sustainable”.

VC COLAB October \$1,000+ Donor Event in Somis

**Wednesday evening, October 19th
VC COLAB will host an event to honor members who have donated goods or services in the amount of \$1,000 or greater to our organization. The party will be held at a beautiful private location in Somis and include the opportunity to mingle with our Board Members. We have 54 members who are in – how about you!?**



From Forbes Magazine:
Fact and Comment by Steve Forbes,
September 12, 2011 Issue, p. 14:

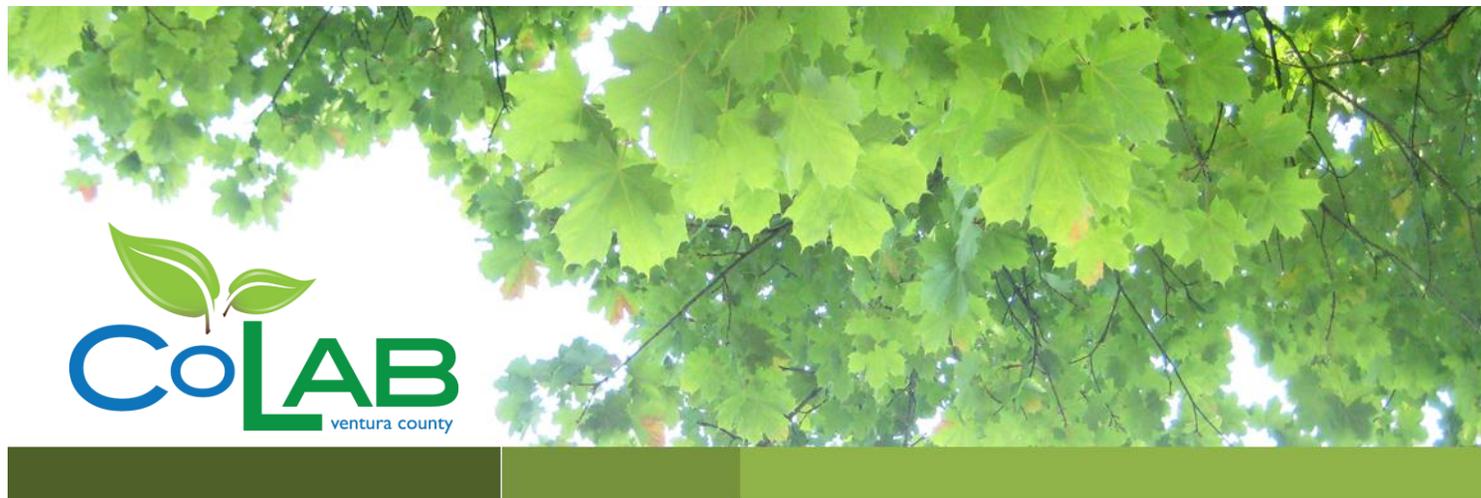
GOVERNMENT IS A LEMON

“On Aug. 20 a number of liberty-minded Americans celebrated “Lemonade Freedom Day”, a protest against government officials’ shutting down kids’ lemonade stands because they don’t have the proper licenses. The fact that officials around the country feel the need to harass these budding entrepreneurs because “regulations require it” shows how stultifying, bureaucratic and un-commonsensical America’s blob-like government is becoming. Kids are not the only victims. A Forbes.com contributor, E.D. Kain, recently told the story about how Salem, Ore. cracked down on a woman who had too many yard sales to raise money to pay for her bone-marrow treatment. Thankfully in this internet era these idiocies are quickly publicized- and feed the fires of citizen-protest movements. . .”

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**Ventura County Coalition of
Labor, Agriculture and Business**

P.O. Box 4237, Ventura, CA 93007
Email: membership@colabvc.org
www.colabvc.org

MEMBERSHIP FORM

I would like to apply for an Active Membership at the following level:

- \$100 Individual - Promote economic vitality and individual rights in Ventura County
- \$500 Business - Promote the common business interests of **VC COLAB** Members
- \$1,000 Gold - Further our efforts to monitor, educate and represent our common business interests
- \$1,500 Platinum - Support ongoing research to challenge harmful and unreasonable regulation
- \$2,500 Black - Advance legal and administrative action for the mutual benefit of **VC COLAB** members
- \$5,000 Benefactor - Let's make a difference in the business climate of Ventura County

Please accept my membership fee of: \$ _____

In addition I would like to contribute: \$ _____

Total contribution payable to **VC COLAB, Inc.** \$ _____

Print this form and send with a check to the P.O. Box or contribute online with PayPal

Individual or Representative (for voting) _____

Name of Business _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email Address _____

Occupation _____

How did you hear about us? _____

Reason(s) for applying for membership: _____