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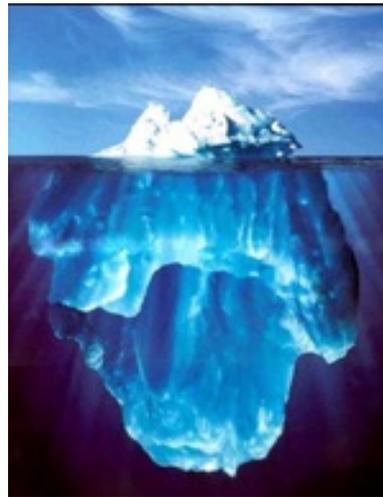
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Looking Beyond the Surface: Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team Report March 19, 2011

Speakers: **Professor Kimberly Tatum**, UWF Associate Professor and chairperson of the Escambia County Domestic Violence Coalition and **Dr. Richard Hough**, UWF and member Escambia County Domestic Violence Coalition.

The Escambia County Domestic Violence Coalition recently presented the findings of the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team (FRT) to local agency heads.

The local FRT studied four cases of domestic fatalities in order to better understand, intervene, and prevent these crimes. Two members of the coalition will present these findings to League members at the League meeting March 19th. **Professor Kimberly Tatum** began her career as a domestic violence prosecutor, and helped to start Escambia County's first domestic violence prosecution unit. After joining the UWF faculty in 2002, she has focused much of her research on the area of domestic violence legislation and policy and has been published in this area. She has served as chairperson of the Escambia County Domestic Violence Coalition since 2007 and serves on the board of directors at FavorHouse.

Dr. Richard Hough is a Criminal Justice Instructor at UWF, who has a background of 30 years involvement with domestic violence issues. He has served on the Board of Directors at FavorHouse, including serving as president. Additionally, he has participated actively on the Escambia County Domestic Violence Coalition.

Background

Delegates to the 1994 LWVUS Convention adopted a position on Violence Prevention. Subsequently, the League endorsed the *Violence Against Women Act*, which became law in 1994. At the Annual Meeting in 2005, LWV Pensacola Bay Area members selected the issue of Domestic Violence for action

State Attorney William (Bill) Eddins formed the Escambia Domestic Violence Coalition in 2005. The purpose of the coalition is to address agency responses to domestic violence crime through cooperation and communication. The functions include: Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team, training, awareness and recognition events and policy examination.

Members of the Social Policy Committee began attending the Escambia County Domestic Violence Coalition to learn what form effective action could take.

In 2007, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) received a grant administered by the Department of Justice to partner with the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV) to create a statewide domestic violence fatality review steering committee. This grant award came at a critical time in Florida, where in 2007, 16 percent of the homicides were domestic violence related. The fatality review process is a critical component in helping communities understand the events that may have led to a domestic violence homicide and, ultimately, to determine how to prevent such homicides.

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Septic Tank Report

Report by Andrea Walker, 723-2112



(L) Robert Merritt and Bill Sirmans respond as Dr. Paula Montgomery relays audience questions.

The Environmental Health Directors of Escambia and Santa Rosa County Health Departments presented the February monthly

League program. Robert Merritt and Bill Sirmans discussed the current status of septic tank usage in the two counties.

This timely topic was the result of the passage of SB 550 by the Florida Legislature in 2010; a law requiring the inspection of all septic tanks every five years with costs to be borne by the owner of the property. The law was to become effective in January; however during a special legislative session last November the effective date was moved to July 2011.

Robert Merritt stated that a septic tank is an on-site sewage disposal system. He reminded the audience the health department is a state agency and it enforces the laws from Tallahassee. In addition, the department enforces county and city codes; one of which in Escambia County is a requirement that all septic tanks must be inspected when property is sold. This ordinance covers property located south of Well Line Road (north of International Paper Company).

There are approximately 48,000 septic tanks in Escambia County. The County initiated the first inspection program in the state in 2000, and inspection is tied directly to the economy through the real estate industry. In 2001, the health department did 1,058 inspections and four years later the number had steadily increased to 1,663. By 2008, the number had dropped to 436 as result of the economic downturn.

The health department generally becomes aware of a septic tank failure as result of a complaint of sewage on the ground. Merritt pointed out that the septic tank is an anaerobic, passive system. He distributed a guide for homeowners who have septic tanks with important guidelines:

- adequately sized
- made of approved construction materials
- installed at the proper elevation
- installed at the proper depth and distance in relation to the water table
- proper drainfield from the septic tank
- GARBAGE DISPOSALS SHORTEN THE LIFE OF SEPTIC SYSTEM BY HALF, WITH SOLIDS CLOGGING THE SYSTEM**

Bill Sirmans has been employed with Santa Rosa County Health Department for more than 30 years. He also serves on the Technical Review Advisory Panel (TRAP) for the state. [The Technical Review and Advisory Panel began July, 1996, as mandated by Florida Legislature. The primary purpose of the

panel is to assist the department in rulemaking and decision making by drawing on the expertise of representatives from several groups that are affected by onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems.]

Sirmans noted that the new governor has recommended that Florida be placed under the EPA's numerical guidelines. According to Sirmans, this change, it adopted, would result in a pass-along cost to every household of approximately \$500 in increased utility fees annually.

Santa Rosa County has about a ten percent (10%) failure rate of septic tanks. Mr. Sirmans reiterated the damage garbage disposals do and also suggested doing laundry over several days instead of overloading the system with a big laundry day once a week. The average system averages 300 gallons a day. In addition, septic tanks cannot handle grease.

Questions and Answers

- If Florida does not repeal SB 550, will the EPA placement be a requirement? *No.*
- What is the comparative cost of septic tank to sewage system? *Approximately \$400 per year for sewage versus \$3,000 to \$4,000 installation for septic in Escambia County - Tap-on fees are \$2600 in Santa Rosa and \$1560 in Escambia.*
- Should chemical treatments be used in septic tanks? *No - solvents go to the drainfield and cause damage.*
- What is the cost for pumping a septic? *\$200 to \$300 and pumping is recommended every three to five years.*
- Who introduced SB 550? *Senator Constatine from Orlando area - no longer in office due to term limits.*
- Are funds available to the consumer to make the switch from septic to sewer? *In Escambia County, there is some funding for lower income households.*
- Are municipal sewer lines required for subdivisions? *In Escambia, new subdivisions within ¼ mile of a municipal sewer line must have municipal sewer service; in Santa Rosa the distance is ½ mile.*

Social Policy Committee Meets

The Social Policy Committee will meet over a Dutch treat lunch at the Mediterranean Plus Restaurant at 11:30 on Thursday, March 10.

For the last two years the committee's focus has been on Domestic Violence primarily. While this is domestic violence is still of concern, it may be time to consider a new project. Please join us and help us to decide. Suggested are education and workforce training for prisoners and human trafficking. We are also open to other considerations. If you have an interest in these or other projects, you are welcome to join this open committee. For more information, contact Paula Montgomery at 438-8891.

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This grant enabled DCF and FCADV to bring together high ranking officials or their designees from almost every state agency in Florida, along with state and local civil and criminal justice associations and community partners, to discuss the domestic violence fatality review. It was unprecedented to have officials at this level at the same table discussing this topic. The experience and expertise of each member, as well as the guidance provided by the project consultants, enabled the Steering Committee to consider potential gaps in systems serving victims and appropriate punishment for perpetrators of domestic violence, and to brainstorm ideas to address those gaps, with an eye toward the ultimate goal of increasing services to families and preventing domestic violence homicides. The interaction between officials of various agencies has also led to the development of new partnerships at the statewide level to address these problems, including partnerships between FCADV and the Department of Corrections, and FCADV and the Department of Education. A guiding principle of the Steering Committee in developing its recommendations was the recognition that it is critical to view system response to domestic violence through the eyes of the victim. It is one thing for a group of providers to meet and analyze gaps in services through the lens of a player in the system; it is quite another to look at the choices a victim may have to make as she navigates through referrals and services offered. (FCADV Project Report 2008)

A Fatality Review Team report may include a review of events leading up to the domestic violence incident, available community resources, current laws and policies, actions taken by systems and individuals related to the incident and the parties, and any information or action deemed relevant by the team, including a review of public records and records for which public records exemptions are granted. The purpose of the multidisciplinary team members is to identify issues and concerns related to the deaths in the community; to learn how to prevent domestic through early intervention and improved response of individual agencies, as well as the system itself. In 2010, legislation was enacted in Florida related to domestic fatality review which provides important protections to enable the committee to effectively conduct fatality reviews. ◇

Expansion of Rehabilitation Programs for Inmates: Visit to Century Prison

Three members of the rehabilitation study committee visited the Century Correctional Facility in northern Escambia County. Strict security is maintained at this facility, designed to hold 1400 inmates. An overview of the facility and issues dealing with rehabilitation were presented by Mr. Robert Flores, Assistant Warden; Sgt.



Century Correctional Institution website:
<http://www.dc.state.fl.us/facilities/region1/106.html>

Greg Gilliard, Coordinator of the inmate Reentry Program and Ms. Parham, Director of the Modality Unit.

At the present time GED preparation is offered for inmates; however no vocational training is available to the general

population. This is the result of a 1981 law, restricting the use of education funds for federal and state inmates. (Sen. Greg Evers, chair of the Senate Criminal Justice Committee, plans to get the law repealed.)

The Modality Unit addresses basic issues relating to re-entry into the community and recidivism. Inmates who are participating in the modality unit are within eighteen months of release and are segregated from the general population in the prison. This transition program is a 100-hour program and is mandated by the state. It consists of various phases: a two-week orientation with lectures and classes; GED classes; alcohol and narcotics abuse sessions; smoking cessation and personal finance.

The Century administration oversees other area facilities:

- The *Work Camp* is located a short distance from the prison. It houses 300 inmates who have been convicted of lesser offenses. Eighty inmates are in a work release program and join with the Escambia County Road Prison to work on the roads. They return to the facility each night.
- The *Work Release Program* is located near the Escambia County jail. These inmates hold jobs in the community but must return to the facility after work.
- The *Berrydale* prison houses 120 inmates who are generally involved in activities related to forestry and work with the Department of Transportation. This facility is located in northern Santa Rosa County.

The Century visit included a tour of the educational facilities and a class for GED instruction was underway. The library seems adequate for the 1400 inmate population and the librarian indicated that books and magazines are

always welcomed donations. The computer lab offers an opportunity for inmates to become 'computer literate'.

What better investment in our own safety and well-being could one envision than to change the lives of men who live on the fringes and/or at taxpayer expense and help them achieve productivity? Their success is our success.

Calendar



March

- 1 Tuesday, 5:30 pm **Board Meeting** at new Tryon Branch Public Library, 1200 Langley Ave.
- 10 Thursday, 11:30 am **Social Policy Committee**, lunch at Mediterranean Plus Restaurant. Contact Paula Montgomery at 438-8891.
- 15 Tuesday, 10 am **International Relations Committee**, Azalea Trace Auditorium; **Haiti**, *Rev. Elaine Buker*. For further information, contact Gene Feicht at 479-3352 or gfl@students.uwf.edu

General Meeting

Saturday, March 19, 2011

Coffee 9:00 am - Program 9:30 am

Looking Beyond the Surface:

Domestic Violence Fatality

Review Team Report

Speakers: *Professor Kimberly Tatum,*

Dr. Richard Hough

New Tryon Branch Library, 1200 Langley Ave.

- 22 Tuesday, 5:30 pm **Natural Resource Committee** to meet at the downtown library conference room (Gregory and Spring Street). Contact Ellen Roston, 453-0730
- 23-26 **Legislative Seminar and Convention**, Tallahassee, See page 6 for more information.

April

- 1 Tuesday, 5:30 pm **Board Meeting** at new Tryon Branch Public Library, 1200 Langley Ave.
- 16 Saturday, 9:00 am coffee - 9:30 am program, **General Meeting**, Speakers: *Charlotte Crane and Connie Bookman*, Prison and/or Rehabilitation, New Tryon Branch Library
- 19 Tuesday, 10 am **International Relations Committee**, Azalea Trace Auditorium; For further information, contact Gene Feicht at 479-3352 or gfl@students.uwf.edu

Susan B. Anthony Member

Sherlee Aronson

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at www.lwv.org and www.lwvfla.org.

Do you want to get involved, but don't know how? Want to learn more about how your government works?

Join the League of Women Voters Pensacola Bay Area to learn more about the things that are important to you. For more information visit www.lwv.org or contact the League at 937-7769.



APRIL 25 & 26, 2011

UWF CONFERENCE CENTER

8:00 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

The UWF School of Justice Studies and Social Work and The Escambia County Domestic Violence Coalition *present*

The Professional's Challenge in Addressing Domestic Violence

Day One: Casey Gwinn, J.D., former prosecutor and current President, National Family Justice Center Alliance **Day Two: Stacy Sharp, J.D.**, former deputy and current Assistant State Attorney, 14th Judicial Circuit *and* Presenters from the University of West Florida faculty and community partners

Free training for all law enforcement, prosecutors, probation officers, social workers, students, victim advocates and others

who work with domestic violence victims.

Contact FavorHouse at 434-1177 or email Danielle@favorhouse.org to register

Clean Air Act: A New Approach to Regulating Greenhouse Gas Emissions

By Eleanor Revelle (LWVIL and LWVUS Climate Change Task Force Member)

With the demise of cap-and-trade legislation during the 2010 session of Congress, the climate action spotlight has shifted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Clean Air Act (CAA). But efforts are now underway to block EPA regulation of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Clean Air Act of 1970

In the aftermath of the first Earth Day in April 1970, Congress passed the Clean Air Act and created the EPA to implement the new law. Over the 40 years that the CAA has been in effect, it has yielded dramatic public health and environmental benefits.

CAA programs have achieved major reductions in dangerous air pollutants that cause smog, acid rain, and lead poisoning. The EPA reports that this has prevented hundreds of thousands of premature deaths, has helped millions avoid developing respiratory ailments and heart disease, and (by banning leaded gasoline) has greatly reduced the incidence of low child IQ.

The benefits of these advances have far exceeded the costs of compliance. An EPA analysis of the CAA's first 20 years found that the dollar value of the human health and environmental benefits amounted to more than 40 times the costs of regulation. For the 1990-2010 period, as requirements have become more stringent, the EPA estimates a benefit-to-cost ratio of four to one.

At the same time, CAA programs spurred significant growth in the U.S. environmental technologies industry. By 2007, the industry was generating \$282 billion in revenues, producing \$40 billion in exports, and supporting 1.6 million jobs. Innovations include catalytic converters, scrubbers, and low-VOC paints and consumer products.

U.S. Supreme Court Ruling

Despite these achievements, concerns about global warming pollution led Massachusetts and 11 other states to sue the EPA over its failure to regulate GHG emissions from the transportation sector. They charged that human-influenced global climate change was causing adverse effects, such as sea-level rise, to the state of Massachusetts.

In a 5-4 decision in April 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that carbon dioxide and other GHGs meet the definition of "air pollutants" under the CAA. The Court directed the EPA to determine whether or not GHG emissions from new motor vehicles (the sector cited in the lawsuit) cause or contribute to air pollution that may endanger the public health or welfare.

In 2009, the EPA responded by conducting an extensive examination of the scientific evidence and, in December 2009, made a determination — the "endangerment finding" — that GHG concentrations in the atmosphere do threaten

the public health and welfare of current and future generations. The EPA also found that GHG emissions from new motor vehicles contribute to the atmospheric concentration of these gases and, thus, to the threat from climate change.

Once the EPA had issued its endangerment finding, the agency moved ahead to finalize proposed GHG emissions standards for light-duty motor vehicles.

The Clean Cars Rule

The EPA partnered with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to set increasingly stringent standards for GHG emissions and fuel efficiency for passenger cars and light-duty trucks for model years 2012-2016.

The federal rules mirror California's Clean Car Standards, also adopted by 13 other states, and set a target of 35.5 miles per gallon (mpg) for 2016 model-year vehicles. The auto industry welcomed the uniform national standards.

The new standards surpass the 2007 federal fuel economy law, which required an average fuel economy of 35 mpg in 2020. The EPA estimates that the new rules will cut GHG emissions by 960 million metric tons over the regulated vehicles' lifetime, equivalent to taking 50 million cars and light trucks off the road in 2030. Consumers can expect to save \$3,000 over the lifetime of a model-year 2016 vehicle.

The EPA and DOT have since proposed emissions and fuel efficiency standards for heavy-duty trucks and buses, beginning in the 2014 model year, and will also set further standards for light-duty vehicles for model years 2017 and beyond.

Stationary Source Regulations

The EPA is also phasing in regulations for major stationary sources of GHG emissions (e.g., power plants, industrial facilities). As of January 2, 2011, rules requiring new or substantially modified facilities to obtain permits that address their GHG emissions have begun to take effect. These facilities must make use of "best available control technologies" to minimize GHG emissions.

The EPA has taken steps to ensure that the new rules do not affect small stationary sources, such as small businesses and farms, schools, or churches. CAA permitting requirements apply to facilities that emit more than 100-250 tons/year of a regulated pollutant such as lead, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide. But GHGs are emitted in much higher volumes than these pollutants.

The EPA, therefore, issued a "tailoring rule" that raises the threshold for GHG emissions so that only the largest sources would be subject to the permitting requirements. The thresholds for GHG emissions are 75,000-100,000 tons/year.

In addition, the EPA has established a timeline for setting limits on GHG emissions for both new and existing power plants and oil refineries. The EPA will propose new rules for power plants in July 2011 and for refineries in December 2011.

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Continued from page 5. Clean Air....

Final rules for power plants will be issued in May 2012 and for refineries in November 2012. Together, power plants and refineries account for about 40 percent of all U.S. GHG emissions.

Challenges to EPA Regulations

Opponents of the new rules are working to block or delay EPA regulation of GHG emissions. Several dozen legal challenges to EPA's recent actions have been filed by a variety of business and industry groups and by several states and members of Congress.

In Congress, bills have been introduced that would, for example, amend the CAA to exclude regulation of GHGs, limit the use of EPA funds, and delay regulation of GHG emissions for two years.

The League of Women Voters strongly opposes efforts such as these to undermine the EPA's ability to establish the urgently needed clean air protections called for by the CAA. It's time for action -- time to reduce dangerous global warming pollution and safeguard "the public health and welfare of current and future generations."

For more details, see the Clean Air Defense section of the LWVUS Toolkit for Climate Action (www.lwv.org/climatechangetoolkit).

Produced by the LWVUS Climate Change Task Force
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