Fanuary 2024 Newsletter



This Month

Tuesday
January 2
7 PM
Clubhouse 7
Hans Johnson

"Making Hate Backfire: Defeating Bigotry and Censorship at School Boards"

Thursday
January 18
2 PM
Clubhouse 1
Maura O'Neill
"Religion, Sex, and Politics"

On Village TV

Concerned Citizens Presents Wednesdays at 1 PM

Most speakers are recorded for later broadcast on Village TV

Friday, January 26
Board of Directors
Meeting 1 PM



Resting is Doing

If only we could see the power in rest. If only we could attach to it the worth it so deserves.

If only we could open our minds to the idea that everything in nature has its time to rise and its time to descend.

That each of these acts is just as important as the other.

And that is exactly as it must be.

If only we could see the courage it takes to lay aside the worries, the fears and the comparison, just for a few hours, to let the mind, spirit and body come together again.

Doing the one thing they all require so much... nothing.

~ Donna Ashworth from "Life"

Welcome our newest members!



Naren Jansen Sarah Moscoe Janet Petersen Pat Pizzimenti Cathy Subar

Content printed herein as commentary, opinions, and/or letters does not necessarily represent the views of Concerned Citizens of Laguna Woods Village.

What We Do

The Bylaws state that the organization shall:

Study issues of peace, economic and social justice, good government, and the environment in an interdependent world.

Communicate concerns on specific issues to elected and appointed officials at all levels of government and to the public.

Provide educational opportunities to our community.

Support the efforts of other groups and individuals who share our purposes.

Has Your Membership Expired?

All <u>unrenewed</u>
Concerned Citizens
memberships expired on
Dec. 31, 2023!

If you paid dues on or after October 1, you are paid for 2024!

To renew, complete the form at the end of this newsletter and mail it with your check or bring it to the next meeting!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Monthly Meeting2
Thursday Event3
President's Corner4
Government Committee5
Earth Day Planning5
Out and About with Joel6
Peace7
Meet Mary Sinclair8
Reading Corner9
Food for Thought10
Contacts/Leadership11
Membership Form—Back Page



Tuesday, January 2, 2024 Clubhouse 7 7 PM

Come early at 6:30 PM for refreshments and conversation

Members Free Non-members: \$3

For Laguna Woods Village residents, their guests, and club members only

Website:
bit.ly/concernedseniors
Email:
cclagunawoodsvillage@gmail.com

Concerned Citizens of Laguna Woods Village MONTHLY MEETING

Are you concerned about...
What's going on in public education?

Join us to learn more!

SPEAKER: HANS JOHNSON

"Making Hate Backfire: Defeating Bigotry and Censorship at School Boards"

This presentation exposes the growing parental rights movement, whose goal is to limit children's access to information without parental consent. The movement wants to eliminate from libraries and classrooms materials that deal with sexuality or race relations. These demands have resulted in heated exchanges at school board meetings and occasionally in death threats.

Mr. Johnson will describe the growing influence of these groups and discuss how to push back against them effectively.

Currently based in Los Angeles, **Hans Johnson** is a long standing political activist working for immigrants' rights, affordable housing, a clean environment, and LBGTQ rights. He is president of Progressive Victory, a virtual community of Americans using the internet to effect social change.





Thursday, January 18, 2024

> Clubhouse 1 2 PM

Members Free Non-members: \$3

For Laguna Woods Village residents, their guests, and club members only

Website:
bit.ly/concernedseniors
Email:
cclagunawoodsvillage@gmail.com

Concerned Citizens of Laguna Woods Village THURSDAY PRESENTATION

"Religion, Sex, and Politics" Speaker: Maura O'Neill

Why are homosexuality and transsexuality so politically controversial?

Why is abortion so divisive?

Must rational responses to sexual behavior differ from religious responses?

Or, can religious people and non-religious people find areas of agreement?





Raised in New York City, Maura O'Neill has been a campus minister in both New York and California. She holds an MA and PhD in the Philosophy of Religion and Theology. The author of two books on inter-religious dialogue, she is Professor Emerita of Philosophy at Chaffey College. Since 2017, Dr. O'Neill has lived in Laguna Woods with her husband, Michael Harnett.

The President's Corner

by Sue Model

Happy New Year to all Concerned Citizens; 2024 will surely be a year of great "concern". To begin, I want to thank CC's Nominating Committee, Board of Directors, and members for re-electing me and my co-officers. We will do our very best to offer you a dynamic and engaging twelve months.

Before outlining our plans for the future, I would like to share some of the Club's 2023 accomplishments. First, as I'm sure you've noticed, we produce a bangup newsletter; arguably the best newsletter of any club in the Village. From first to last, it is chock full of useful information and penetrating insights. In addition, our April 20 Earth Day observance was outstanding. Over 300 residents attended. They came away with a plethora of environment-friendly tips and paraphernalia. Still, some members thought our Peace Day observance was the "event of the year". Its theme, "Poems for Peace", brought together creative minds from all over California.

In terms of new initiatives, there were several. We participated in the Laguna Woods Memorial Day parade. At a more mundane level, our Treasurer, Hassan Alief, created and maintained a budget. At long last, we know how much we spent and for what purpose. What's more, a healthy bank balance confirms that we are in sound financial shape.

An accomplishment at mid-year was to repopulate our Hospitality Committee. After many years of service, Rita Rabinowitz, our Hospitality Chair, and her associate, Jo Ballantyne, retired. Lucky for us, Maura O'Neill stepped into the breach. And we have eight dedicated volunteers working under her. Thank you, one and all, for rendering this important service to the Club. In addition, we have launched a brand new Committee on Homelessness. Though just getting started, its members have put together a spectacular list of potential goals. For some of these, they will need our help. So expect to hear from them soon!

A few other innovations are worth noting. Judy Northrop kept a binder of flyers, minutes, and other important club documents. At the end of the year, she deposited it in the Club's archive at the Village History Center. Now she's starting a new one. Sue Snyder, our conscientious Membership Chair, has been keeping track of attendance at meetings. For the first time, we are answering questions like are

there differences between members who attend our Tuesday meetings and members who attend our Thursday meetings? The more we know about our members, the better we can serve them.

We bid farewell to Lee Goldstein who has chaired our Environment Committee so capably. He is leaving the Village, and we will miss him! Mary Sinclair (see page 8) is the new chair of the Environment Committee, and we welcome her energy and enthusiasm.

So, what do we plan going forward? This is a weighty election year. Although Concerned Citizens is nonpartisan, we will continue to raise residents' awareness of the issues at hand. The main way we do this is to host stimulating, knowledgeable speakers. Although one of our Program Committee Co-chairs, Barbara Siry, has resigned, she will continue to serve on the Committee and assist Wendy Burry, who has graciously agreed to serve as sole Chair. Under her leadership, we may try some new programming ideas, like sponsoring a speaker via Zoom, rather than in person. This would allow us to tap talent beyond Southern California. Another possibility is to devote a meeting to small group discussions led by member experts on topics like nuclear power, gun control, immigration, free speech, abortion, etc. We have members well-qualified to lead discussions on several controversial subjects.

To learn precisely what we're offering at any particular meeting, check out Richard Snyder's entertaining articles in the Globe every week.

Finally, this year, we plan to mobilize a new Committee—a "Good Government Committee". Last year, the CC Board voted to create such a Committee. Now, we are moving forward in the hopes of recruiting a chair. An organizational meeting is planned for 2 pm on Monday, January 15. For

more information, please see the article on page 5 of this issue.

Thank you for being a Concerned Citizen. Should you have questions, suggestions, or comments about Club policies or activities, please contact me at cclagunawoodsvillage@gmail.com.

As the year progresses, we look forward to working with you.



Sue Model

Good Government

by Sue Model

In this important election year, Concerned Citizens would like to launch a Good Government Committee.

A commitment to "good government" is part of the Club's mission statement. And many members have expressed interest in joining such a committee. The difficulty has been finding someone to chair or co-chair the group. Although we have not solved this problem, we have decided to go ahead and schedule an organizational meeting in the hope that the required leadership will emerge.

What might this Committee do? Whatever its members choose to do. Though we are nonpartisan, Concerned Citizens endorses or opposes policies of all kinds. In the past, Club members have lobbied legislators (by petition, post, e-mail, and telephone), picketed meetings, attended rallies, and participated in marches. In 2016, we pressured our Congresswoman to support a state gun control measure by staging a "die-in" outside her office. In other words, we use a myriad of strategies to get our message across.

Another potential focus is local government, specifically the leadership of Laguna Woods While the goal of most residents' interaction with Village leaders is to lower costs, a number of other goals are worth seeking: transparency, two-way communication, reduction of red tape, and investment in infrastructure, to list a few. To be sure, residents attend GRF or Mutual meetings, but they are seldom organized. change requires focused, persistent effort. A Concerned Citizens' Good Government Committee could provide the structure that successful activism requires.

So, if you find the concept of a Good Government Committee appealing, please join us for a "brainstorming session" at 2 pm on Monday, January 15, in Clubhouse Three, Dining Room Two. Bring your ideas, priorities, and energies, and we'll put together a committee of movers and shakers.

Let us never forget that government is ourselves and not an alien power over us. The ultimate rulers of our democracy are not a President and senators and congressmen and government officials, but the voters of this country. ~ Franklin D. Roosevelt

Earth Day "All-In" Zoom Call Wants you

by Mary Sinclair

The **Environment Committee** of Concerned Citizens is about tackling the climate crisis together. True, it's overwhelming, but the best solution is to commit to just one area, join a group, and make an action plan.

What concerns you? Some broad areas are... water conservation, turf reduction, landscaping, solar panels, EV charging, electricity bills, trash/ organic waste, climate friendly actions, wildfire prevention, plastics, pollution, fast fashion, wildlife and wilderness preservation, food and agriculture. sustainability, climate resiliency, something else?

This year we are seeking YOUR input. You are

cordially invited to the first open call organized bγ the Environment Committee Earth Day. The goal of the call is to meet you, hear your concerns and ideas, and for those interested, offer ways to get involved.



Mary Sinclair

The Zoom call is Friday, January **12, at 10 AM.** Please join our call—we need you. To sign up so we can email you the Zoom link (or if you can't make it and want to stay connected), send your name and email address to Marv at miswellness@aol.com.

We can do this. This is the biggest emergent social movement in all of history. We can do this. And if anybody thinks that we don't have the political will, remember, political will is itself a renewable resource.

~ Al Gore

Out and About With Joel



These are photos taken over the years in various seasons in Laguna Beach. We are fortunate to have such beauty and variety so close to us. These scenic views capture some of that beauty and variety.





The Tragedy in the Middle East

In the December newsletter, we invited readers to share with us how they were **personally** working on dealing with the tragedy in Israel and Gaza and how we might **work together** on this locally, as a club, a village, and a community.

If you responded to the invitation to share your thoughts, we thank you for taking the time to share them. Please know that the newsletter team reviewed your submitted thoughts carefully.

It is the decision of the newsletter team that in keeping with the original intent of the invitation, responses that focus on taking a side in the conflict and offer political or military solutions will not be published. There are other forums for those discussions.

Peace

Today I am taking sides.

I am taking the side of Peace.

Peace, which I will not abandon even when its voice is drowned out by hurt and hatred, bitterness of loss, cries of right and wrong.

I am taking the side of Peace whose name has barely been spoken in this winnerless war.

I will hold Peace in my arms, and share my body's breath, lest Peace be added to the body count.

I will call for de-escalation even when I want nothing more than to get even.

I will do it in the service of Peace.

I will make a clearing in the overgrown thicket of cause and effect so Peace can breathe for a minute and reach for the sky.

I will do what I must to save the life of Peace. I will breathe through tears. I will swallow pride. I will bite my tongue. I will offer love without testing for deservingness.

So don't ask me to wave a flag today unless it is the flag of Peace.

Don't ask me to sing an anthem unless it is a song of Peace.

Don't ask me to take sides unless it is the side of Peace.

Rabbi Irwin Keller, Oct. 17, 2023

First, examine our attitude toward peace itself. Too many of us think it is impossible. Too many think it is unreal. But that is a dangerous, defeatist belief. It leads to the conclusion that war is inevitable. That mankind is doomed. That we are gripped by forces we cannot control. We need not accept that view. Our problems are manmade; therefore, they can be solved by man.

~ President John F. Kennedy

Meet Mary Sinclair New Chair of the Environment Committee

It is a genuine honor to serve as Chair of the Environment Committee. My sincere wish is to be a worthy "climate citizen"—in my home, in the Village, and on this planet. I want to make a difference, however small. I want to be part of a movement to create a climate-resilient Village. We are in such a unique position here not only to become more sustainable (energy, water, landscape, waste, plastics, carbon footprint, etc.) but to be a model for other communities. "All" we need to do is work through the kinks and make it work. No small order! But a worthy cause.

Some History

My background includes competitive sports, fitness, crafts, botanical drawing, energy medicine, and degrees in Health Ed from the University of South Florida (USF), Physical Education (USF), and Educational Leadership from University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). I taught wellness and exercise science courses in higher education at the University of Tulsa and UIC. After six years as Coordinator of Fitness and Nutrition, I retired from Wellness House in Hinsdale, a not-for-profit that offers counseling and wellness programs to people with cancer.

You Can't Be a Healthy Fish in a Sick Pond

Wellness is my lifework. It is the thread that weaves itself through what I believe, who I am, and what I do. Wellness is about being healthy in a well-rounded yet imperfect way. It is about being self-sufficient in those things that I can do for myself (including knowing when to "refer out"!).

Back in the '80s when I taught Wellness to undergrads, I remember saying, "You can't be healthy in a sick pond." Well, here we are, and it is happening. Our "pond" is very, very sick, damaging our physical health, social bonds, emotional balance, and even spiritual well-being. For me to be a healthy fish, I must step up beyond my own self-care and help my pond get well. I want the plants, animals, insects, birds, air, lands, oceans, and waters to be ok. I want my planet to be well again.

Story of a Reluctant Activist

Like so many of us, I moved to downsize my life, which included downsizing the labor and financial burden of caring for my 60-year-old suburban Chicago home. Also, my beloved garden had grown so big and full that the mowing, edging, trimming, mulching, etc. outgrew my time and energy. Moving cross country in the Fall of 2017 to a co-op here in United Mutual checked off all the boxes on my wish list—beautiful landscape, cozy living space, low maintenance lifestyle, wonderful neighbors, active lifestyle, affordable living, plenty to do, and much more.

Did I say, "plenty to do"?! After getting settled in, I volunteered right away to coordinate the program of classes taught by volunteer teachers of the Laguna Woods Art Association, signed up as a Good Neighbor in the Disaster Preparedness Program, took a few Emeritus classes, joined the Circuit Training class, and of course,

resumed gardening, this time in a lovely little garden plot in Garden Center 1. Over time I also joined the Crazy Quilters Guild and during the pandemic made facemasks for Social Services staff in LA.

Around 2019 I joined Concerned Citizens because they seemed like my kind of people. To be honest, I was a totally idle member. Being an "activist" was unthinkable to me, partly because I didn't really know what it meant—UNTIL several years later I watched a webcast that blew my doors open about the realness of climate change. And the deepening water crisis here in the Village was so distressing to me that I needed to do something. But what? I soon realized how little I knew about the crisis or even how to make a difference beyond saving water at home. So I joined the Concerned Citizens Environment Committee and began attending the Energy and Action Workgroup meetings led by Ann Beltran. BEST. MOVE. EVER!

Just Do Did It

And thus began my "doing something". With the help of a savvy leader and the small troupe of devoted "changemakers", I began to learn how things work around here. I saw how my interests and strengths fit in. For the first time, I moved beyond being ecoresponsible in my personal life to getting involved at the level of governance. For example, I dropped everything when I found out that United Mutual was passing a resolution to cut down almost 300 Canary Island Pine trees. Unconscionable. We (including residents I didn't know yet) wrote letters to the editor, attended Board United meetings, spoke to the Directors, emailed information to inform others, and rallied a petition with hundreds of names (modeled after the successful petition to ban Roundup).

That grassroots effort to save the trees was so successful that not only was the resolution canceled, but funds were approved to trim the trees and professional experts were hired to draw up an "Urban Forest Management Plan" to guide future decisions. This month the Plan will be discussed at a Special Landscape Meeting (9:30 AM on Monday, January 15) and up for approval at the United Landscape Committee Meeting (1:30 PM on January 22) and at a future United Board Meeting Board. Come out and help support and celebrate the trees!

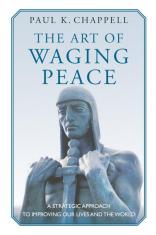
The story doesn't stop here, it continues to play out, and it is not

over yet. But I need to get out of my jammies and go for a walk, and who knows, you might too. Thanks for taking time to "listen". If you have a story to tell, please do. We are all in this little pond together.

Mary and the Monkey Puzzle Tree Pinecone that shook loose during the remnants of the summer hurricane. Can you believe it yielded about 50 huge pinenuts? (They received mixed reviews from taste testers!)



The Reading Corner



In today's struggle to stop war, terrorism, and other global problems, West Point graduate Paul K. Chappell offered new and practical solutions in his pioneering book, *The Art of Waging Peace*. By sharing his own personal struggles with childhood trauma, racism, and berserker rage, Chappell explores the anatomy of war and peace, giving strategies, tactics, and leadership principles to resolve inner and outer conflict. Chappell explains from a military perspective how Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. were strategic geniuses, more brilliant and innovative than any general in military history, courageous warriors who advanced a more effective method than waging war for providing national and global security. This pragmatic and richly instructive book shows how we can become active citizens with the skills and strength to defeat injustice and end all war. *Source: Amazon.com*

Chappell's military background allows him to write as one who knows of what he is speaking, and inspires confidence in his message. He has also been through discrimination due to his multiracial heritage, and domestic violence from his own combat-traumatized father. His experiences have given him insight into the psychology of abuse, while convincing him that the cycle of pain and revenge originating in these and other wrongs must be broken.

I've heard that he's a dynamic and powerful speaker, and that might be an even better way to experience his ideas. But failing that, I can recommend *The Art of Waging Peace* as a thought-provoking, inspiring catalyst for change.

Lory, in Emeraldcitybookreview.com

Paul K. Chappell is the founder and Executive Director of the Peace Literacy Institute. He graduated from West Point, was deployed to Iraq, and left active duty as a Captain. Realizing that humanity is facing new challenges that require us to become as well-trained in waging peace as soldiers are in waging war, Chappell created Peace Literacy to help students and adults from all backgrounds work toward their full potential and a more peaceful world.

Chappell grew up in a violent household. Born in 1980, he was raised in Alabama, the son of a Korean mother and a Black father who was a veteran of the Korean and Vietnam wars. These experiences were part of what compelled him to forge a new understanding of war, peace, rage, trauma, and our shared humanity.



Paul K. Chappell

This understanding is conveyed in his seven-book Road to Peace series. The first six books are Will War Ever End? (2009), The End of War (2010), Peaceful Revolution (2012), The Art of Waging Peace (2013), The Cosmic Ocean (2015), and Soldiers of Peace (2017). The final book of this series, The Transcendent Mystery: A New Paradigm for Understanding Peace, Trauma, Technology, and the Human Condition, is still to be published. It predicts enormous technological disruptions that will occur in the coming years and discusses how we can escalate our ethical evolution in response to these disruptions.

The right tools for solving disputes within our community are precision instruments such as reason, communication, empathy, curiosity, and understanding. They are also the right tools for building a global civilization of peace and prosperity.

~ Paul K. Chappell

Food for Thought

What kind of seafood is morally ethical to eat?

Do you like cod, shrimp, salmon, crab, or pollock (also known as fish sticks)? Of course you do. Do you shop at Walmart, Costco, Kroger or Albertsons for fish? Who doesn't? Do you eat at one of the more than 400,000 restaurants supplied by food

distributor Sysco? Almost certainly.

If so, you've likely been served or sold seafood caught by Indonesian forced-labor victims on Chinese vessels or processed in China by Uyghurs, a cultural, racial, and religious minority that faces systematic repression. Some 79% of the seafood sold in the United States is imported, according to the latest data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. China alone supplies nearly 10% of American seafood imports.

Learn more by clicking on the link: Commentary: What kind of seafood is morally ethical to eat? | Opinion | northwestgeorgianews.com

~ Shared by Joel Goldstein

Sustainable Travel

As more and more of us are planning to travel to near and far locations, are we responsible travelers? What do we mean by sustainable travel?

While people often think of sustainability as minimizing our environmental footprint, it is in fact much broader and all-encompassing than this. Sustainable tourism is all about achieving a balance between economic growth, human well-being, and environmental health. It focuses on reducing tourism's negative impacts and on maximizing its positive benefits for communities, cultures, ecosystems, and the planet. Sustainable tourism accounts for both the immediate impacts felt today as well as those longer-term impacts that will be experienced by future generations.

Learn more by clicking on the link: <u>Top 10 Tips for Sustainable Travel - Sustainable Travel</u> International

~ Shared by Judy Northrop

Free healthcare?

It sounds too good to be true: Free healthcare and prescription medications with no qualification process and no one turned away.

But that's exactly what the nonprofit Mission of Mercy Arizona offers in Chandler, Mesa, and four other mobile clinics in the Valley. Unlike other clinics that use a sliding fee scale, it removes all barriers to care by treating anyone who needs it.

"We never want patients to have to prove they can't afford something," said Paula Carvalho, Mission of Mercy Arizona's executive director. "They don't qualify by income; they don't qualify by citizenship status."

Mission of Mercy (MOM) was founded 26 years ago in Mesa and Phoenix and now has clinics in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Texas as well. It operates clinics either weekly or twice monthly at churches near transit lines to make for easier access. Click here to learn more.

Shared by Judy Northrop

Contact your State Legislators!

Click on the links below where you can express your views.

California Assembly Member:

Diane Dixon

California State Senator:

Dave Min

Contact your US Senators & Representative!

Senators: Alex Padilla

Laphonza Butler

Representative: Young Kim

Not everyone (even in Laguna Woods Village) has the same federal and state legislators. As a result of the 2020 Census, most of Laguna Woods is in the newly created 40th Congressional District (check to see if you might be in Katie Porter's district), the 72nd State Assembly District, and the 37th State Senate District. To be sure who represents you, click here to find out.

Unsure about how to email your elected representatives about issues that matter to you?

You aren't alone! Lots of people have strong concerns about issues like abortion, fair voting, war, military spending, the environment, immigration, treatment of migrants, etc. But they aren't sure what to say—or if their comments make any difference at all.

First, your comments to your elected representatives DO make a difference! According to the League of Women Voters, your representatives look forward to the views of their voters, and emails and phone calls are the best indication of what those voters are thinking. Voters get top priority with most elected officials—they want to keep their voters happy.

The names in the box above serve ALL of their constituents regardless of their party affiliation—or yours! It is important that they hear from us often about our concerns and our expectations. You can state your concern and simply ask them what they are doing as your representative to address that.

If you click on the links in the box above, you will usually come to a prepared email template that makes it easy for you to enter your information and choose the topic you wish to comment on.

Here are some guidelines for an email message:

I am your constituent and I am concerned about [enter your concern]. If it is a specific piece of legislation you are urging them to either vote for or against, enter the bill number, if possible. Briefly explain why you are concerned about the issue or legislation. Don't forget to thank them for listening. And ALWAYS ask for a response.

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Sue Model

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CONTACT:

cclagunawoodsvillage@gmail.com

OR

CONCERNED CITIZENS
OF LAGUNA WOODS VILLAGE
24310 MOULTON PARKWAY
SUITE O — BOX 119
LAGUNA WOODS, CA 92637

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: bit.ly/concernedseniors

OUR <u>YOUTUBE</u> CHANNEL: <u>bit.ly/youtubecclwv</u>

MEMBERSHIP AND RENEWAL FORM



Membership runs for the calendar year January 1 to December 31, and dues are payable by January 1 each year.

All dues paid starting October 1, 2023, include all of 2024

This form must be submitted with payment.

TODAY'S DATE:	If paying in person, cash is accepted. If paying by mail, only checks are accepted.	
Type of membership (check only one box): Dues enclosed	Ç	
I am enclosing an extra contribution in the amoun	t ofTOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED:	
A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER is emailed to all active website at www.bit.ly/concernedseniors. No new	•	
Time-sensitive information (change in progropportunity, etc.) is sent via an email address NEVER share your information with anyone. We welcome any help you could give to further surare large and small ways to help and they vary below, someone will be in touch with you to discuss I am interested in finding out mor	ss, so please share yours with us. We will upport the work of Concerned Citizens! There y throughout the year. By checking the box ss your interests further.	
☐ Environment ☐ Budget/Finance ☐ Gov	vernment <u> </u>	
☐ Membership/Outreach ☐ Peace ☐ Pe	rogram □ Publicity □ Newsletter	
PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY NAME(S)		
Street Address		
Сітү	STATE ZIP	
Phone(s)		
E-Mail Address(es)		

If submitting by mail, send this form and A CHECK (no cash) payable to CCLWV to:

Concerned Citizens of Laguna Woods Village

24310 Moulton Parkway

Suite O - Box 119 Laguna Woods, CA 92637