

Pro-water outspends opponents

(Continued from page 1)

\$100 between Feb. 25 and April 7.

The others were listed as Christmas tree farm owner Paul Marsalek, Realtors Peggy Miller and Mrs. A.S. Fitzgerald, retired school teacher Wayne Bernard, teaching assistant and former NCSO director Barbara Haslam, and pharmacy owner Barbara Papageorge.

The committee has received \$200 from Nipomo Oaks, an agribusiness managed by Donna Mehlschau, who is the committee treasurer. But the largest single donation has come from mini-storage owner Don Pruitt, according to the campaign statement.

It also shows that the committee took in \$1,795 and spent \$889 between Feb. 25 and April 7. Two full-page advertisements in the Adobe Press cost \$585, and other printing costs accounted for the remainder.

Manriquez said more ads are being planned for the Adobe Press along with other methods of getting the message out.

On the other side of the campaign, the Nipomo Citizens for Democracy mailed fliers to every household in the district late last month.

Charles Gulyash, the main author of the flier, said it cost "a hair over \$500" to copy and distribute, including \$150 for a bulk mail permit.

A second mailing is in the works, but it will be cheaper because the group now has the permit, Gulyash said, estimating that about \$800 will be spent throughout the campaign.

Carol Thorpe at the FPPC said campaign statements need not be filed if less than \$1,000 is raised by an organization.

Gulyash said donations have been received from fewer than 10 people, and only one donation has been over

Luiz said the Nipomo Citizens for Democracy would try to do more than another mailing if its finances allow, but that seems unlikely.

"We're kind of going hand to mouth here," he said. "We're doing what we can to get the word out and clarify: If you don't want state water, vote yes."

Gulyash and Luiz both said they weren't surprised to learn that two board members are working on the campaign for state water.

"I'm not surprised at all. I consider anyone on the board and the employees of NCSO as adversaries," Luiz said. "They still haven't proven me wrong. They overturned an election, and I didn't think that was possible."

Fairbanks said she donated money to the state water supporters because "I felt there needed to be both sides heard" instead of the small but "vocal portion" of the residents who don't want state water.

"If we don't have state water, it keeps the downtown from being able to expand in a nice way," she said. Several years ago, a sewer moratorium stopped new development in the area, and residents could only add on to their homes while more modern houses were being built all around the district.

Fairbanks fears that, without state water, the same thing will happen again.

"I don't know if ghetto is the right word" for the area's future, she said, but state water would bring with it "a better grade of development" inside the district borders.

Fairbanks is also convinced that the Nipomo Citizens for Democracy is receiving financial support from several outside groups related to the Citizens Planning Alliance, which had its name on the flier that has since been blamed by district officials for the defeat of state water in

ently referring to the ECOSLO number where callers are referred to contact people for smaller mostly environment-oriented organizations.

Gulyash, who wrote the flier and is president of the Citizens Planning Alliance, describes the organization as a political watchdog group concerned mainly with planning and development issues in the county.

He said he wrote the November flier on his own, and didn't have enough time before the election to seek formal approval from the planning alliance board. However, the flier's contents were "totally consistent" with that group's goals, he said.

"The Citizens Planning Alliance is not going to participate" in the Nipomo election campaign, Gulyash said. "This is a local issue at this point."

Question on the ballot is complex

NIPOMO — "Shall Ordinance 91-64 be repealed?"

That is the complex and controversial question facing voters in the May 19 election as they make perhaps the single most important decision facing the Nipomo area.

In a nutshell, this is how the vote came about and what the ballot question means:

The Community Services District board adopted Ordinance 91-64 after district voters turned down state water by a slim margin in a binding election on Nov. 5. The ordinance would have retroactively made the election non-binding and allowed the NCSO board to sign up for the State Water Project.

But a referendum petition signed by hundreds of district voters then forced the board to either rescind

Vote 'No' on state water

There is a special election coming up in Nipomo on Tuesday, May 19, about the state water project.

Let's remember one thing — the vote is about water. In this case, a "No" vote is in favor of state water for Nipomo, and a "Yes" vote is against it.

Nipomo needs water and, in my opinion, the state water project is the best chance to get it.

Opponents of state water have been using other arguments to keep it from coming to Nipomo. Can we afford to let a few anti-state water zealots prevent Nipomo from securing this precious commodity? We think not.

The coastal branch of the state water aqueduct is the most viable source of new water for Nipomo. It is estimated that Nipomo Community Services District customers would pay about \$30 a month for the first five years, then about \$18 a month for state water. In my opinion, that's cheap insurance to assure the economic well being of Nipomo in the future. Your children will thank you.

I urge a "No" vote, which will mean state water for Nipomo.

Dick Blankenburg
Co-publisher

will also be a decision on whether to join the State Water Project because the NCSO directors have indicated they will contract for at least 1,500 acre-feet if the voters allow it.

Simply put, a "yes" vote has two meanings. It would disallow the NCSO board's attempt to overturn the Nov. 5 election and it would bar state water from Nipomo.

A "no" vote means yes to state water. State water supporters say the need for new water sources drowns out the debate over democratic processes. More water is needed to accommodate further development and to assure the district's future rights to draw from the local groundwater basin.

Opponents question the reliability of the Coastal Branch and point out that local water bills would triple

Absentee ballots must be returned to the NCSO office by 5 p.m. Tuesday, May 12. Today, May 8, at 5 p.m. is the deadline for voters to bring in request forms for absentee ballots because their signatures have to be checked for authenticity with the county Clerk-Recorder's Office, said district General Manager Ryder Ray.

The absentee ballots will be placed in a sealed ballot box to be opened at 8 p.m. on election day. Sequoia Pacific, the private company running the election, will be in charge of counting all the votes, probably in the NCSO office or boardroom. Anyone is welcome to watch the process, according to the NCSO.