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NORTH COUNTY TIMES

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THE CALIFORNIAN

Last modified Wednesday, February 4, 2009 8:57 PM PST

4S RANCH: Roads closed, residents evacuated after gas-line rupture

By North County Times

4S RANCH ---- Residents on two streets were evacuated and roads were closed after construction workers ruptured a natural gas line Wednesday morning.

A crew working in the area of Camino Del Norte and Camino San Bernardo ruptured the gas line shortly before 10 a.m., authorities said. Residents from houses on two blocks of Wrenhaven Way and Meadowlark Ridge Road were evacuated about 10:30 a.m. and allowed to return to their homes shortly before 1 p.m., after San Diego Gas & Electric workers secured the line, a NorthComm fire dispatcher said.

The southbound lanes of Camino San Bernardo were closed at Camino Del Norte for almost two hours while crews worked, according to the California Highway Patrol's Web site.

Later in the afternoon, one lane of Camino San Bernardo was closed in each direction. County road crews expected the lanes to open by the end of the afternoon, the CHP Web site said.



RSF School Junior Girl Scout Troop #1039 developing recycling program for RSF School

Rancho Santa Fe School Junior Girl Scout Troop #1039 is busy working on achieving their Bronze Award this spring. For their award project they are developing a composting and recycling program for the R. Rowe Rancho Santa Fe School. They will be composting and recycling lunch waste from the students at the school.

As part of the process they are required to fulfill research hours to achieve the award. In order to do this they took time on a Saturday and went to the Solana Center for Environmental Innovation in Encinitas to learn more about composting. The girls plan on using the information learned on this trip to help them teach other students about the importance of composting for our environment.

The girls picked a project that would make a difference in their community and have a positive impact on their connection to the planet. The composting and recycling lunch program will begin at the school on Monday, Feb. 2.

From left top: Stacey Halboth (RSF teacher), Avalon Chaffer

(Junior Aide from troop 1106), Elizabeth Liang, Erin McBurnett, Lauren Flaming, Ashley Kim, Katie O'Meara, Gillian Chaffer, Victoria Walz, Cami Watson, Nicholette Bahr.

Sign up now for RSF Fire Protection District's free CERT training

CERT is a nationally-recognized program designed to train members of neighborhoods, community organizations and workplaces in basic disaster response skills. During natural or man-made disasters, emergency personnel are stretched thin, and may be unable to help residents in a timely manner. If a disastrous event overwhelms or delays the community's professional emergency crews, CERT members can assist others by applying their skills learned in training.

This free CERT class will be a 25-hour Web-based program with an introductory meeting and four meetings for skills assessment on the following dates:

Feb. 25 - 6-9 p.m., Class introduction

Feb. 28 - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Questions and Answers, skills instruction

March 4 - 6-9 p.m., Questions and Answers, skills instruction

March 7 - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Questions and Answers, Skills instruction

March 14 - 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Questions and Answers, Final drill and Graduation

CERT training includes the following modules:

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Fire Safety & Cert Organization

CERT Training Kicks Off

Disaster Medical Operations part 1 & Disaster Psychology

Light Search & Rescue Operation-Terrorism and CERT

Disaster Medical

Final Drill and Graduation

The Rancho Santa Fe Fire District's CERT program is absolutely free; however, you must be over 16 years of age and live or work within the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District to join the RSF CERT team. To obtain more information, or to receive an application, please visit our web site at www.rsffire.org, or call (858) 756-5971, ext. 149. Bring a neighbor and get involved today!

The mission of the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District is "To protect life, property, and environment through prevention, preparedness, education and emergency response." Formed in 1946, the Fire District now spans approximately 42-square miles and protects over 26,500 citizens. The Fire District currently operates out of four full-time fire stations and serves the communities within and surrounding Rancho Santa Fe and 4S-Ranch.

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Katie Hawkes, Jamile Palizban, Greg Grajek, Melissa Grajek, Jill King



LUX Art Institute Director Reese Shaw is presented a check from RSF Rotary President Jill King



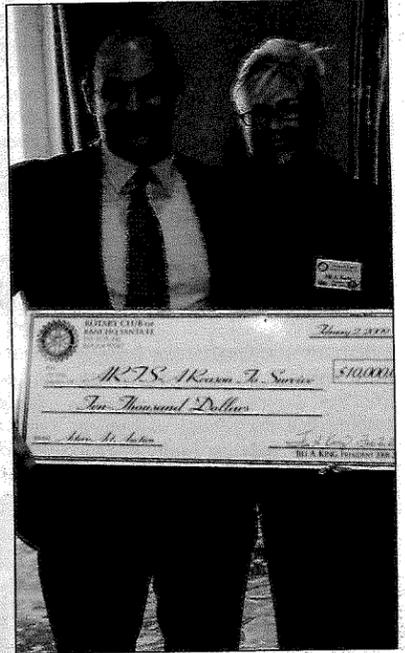
Pamela Meistrell, Eleanore Clark, Robin Chappelow



Cindy Kloug, Robert O'Connor, Pam MacLaird



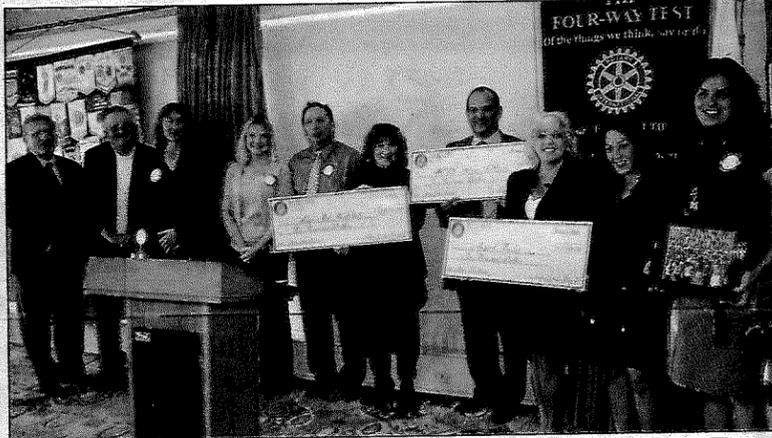
Maurice Rahimi, Ed Meyers



Matt Darrigo, from ARTS - A Reason to Survive, is presented a check from RSF Rotary President Jill King



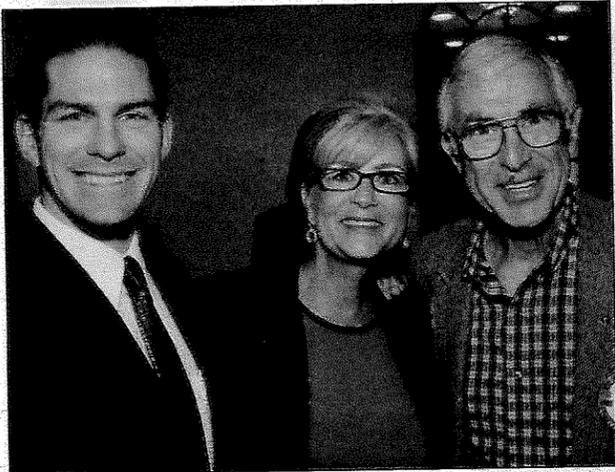
Lesia CarPELLi of Angel Faces is presented a check from RSF Rotary President Jill King



Robert O'Connor, Claude Korduf, Pamela Meistrell, Cindy Kloug, Tim Lueker, Reese Shaw, Matt Darrigo, Lesia CarPELLi, Mary Murray, Pam MacLaird



Bill Paul, Lindy Delaney



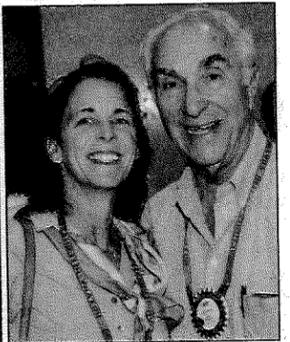
Chris Dorazio, Jill King, Fred Judge



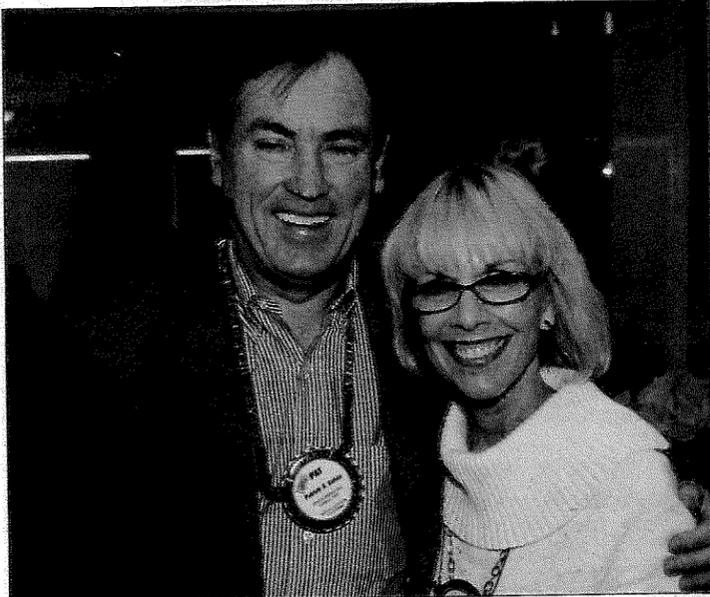
Don Meredith, Nick Pavone, Jill King



Camille Zele-ny



Deana Carter, Jere Oren



Patrick Galvin, Susan Callahan

RSF Rotary presents organizations with funds raised from "Artero...A Fine Art Auction"

Launching an art auction, "Artero...A Fine Art Auction," in late 2008 was a challenge that provided needed funds for three local organizations.

On Feb. 2, Jill King, president of the Rancho Santa Fe Rotary Club, presented checks for \$10,000 each to ARTS Art is a Reason to Survive, Angel Faces and Lux Art Institute. The funds were raised at the Artero event.

The RSF Rotary Club was successful in 2007 with an auction that started people thinking about bigger and better. Kerman Beriker, the director of the Inn at Rancho Santa Fe, saw an opportunity to bring an upscale event to the Ranch. "While working in Beverly Hills, we had a marvelous art auction that was tremendously successful and I wanted to do the same here," Beriker said. It was from this start the local Rotarians, members of the Art Guild and many others worked to develop Artero.

The Inn at Rancho Santa Fe became the founding sponsor of the event, which helped to build momentum in the community. Craig Edwards of Rancho Santa Fe Insurance was an enthusiastic supporter and sponsor for Artero. Soon Morgan Stanley, California Bank & Trust along with Wells Fargo, The Private Bank joined as sponsors.

Ranch resident, Linda Brandes was selected as honorary chair to acknowledge her generous support of the local art community. An Artero reception was held at Brandes' lovely home to showcase the art. Local Realtor and Ranch resident Janet Christ hosted another Artero reception at the RSF Golf Club, which was underwritten by Coldwell Banker. "It was standing room only with everyone wanting to see the art," said Christ.

Rotary President Jill King said, "This is a unique opportunity for Rotary to host an arts event for the Ranch and benefit local organizations. Rotary looks forward to making Artero an annual event for the Ranch." Photos/Jon Clark

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2643 ___ Karlena ___ 2644 last

Rotary marks 50 years

BY KAREN BILLING
Staff Writer

The Rancho Santa Fe Rotary can now tally 50 years of giving back to the community.

They've put books on the library shelves and flagpoles in the village, helped foster teens at San Pasqual Academy in Escondido and brought water to parched lips in parts of southern Sudan.

To celebrate 50 years of good work and their club slogan of "Making Dreams Real," the club will host a golden anniversary party at 6 p.m. on Feb. 9 at the Inn at Rancho Santa Fe.

Along with drinks and dinner there will be live entertainment by the Alley Cats, the top doo-wop group in the country.

Past presidents and members from the local Rotary governing board will be in attendance.

Service and friends

The Rancho Santa Fe Rotary's roots go back to 1959, when 25 local Rotarians wanted to form their own group. The Ranch Rotarians had been involved with groups in Del Mar and Encinitas but they wanted one of their own according to Roger Rowe, who has been a member since 1962.

"Over the years as the community has grown, the rotary has also grown in numbers," Rowe said.

SEE ROTARY, PAGE A4

Library reopens with brighter look



Librarian Laurie Knodle sits with Rachel Fetzer in the newly remodeled Rancho Santa Fe Library. KAREN BILLING

A new chapter

BY KAREN BILLING
Staff Writer

After being closed for six weeks for renovations, the Rancho Santa Fe Library re-opened on Monday.

While a temporary library operated out of the library guild offices below, people had been anxious to get back into the main library — there were lots of "looky-loos" knocking on the doors and peeking through the windows, said Caryl Andrews, branch manager.

"I think it went wonderfully," Andrews said of the completed project. "Everything happened within the timeline."

The library interiors have been freshly painted with the walls, bookshelves and shutter all a bright white, matching the blossoming trees outside the windows. The painting came courtesy of a grant from San Diego County Supervi-

sor Bill Horn.

During the renovation, a company from Boston was taxed with the huge undertaking of removing, storing and eventually returning the 80,000 books the library owns.

"We're just so pleased," said Wynne Weiss, the north area supervisor of the San Diego County Libraries. "Everything looks so nice."

New and improved

No one was perhaps more pleased with the renovations than the youth librarians. The back area of the library, reserved for the youngsters, was completely transformed.

Now the space is much more open with computer desks set up in the middle, new computers new furniture.

SEE LIBRARY, PAGE A12

Fire, school officials at odds over Dacus land

BY KAREN BILLING
Staff Writer

A game of tug-of-war is being waged over a slice of village property, wanted by both the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District and R. Roger Rowe School.

Known as the Dacus property, the 1.28-acre parcel is located on El Fuego, across the street from the school's back parking lot and kindergarten classrooms and down the road from the fire station. Currently, there is a ranch home on the property.

On Jan. 6, the fire district sent a resolution of necessity to the Rancho Santa Fe Association, which owns the land, saying the land is needed to address the "immediate parking needs and future expansion of its operating facilities."

Fire district officials stated that they have exhausted all other options and that the acquiring of the Dacus property is the only solution.

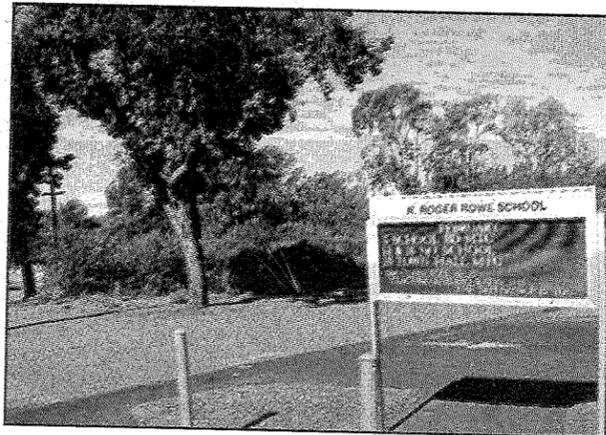
The district could be able to acquire the land through eminent domain, which gives public agencies the right to make a case for acquiring land if they have a higher necessity, without the owner's permission but with monetary compensation.

The fire district did not return phone calls requesting comments.

Place to play

The fire district's resolution caught the Rancho Santa Fe School District off guard. Superintendent Lindy Delaney

SEE LAND, PAGE A12



Both the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District and the R. Roger Rowe School want the Dacus property, owned by the Rancho Santa Fe Association.

KAREN BILLING

Mille Fleurs hosts
Community Center's
Winter Feast

Story on page B11



Karl Strauss
Brewing celebrates
20 years of beer

Story on page B1

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LAND, FROM PAGE A1

said that the school has held an interest in acquiring the property for at least 10 years.

After two bonds proposing building a new school at alternate sites failed, they started looking seriously at the Dacus property, Delaney said.

Prop. E passed in 2007, allowing them to renovate the school with what they had and look at opportunities to purchase adjacent properties like Dacus and the two lots next to it (called the Mature properties).

Delaney said they would use

Dacus to add play space and help the school improve traffic circulation.

'Best alternative'

"We still believe that this property would be best for the school and the community," Delaney said. "We believe the children and the community need play space and fields."

The land does not immediately figure into the Rowe renovation project that is planned to begin at the end of this school year, Delaney said. But she said they did plan to use the land as a "lay down area" for construction equipment

and materials during the renovation.

"The idea that we would lose that land would put us under additional financial and time constraints that we'd like to avoid," Delaney said.

Seeking solutions

The association has been working with both agencies to see what kind of solution can be made.

"Hopefully we can come to a peaceful resolution," Rancho Santa Fe Association Board President Lois Jones said last week.

The association has also not

been able to come to a long-term lease agreement with the fire district over the Rancho Santa Fe Patrol, whose headquarters are at the fire station.

The fire district has requested the patrol to vacate the station by April 1 as they can no longer accommodate the patrol's parking needs in addition to their own.

No meeting has been scheduled yet that would allow the public to weigh in on the Dacus issue. The fire district's board of directors will next meet on Feb. 11 at 1 p.m. at the station on El Fuego.

Attack tryouts set for Feb. 9 to 19

Get ready for Attack tryouts

Tryouts will be held for the 2009 Rancho Santa Fe Attack competitive soccer teams, Feb. 9-19 at the Horizon Church fields.

This year the league has added many Premier and AAA level teams. The tryout dates are broken up by age groups and most are held from 3:45-4:45 p.m. or 4:45-5:45 p.m.; a full schedule can be seen at rsfssoccer.com. Shin guards and cleats are required for tryouts.

The Attack also will host a Ski Week camp at the Rancho Santa Fe sports fields Feb. 16-20. The Web site has additional information and sign-up sheets.

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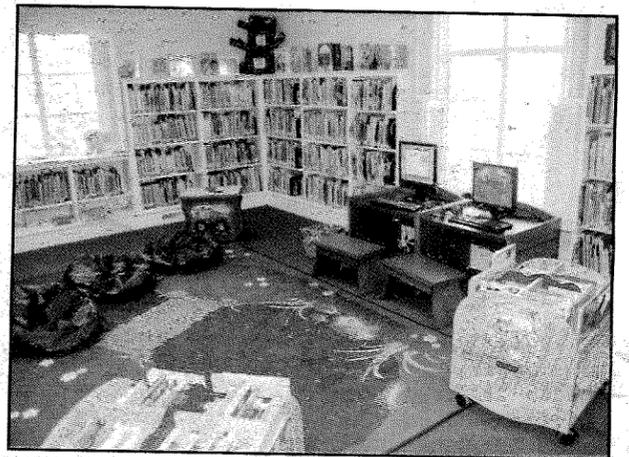
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The interior of the newly renovated Rancho Santa Fe Library is shown Monday. KAREN BILLING

LIBRARY, FROM PAGE A1

bookshelves and rugs. There are big beanbag chairs and one table has a chessboard painted on top with red chairs to match.

The teens also got a more separate, secluded space instead of being crammed in the middle where they were before.

More to come

Most of the new furniture was moved in over the weekend but some still is yet to come. There will be a sofa in one corner to create a cozy reading nook and new tables and chairs in the teen room.

"We just really needed this little revamp," said youth li-

brarian Laurie Knodle. "It's very exciting."

Children have really been excited to get back in the library Knodle said. Many come right after school to participate in the library's many after-school programs like Wii-playing, crafts and readings. The children even have a convenient back door entrance.

"Best friends always come in through the back door," Knodle said.

To celebrate the new look, the library will host a customer appreciation day and open house on Feb. 27, from 12-4 p.m. The event will include crafts, activities and live entertainment. For more information, www.sdcl.org

Critter Camp dates set

The Helen Woodward Animal Center is hosting Critter Camp, Feb. 16-20 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Each day will present a different topic and introduce children to animals. Camp is open to children in pre-kindergarten to fifth grade. For more information, call (858) 756-4117, Ext. 318, or visit animalcenter.org.

The center also is now accepting junior volunteers for its summer Critter Camp sessions. Teenagers ages 13-17 can apply before the April 17 deadline. To receive an application, call Lori Piccirillo at (858) 756-4117, Ext. 305, or e-mail lorip@animalcenter.org.

newsday.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-australia-fire-defend9-2009feb09,0,6147782.story

Newsday.com

Australia will take a hard look at 'Leave Early or Stay and Defend' fire policy

The policy trains people to defend their homes and is being considered for adoption in California. But in these fires, 'the conditions were just too extreme,' and lives were lost.

By Julie Cart

February 9, 2009

As Australia comes to grips with the death of at least 130 people in the deadliest bush fires in its history, officials there say they will take a hard look at the much-vaunted "Leave Early or Stay and Defend" policy, which trains homeowners to defend their homes and is being considered for adoption in Europe and some parts of the United States, including California.

Even as firefighters in the state of Victoria struggle to reach stricken communities, authorities say that some people were killed while actively defending their homes, a choice that researchers say has rarely resulted in death. In addition, authorities expect that a large number of fatalities will have occurred in highway crashes during panicked evacuations, the very scenario the Australian policy seeks to avoid.

Australia adopted the "stay or go" approach about a decade ago following the so-called Ash Wednesday fires in 1983 that killed 83 people and injured 2,600. Researchers found after those blazes that the most frequent cause of death in wildfires was people being trapped in their cars trying to flee. They determined that properly trained homeowners would be at less risk if they stayed off the roads and took shelter.

The Australian policy includes extensive training that emphasizes homeowner preparation and calls for measures such as clearing a defensible space, storing water, having fire equipment ready and establishing a fire plan.

Research further demonstrated that during wildfires homes usually burn not in a wall of flames but from small spot fires sparked by embers, often carried miles ahead of the fire front. Homeowners are instructed to stamp out small fires -- often with mops -- and take shelter in their homes as the fire moves past.

Officials say the "stay or go" policy has been demonstrably successful in saving both lives and property in Australia, and is now the most talked-about strategy in the firefighting world. Australian fire officials travel the globe explaining their ideas to officials who are looking for ways to better deploy fire crews.

In the U.S., federal, state and local fire officials spent last year examining how the Australian policy would work if adopted in this country. In January the panel submitted recommendations to the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, a Cabinet-level committee that reports to the president.

More recently officials from fire agencies in seven Southern California counties began discussing a hybrid of the Australian approach: an evacuation policy that makes allowances for people who want to try to save their homes.



Ventura and Orange counties are building the strategy into their firefighting plans, and the unincorporated community of Rancho Santa Fe in San Diego County has had a similar program for a few years. That policy saved homes while not resulting in any loss of life during the 2007 Witch fire, according to the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District.

In Australia, the policy is well entrenched. A decade of concerted public safety announcements and community-based education was thought to have nearly blanketed the populace with the details of the program. However, even fire officials say the proven policy can break down in the face of raw panic.

"Even if you have been to the lectures and have had somebody of experience tell you what happens, and you rehearse what you are going to do . . . you still don't completely understand the ferocity of that fire when it comes," said Daryl Wells, for 32 years captain of the fire brigade in Werribee, a suburb of Melbourne.

"All the information that we provide for the people -- part of the psyche is they think they know better, they think they can do it. But when they feel the heat, and then noise, as the fire starts to come over the hill, that causes panic. They say, 'Let's get in the car.' When you get up in the morning and conditions are like that, that's when you decide if you stay or go. By the time the smoke is coming up the hill behind your house, it's too late."

According to Australian fire researchers, the vast majority of deaths occur when residents race onto smoke-obscured roads, often littered with downed trees, charred wildlife or emergency vehicles. Reports from over the weekend, when hundreds of fires raced across southeastern Australia fanned by high winds, suggest that in some hard-hit communities residents organized convoys of vehicles that fled one fire only to be consumed by another.

"What seems to have happened in some cases was people had a perception that a wave of fire was coming over the hill at them and they ran from that," said Kevin Tolhurst, a fire researcher at the University of Melbourne. "But in fact they may have been surrounded by fires in many directions and taken by surprise. That complexity is lost to some."

Some argue that without the policy and its educational component, things would have been much worse.

"If those messages weren't out there, the possibility is we could have lost 200 to 300 by now," said Ashley Mills, the officer in charge at the Wangaratta fire brigade.

As happened after the Ash Wednesday fires, the tragedy has triggered official reviews and public reflection. Victoria's coroner declared the burned areas to be crime scenes because arson is suspected as the cause of some of the fires.

In addition, fire officials said a Royal Commission is likely to be convened to examine all aspects of the fires, including emergency response. Victorian Premier John Brumby said the fire policy will be among those issues up for review.

While firefighters welcome the oversight, they caution that there's a limit to what can be done to protect homes in firestorms like those that occurred over the weekend.

"I feel there will be an overall look at the policy; you would be stupid not to," said David Gillett, brigade captain for the Country Fire Authority in the town of Anakie. "But they will find the policy is right because we've proved time and time again that it works."

But Gillett said he's beginning to see the limitations of convincing homeowners they will always be safe in their homes if properly prepared.

"The conditions were just too extreme, so ripe, I'm not sure some of those homes were defensible," he said. "Maybe we need to tell people, 'Yes, you can stay and defend your house, up to certain level. But once you reach that level, maybe you've got to get out.' "

julie.cart@latimes.com

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NORTH COUNTY TIMES

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THE CALIFORNIAN

Last modified Tuesday, February 10, 2009 7:07 PM PST

REGION: Australian fires highlight stay-and-defend policy

By EDWARD SIFUENTES - Staff Writer

County fire officials said Monday they recommend that people leave ahead of a wildfire instead of trying to defend their homes, as is common practice in Australia, where more than 200 people have died in massive brush fires in recent days.

In Australia, people are taught to leave early or stay and defend their homes. It is a policy that is being considered in many places in the United States, including Southern California.

And in one North County area, Rancho Santa Fe, there is a "shelter in place" policy ---- similar to the one in Australia ---- that was praised after the deadly 2007 wildfires for saving lives and property.

Ron Lane, director of the county's Office of Emergency Services, said the wildfires in Australia serve as a reminder for county residents to be prepared in case of an emergency, and to evacuate ahead of a fire as soon as possible.

"The county's philosophy is one of evacuating early," Lane said. "It is our fire officials' belief that evacuating early is the best way to save families and leave the firefighting to the professionals."

Lane said there is much to consider before implementing a policy like that of Australia. Communities must be prepared beforehand to properly implement shelter-in-place programs, such as building wide roads, creating a defensible space around the community and building fire-resistant homes.

Fire officials say attempting to flee the fire too late can be dangerous due to low visibility from smoke and crowded roadways. Vehicles also can fail to start due to the fire's intense heat and the oxygen vacuum it creates.

In 2003, a Valley Center family was caught in the path of the deadly Paradise fire. Parents John and Lori Roach drove off in one car while their three children, Jason, then 22, Allyson, then 20, and Ashleigh fled in another.

Jason Roach's car collided with a neighbor's car and ran into a burning pepper tree just outside of the Roach's driveway. Jason was able to escape with minor injuries while Allyson suffered burns to 85 percent of her body. Ashleigh died in the back seat.

Some Rancho Santa Fe neighborhoods have been specially sanctioned as shelter-in-place communities by the county. Those communities must adhere to strict fire-prevention building

guidelines, according to the county's Planning and Land Use Department.

The homes must have fire-resistant roofs, dual-paned windows, noncombustable exterior walls, attics and foundation vents in places that would deter burning embers from getting inside.

"And with all of that, our shelter-in-place guidelines state that early and safe evacuation is preferred when fires strike," said Gig Conaughton, a spokesman for the county's Planning and Land Use Department.

On Tuesday, officials said more than 200 people have died in blazes near Melbourne in southeastern Australia. Disaster teams have found charred bodies on roadsides and crashed cars, which officials say is a grim sign of the futile attempt to flee the fires.

The recent events have led Australian officials to question their stay-and-defend policy.

Victoria state Premier John Brumby said a commission would examine all aspects of the fires, including warning and evacuation policies that allow people to stay to protect their homes. Some former police officials dismissed the idea of forced evacuations, noting the ferocity of the weekend fires seemed to preclude such an option.

Lane said San Diego County fire officials are watching the situation in Australia to see if there are lessons they can glean from that disaster.

In the fall of 2003, wind-driven fires torched three-quarters of a million acres across six Southern California counties, killing 24 people and destroying more than 3,600 homes.

More than half that acreage, and about two-thirds of the deaths and damage, was in San Diego County.

In October 2007, another wave of wildfires swept across a half-million acres in four Southern California counties. Once again, San Diego County was hit hardest, with 368,000 acres burned. The county lost 1,750 homes and 10 lives.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Contact staff writer Edward Sifuentes at (760) 740-3511 or esifuentes@nctimes.com.

Big-wave surfer faces charges in fatal crash

By Joe Tash

The District Attorney's office has charged big-wave surfer Milton Willis with gross vehicular manslaughter and two related felony counts stemming from a crash last June that killed a passenger in Willis' car.

A \$500,000 warrant for Willis' arrest was issued on Monday, Feb. 9. As of press-time, Willis had not been taken into custody.

Willis, 52, was critically injured in the crash, which occurred in the 2000 block of Coast Boulevard in Del Mar, in the early morning of Friday, June 6. According to police reports, a Toyota Avalon allegedly driven by Willis was traveling at 65 mph in a 25 mph zone, when it went out of control, slamming into a tree and two parked cars.

The passenger, Bradley James Dillahunty, 24, of Laguna Niguel, died at the scene. Willis spent several months in the hospital recuperating from his injuries, according to sheriff's officials.

Milton Willis and his twin brother, Michael Willis, are well known in surfing circles in California and Hawaii. According to the brothers' Web site, the two have surfed some of the largest waves in the world, and they sell their own line of surf boards, clothing and accessories. They also run surf schools in both California and Hawaii, and have co-authored several books on surfing and motivational topics.

The brothers grew up in Solana Beach and learned to surf at Fletcher Cove, according to their Web site.

The brothers are also musicians, and according to investigators, the Willis brothers and Bradley Dillahunty may have been playing music on the night of the crash.

"On the night of this tragic accident, (Milton) and Bradley were playing music until the wee hours of the morning working on a forthcoming C.D. Why they left the studio no one knows...." said an anonymous post on the Surferpedia Web site.

As to why it took eight months for charges to be filed, Sgt. Thomas Cleary of the Encinitas Sheriff's station said, "It was a difficult case." He said investigators had to bring in an expert to examine the vehicle and determine if there were any mechanical defects. Another factor was Milton Willis' long hospital stay.

"We just want to be sure we touch all the bases," Cleary said, adding that in such complex cases, it is not unusual for an investigation to take several months.

Steve Walker, a spokesman for the District Attorney's office, said Willis was charged with gross vehicular manslaughter, and two counts of driving under the influence with injury, by a person with a prior DUI within the past 10 years. The maximum penalty for the three counts is 11 years, 8 months in prison. An arraignment date will be set once Willis is arrested, Walker said. Sheriff's officials declined to release the results of toxicology tests, or to provide Milton Willis' blood alcohol level at the time of the crash. However, at the time of the incident, police said there was a strong odor of alcohol in the car following the crash.

Dillahunty, a guitar player and avid surfer himself, coached football at Santa Margarita Catholic High School, where he had played defensive end from 1998 to 2001.

Core Circuit Training and Pilates complements RSF Community Center Adult Fitness Program

The Rancho Santa Fe Community Center is proud to be adding Core Circuit Training, 8:15 a.m.-9:15 a.m., Tuesday and Thursday, to its weekly fitness lineup. The instructor, Isaiah Truymen, recently moved here from the East Coast and has 15 years of personal training experience. The Community Center is also adding Pilates to its array of Adult Fitness classes on Wednesdays from 8:15-9:15 a.m. Led by Federico DeSilva, this class is sure to help you with posture, core strength, and flexibility for all sports and occupations. Your first Adult Fitness Class is free, so come try one of our classes we offer five days a week!



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Ruptured gas lines lead to evacuations

Firefighters from the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District responded at 9:53 a.m. Feb. 4 to the report of a ruptured gas line on Camino San Bernardo just south of Camino del Norte. Upon arrival, firefighters discovered that a tractor doing road work in the area had severed a 4-inch natural gas line. The Sheriff's Department and California Highway Patrol assisted with the evacuation of 10 condominiums adjacent to the leak and traffic control on surface streets while San Diego Gas and Electric worked to secure the leak. Crews remained on scene for approximately three and a half hours until the leak was secured. Evacuated residents were then allowed to return to their homes.

Two fire engines and a Battalion Chief from RSFFPD responded to the scene along with SDG&E, CHP, and San Diego County Sheriff's Department. No injuries were reported. Battalion Chief Mike Gibbs served as the Incident Commander.

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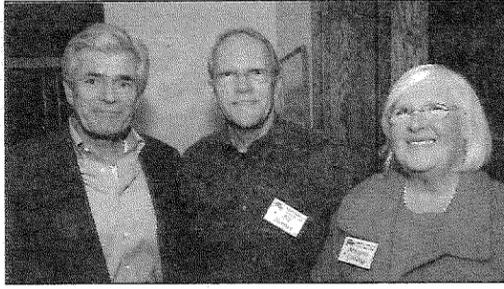
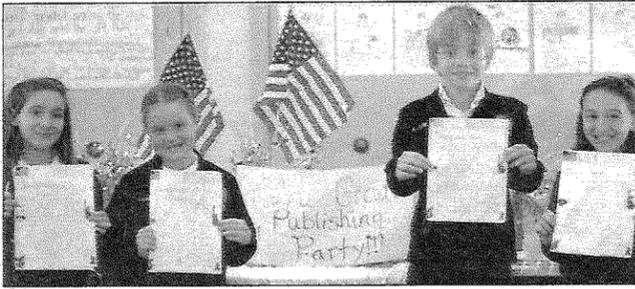
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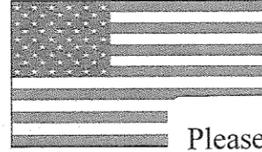
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RSF Association to consider sale of Dacus property to RSF School Feb. 19

•But RSF Association, Fire District and School District agree to work together and 'stand still' for six months on any major Dacus property action

By Matt Liebowitz

The RSF Association Board of Directors will consider the sale of the Dacus property to the RSF School District at a public hearing at its Feb. 19 meeting. But, even if the board approves moving ahead with the sale, the transaction won't close for at least six months because the RSF Association, the RSF School District and the RSF Fire Protection District have all agreed to take a "stand still" position for six months on all actions pertaining to the property, according to RSF Association Manager Pete Smith.

"Representatives of the three groups are continuing to meet on a weekly basis to find a solution that will meet the needs of the community and all three organizations," said Smith.

The agreement also means the fire district (which also wants the property and earlier this year took initial steps toward eminent domain proceedings) will suspend those proceedings for six months, Smith said.

The 1.28-acre piece of property, known as the Dacus property, is situated just to the west of the school and north of the RSF Fire District on El Fuego.

Smith said the timing is right for the sale to the school now because the school district is ready to begin the construction process on its upgrade project and the property is needed to help facilitate that project.

RSF Association board president Lois Jones said the concept of selling the land to the school district has been in discussion going back to the year 2000.

"When it became clear that the only option available to the school was to develop the existing campus, the Dacus property next to the Roger Rowe School became a key component of the school's plan," Jones says in this week's Association Buzz

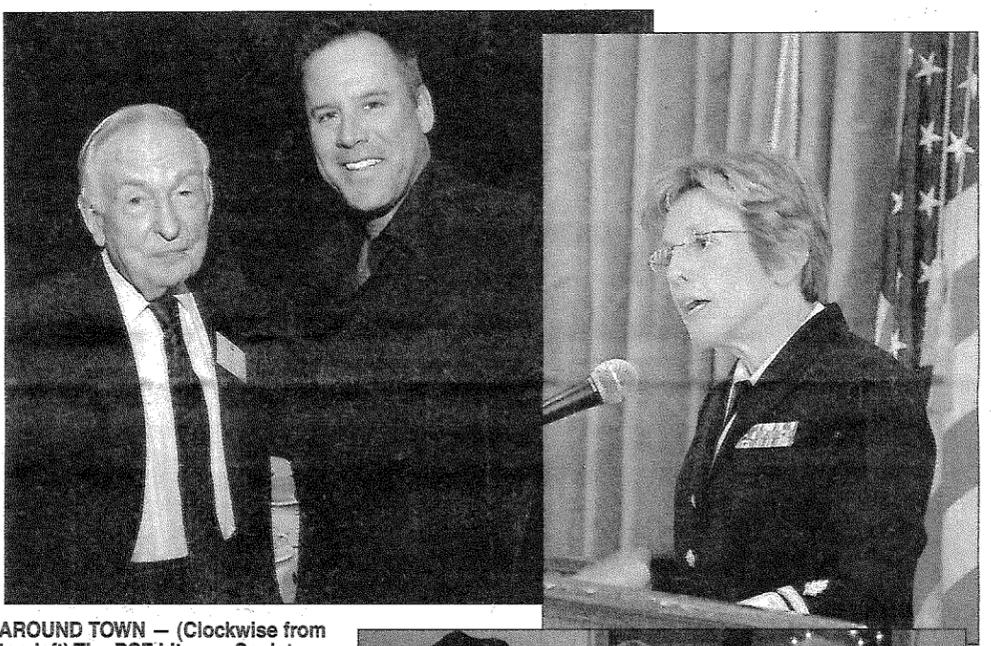
column on page 5 of this newspaper. "In support of the school efforts, the Association board began negotiating a conditional agreement to sell them the parcel known as the Dacus parcel...The school plans to use the Dacus property for their construction staging area, thus allowing them to keep the entire school and playfields open during construction. Once the renovation is completed, the site will be used to address their critical parking needs and to alleviate the drop off and pick-up congestion at the school. The long-term plans include the option of converting the property to much-needed play fields.

"The Association will retain a right in the Dacus property to develop a Patrol office on the west end of the parcel in the event that another location cannot be identified."

Smith said that if approved at the Feb. 19 meeting, the Association will mail notification of the potential sale to the Association membership. Under Association bylaws, any sale of Association property requires a 30-day notification period to the membership. During that 30-day period, members have the right to submit a petition signed by 100 voting members protesting the sale. Should a petition be filed, the item will go to a vote of the entire membership and the sale must be delayed until the vote has been completed.

If a vote of the entire Association membership is held, a simple majority is required for approval if a quorum (75 voters) respond, Smith said.

If approved by the membership, the Association, as per the agreement with the fire district and school district, will not close on the sale for six months. If the Association still sells the property to the school



AROUND TOWN — (Clockwise from top left) The RSF Literary Society recently welcomed bestselling thriller writer Vince Flynn (above right with RSF's Walter Zable; (Top right) The RSF Foundation and its Armed Forces Interest Group held a reception Feb. 11 at The Inn honoring RADM Christine Hunter (in photo), commander of Navy Medicine West and Naval Medical Center San Diego; (Bottom right) Katherine and Bill Gang and Rotary President Jill King at the Rotary Club's 50th anniversary celebration held at The Inn. For photos of these events and more, see inside. Photos/Jon Clark



Plans moving forward for new Fairbanks Ranch Fire Station

By Matt Liebowitz

The Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District is moving forward with its plan to replace the current Fairbanks Ranch Fire Station, reported the board at its Feb. 11 meeting.

Anthony Damon, from Jeff Katz Architecture, presented the Fire Protection District with a detailed outline of the schematic design of the new station, which will replace the current Fairbanks Ranch station on El Apajo road. The current station will be demolished, according to RSF Fire District Chief Nick Pavone.

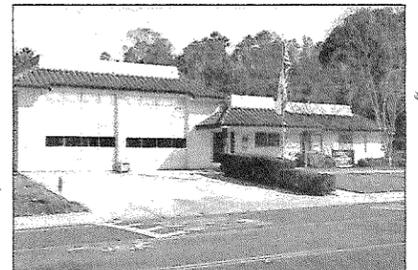
According to Damon's presentation, the design of the new 10,500 square-foot station will include elements such as a stone veneer on the front of the building,

stucco, dual glazed tinted glass, and a clay tile roof. Its maximum height will be 35 feet.

"We'll match the surroundings as best we can," said Damon.

For reference points, Damon showed pictures of other fire stations designed by Jeff Katz Architecture, including ones in Chula Vista, Alpine, Oceanside and SantaLuz.

"I thought the architects did a terrific job," said Fire Protection District Board President Jim Ashcraft. Ashcraft praised the architects for working directly with the firefighters, assessing their needs and designing with them in mind. "They're very good to work with," he said.



The current Fairbanks fire station on El Apajo will soon be replaced.

See DACUS, page 27

See STATION, page 6

Registration begins March 8 for Torrey Pines Pop Warner Youth Football and Cheerleading

Are you ready for some football? Torrey Pines Pop Warner's 2009 season registration and sign-ups for football and cheer begin Sunday, March 8, from noon - 4:30 p.m. at Ashley Falls Elementary School multipurpose room. Two other registration opportunities will take place at Ashley Falls as well: Tuesday, March 31, from 4-7:30 p.m., and Saturday, April 25, from noon-3:30 p.m. Participants must pre-register at www.torreypinespw.com

"Last year was one of TPPW's most successful years ever. We had several football and cheer teams successfully advance to win their respective Palomar Conference championships. This program not only taught our participants the fundamentals of football and cheer, but developed teamwork, confidence, character and scholastic achievement for so many of our 600 par-

ticipants last season. This is one of the best youth sports programs in San Diego," said John Hickman, TPPW President. "It's a rewarding experience for all players, whether they are new to the sport or have some experience behind them. We are all looking forward to another great season."

A parent and player must be present to register at one of the in-person registration dates. A priority number is given at registration so the league encourages early registration for any new players. New players are entitled to play on a first come, first serve basis. Returning players and cheerleaders must register by March 31st in order to maintain returning status. For more information, please visit www.torreypinespw.com.

Art Jury Corner

Solar energy in the Covenant

The recent spike in energy prices has started people thinking about solar panels as one way to reduce a household's electric bill and help reduce the nation's dependence on foreign energy. Currently, the appeal of photovoltaic energy is enhanced by government incentives to reduce the purchase price.

As attractive as the idea of energy independence is, sometimes the solar installations can be less than attractive to the eye. As with other construction within the Rancho Santa Fe Covenant area, the Art Jury must review solar installations to ensure that the facility is not unduly prominent and is screened from neighbors and the road. The Art Jury wants your solar facility to fit into the community in an aesthetically pleasing manner.

When shopping for a solar facility, you will no doubt be meeting with solar installation contractors and getting a lot of advice. Some of the contractors are not only knowledgeable about the technical side of the business but are also sensitive to the visual impact of the facility - the others may not be aware of community's high aesthetic standards. The Art Jury strongly encourages you to contact Association Building Division staff to discuss your plans prior to making any commitments and before submission of an application to the Art Jury. Association staff will be happy to come out to your property to advise you and assist in choosing an inconspicuous location while still meeting the technical requirements of solar access. The staff will also help you with the Art Jury application procedure.

Most of the properties within the Covenant area are blessed with enough space so that the solar panels do not need to be mounted on the rooftop, where they are often the most conspicuous. Ground mounted installations are just as efficient as rooftop ones and can usually be screened with low growing shrubs that would not shade the panels.

If you would like to get a head start on planning for the review of your solar facility look at the Art Jury's handout: "Supplemental Design Criteria for Solar Units." The handout is available at the Association offices and on the Association's Web site.

- Submitted by the RSF Art Jury

RSF's Silverwood family to discuss adventures at sea at March 5 event

The seagoing saga of a Rancho Santa Fe family will be recounted by John and Jean Silverwood at Del Mar Library at 7 p.m. on March 5.

Co-authors of *Black Wave*, the Silverwoods will relive their adventures aboard the 55-foot catamaran Emerald Jane on a journey that started on Long Island Sound and ended almost two years later in treacherous waters off a remote atoll in French Polynesia.

After surviving a hurricane, balky generator, the threat of pirates and ongoing family squabbles, the voyage of the Silverwoods and their four children came to a sudden end when the catamaran ran aground on a reef

350 miles west of Tahiti.

Alerted by satellite signals, the French Navy, aided by a native family, rescued the Silverwoods and flew them to Tahiti. John lost his left leg.

Now back in the Rancho Santa Fe area, the Silverwoods survived another near disaster - the 2007 wildfires. The children attend local schools and John, who'd been a developer, has a new career as a writer and public speaker. Their story is to be told on the CBS "48 Hours" program Feb. 28.

Admission is free and more information is available by calling the library at 858-755-1666.

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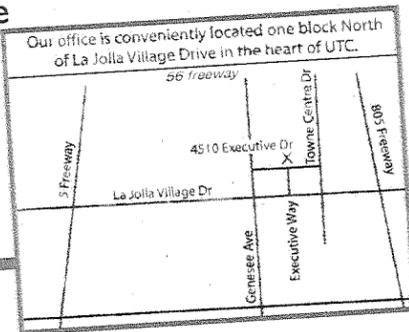
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Horizon Prep scores in 94th percentile nationwide

Horizon Prep's IOWA test scores keep climbing the charts: the results are in and this year Horizon Prep ranks in the 94th percentile nationwide, edging out the school's 93rd percentile ranking from the previous year. "Not only did our overall score improve as a school," says Allisen Hemple, registrar and director of Enrollment Services, "3rd and 4th grades rank in the 99th percentile and 5th and 7th rank in the 98th percentile nationwide!"

"Having spent over 29 years in University circles, I recognize the value of quality nationally recognized standardized testing," says Headmaster Ken Kush. "When I came onboard at Horizon Prep, everyone talked about the 'Love Bubble' of Horizon Prep - referring to the nurturing care and attention our students receive. Now our track record is proving our Trivium-Based Classical approach to education stands the test—we have the best of both worlds."

According to data published from the test results, Horizon Prep "has a larger percentage of high achieving students" in all core subjects, than other schools taking the IOWA nationwide! "A terrific marker on the IOWA is the Grade Equivalent—the score that estimates the grade level at which a child performs," says vice principal Heather Henning. "On average, Horizon Prep students have consistently scored two years above grade level again this year!"

"There's always a buzz in educational circles about 'teaching to the test' and what affect that has in the classroom," says Hemple. "But we administer the test in the fall rather than waiting until the end of the year, so that teachers are able to utilize the scores to drive their instruction and better meet the needs of their students."

Horizon Prep currently serves over 425 students preschool - 8th grade.

STATION

continued from page 1

Damon informed the board that the design will be submitted to the county in the next two weeks. Jeff Katz Architecture will continue to work on the design while the county is reviewing the project, but that the company won't work on the building permit documents until the county approves the project's design.

RSF Fire District Chief Nick Pavone estimated that the new station should cost somewhere between \$3-4 million, but said they will have a better idea on the exact amount when the final plans are submitted.

If all goes as planned, Pavone said the district hopes to move the fire station temporarily

to a nearby property and begin the demolition process in about six to eight months.

Ashcraft estimated the project will be completed in 18-24 months.

"The sooner we can get started, the better," Ashcraft said. "We'd really like to move this up as soon as possible. It would really help the region to be better served by a new fire station."

Formed in 1946, the fire district now spans approximately 42-square miles and protects over 26,500 citizens. The fire district currently operates out of four full-time fire stations and serves the communities within and surrounding Rancho Santa Fe and 4S-Ranch.

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DACUS

continued from page 1

district after the six-month "suspension" period is over, Smith said the property would be sold at appraised value. Smith said an appraisal is still in the works, but a year ago the property was valued at \$1,450,000.

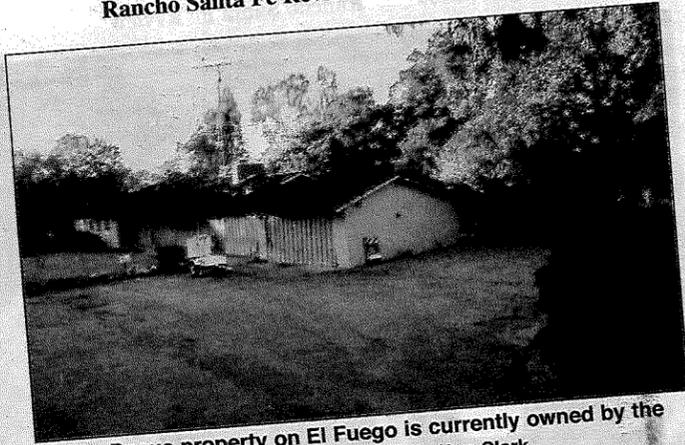
RSF School District Superintendent Lindy Delaney said she is pleased that the Association is taking action.

"I am happy that the Association is moving forward with the agreement," Delaney said. "Ultimately that property should be in the hands of the RSF School District for safety, parking traffic circulation and, eventually, playfields."

"Currently, on campus, we are short one parking space for our staff. The new parking provided by the Dacus property will give us an additional 20 parking spaces. We have high parent participation on a daily basis so any additional parking helps the community by taking parking off the streets and adding to the safety of people walking through traffic to get to the school."

The RSF Fire District also wants the property for parking and future administrative space, which is why the district took initial steps toward eminent domain proceedings, which allows the seizure of private property, with due monetary compensation, but without the owner's consent. The property is taken either for government use or by delegation to third parties who will devote it to public or civic use. In the case where two public entities have a dispute over an individual piece of property ultimately the decision is decided by the courts.

But representatives from the



The Dacus property on El Fuego is currently owned by the RSF Association. Photo/Jon Clark

school board, fire board and Association board stress that they continue to meet on a weekly basis and hope to come up with a solution that will address the needs of everyone. Smith and Jones said management at The Inn has also indicated its willingness to provide parking space in the short term and possibly as part of a longer term solution.

At a recent meeting of the RSF Fire District board, at the insistence of a concerned Mimosa resident, the board of the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District addressed its recent decision to start eminent domain proceedings on the Dacus property.

Because of the Dacus property's proximity to her house, the woman was concerned about exactly how many spaces the Fire Protection District would need for parking. She also expressed anxiety over the possibility that the Fire Protection District could start eminent domain proceedings on a residential property.

Board president Jim Ashcraft told the woman the

Fire Protection District has a need for 50 total parking spaces, but admitted, "that could change."

"A lot of things are up in the air at this point," Ashcraft said. He then reassured the woman that the Fire Protection District has "no plans to ever do an eminent domain on a residence. No plans at all."

Ashcraft told the woman to submit a letter with her concerns, and he would address them prior to the next meeting.

Following the meeting, the woman, a mother of three RSF School students, stressed the importance of involving the community in a decision of such magnitude.

"Eminent domain seems very severe without a community discussion of needs," she said. "The community wants a great school and a great fire department. We just need a little sunshine on what their [Fire Protection District] needs are. It has the potential to be a win for everybody. Community discussion has the best possibility of coming up with a great solution."

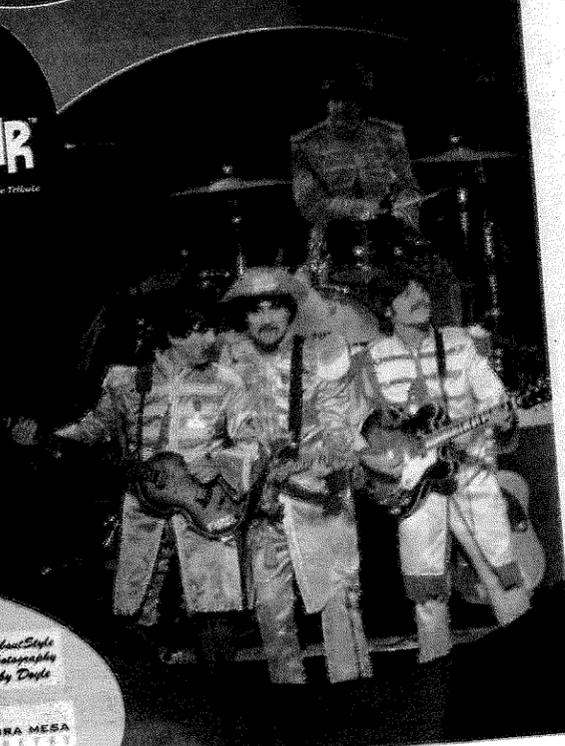
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Strategy revisited in wake of wildfires in Australia

By [Emmet Pierce](#)
Union-Tribune Staff Writer

2:00 a.m. February 22, 2009



Southern Australia's fires earlier this month resulted in a death toll of more than 200 and loss of more than 1,800 homes. (William West / AFP / Getty Images) -

The raging fires that claimed dozens of lives in Australia this month have renewed doubts about “Leave Early or Stay and Defend,” a firefighting strategy that has been under study in wildfire-prone California.

Despite long-standing skepticism toward the Australian approach, which involves training homeowners to protect their properties, in recent months fire officials in San Diego County have been debating its merits. Some experts say preparing homeowners to fend off flames makes sense, since there always are people who are unable or unwilling to evacuate.

Now the tragedy in Australia could reinforce the belief of many local officials that it's not a sound approach. One concern is that agencies that endorse it could be held legally responsible if people who don't evacuate are injured.

The issue was the subject of an October summit in Orange County that brought together fire chiefs from throughout the state, said Maurice Luque, spokesman for the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department. And officials in both Ventura and Orange counties have been discussing a proposal that would make allowances for people who want to stay and protect their homes.

While the San Diego County Fire Chiefs Association has taken no position, there are strong feelings among members that people should evacuate when they are told to do so.

Even so, “the fire service can't have its head in the sand and not acknowledge that some people are going to stay and defend their homes,” Luque said. “It has to do what it can do in terms of education to keep these people safe.”

Bill Metcalf, fire chief of the North County Fire Protection District in Fallbrook, says the Australian concept of fighting wildfires is worth considering.

“If we don't do anything, people are going to stay and they are going to die,” he said. “If we do something, maybe more of them will survive.”

Throughout Australia, public safety authorities train people who choose not to evacuate during wildfires how to safely remain in their homes, emerging after fire fronts have passed to douse flames and embers. Their training requires them to make their homes fire resistant, store water, trim back vegetation and make sure there are no flammable objects nearby.

Dave Bacon, president of Firewise 2000, a fire-protection consulting firm in Escondido, said Australia's program has been widely recognized as successful. Despite that, the recent deaths are expected to make U.S. fire agencies wary of following suit.

Former San Diego Fire Chief Jeff Bowman thinks area residents have the right to defend their homes, but he doesn't expect local fire agencies to adopt Australia-style policies.

Bowman declined a request to evacuate his home when a wildfire threatened his Escondido neighborhood in 2007. He said his house was never truly threatened. He also was well prepared and his dwelling was built to withstand wildfires.

Adopting a leave-early-or-stay-and-defend policy is “one of those subjects where you are damned if you do and damned if you don't,” Bowman said. “My feeling is that to have a blanket policy that people should be allowed to stay would never work. There are places and conditions where I believe it has a lot of merit. The reality is, a lot of people are going to choose to stay.”

One local firefighter who strongly believes in Australia's policy is William Middleton, a retired San Diego assistant fire chief. He and his wife refused to evacuate during the 2007 Witch Creek fire. If they had, their home almost certainly would have been destroyed, Middleton said.

Aggressively pursued since the mid-1990s, Australia's firefighting policy encourages early evacuations to prevent people from being overtaken by fast-moving fires and trapped on highways. Before the recent fires, the consensus was that the program was working, removing children and the elderly from harm's way and allowing trained homeowners to protect dwellings.

Australian officials say the number of people killed as fires tore through the state of Victoria probably will exceed 200. Investigators are trying to determine if the stay-and-defend strategy contributed to the toll.

Defenders of the program say many of those who died may have panicked and fled as unusually fierce fires approached their homes.

“We will have to wait,” said Inspector Ben Shepherd, spokesman for the New South Wales Rural Fire Service in Sydney. “They are still counting bodies. At this stage, what we have to evaluate is what has happened to these people. It does seem they have been caught out in the open or fleeing in their cars.”

One thing authorities are considering is increasing training to make sure those who stay behind are mentally prepared to remain inside their homes until the fire fronts pass.

Hunkering down during a firestorm requires preparation and steady nerves, said Cliff Hunter, fire marshal of the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District.

“You can hear the wind, you can hear things hitting the windows because there are flying embers,” he said. “It’s really loud. It sounds like someone is trying to break in. It also gets extremely dark if you lose your power. You lose perspective of whether it is day or night. Your home could rise in temperature. You can’t panic and take off.”

Although they provoke fear, authorities say imposing walls of fire that often accompany brush fires seldom destroy homes. Dwellings more often are ignited by floating embers.

Fire officials in Ventura and Orange counties have been studying stay and defend as they consider a policy that would make some allowances for people who want to protect their dwellings.

Ventura County Fire Chief Bob Roper, chairman of the International Association of Fire Chiefs’ Wildland Fire Policy Committee, said he is waiting for all the facts to come in about recent wildfires before judging how well the strategy has worked in Australia.

“I think it would be best if everybody could wait a few weeks or months to see what has happened in Australia,” he said. “It is premature to jump to any conclusions until we get all the facts.”

Closer to home, the Rancho Santa Fe district has championed “shelter in place.” The idea is to make homes so fire-resistant that residents can remain inside if they don’t have time to evacuate.

Shelter-in-place communities utilize fire-resistant building materials. Homes and landscaping are routinely inspected to make sure they remain fire-safe. Hunter supports early evacuation, but says wildfires don’t always give people adequate time to flee.

“The theory is you can stay in your home, close all windows and doors, and the fire won’t come into your house,” he said.

In 2007 none of the 2,460 upscale tract and custom homes in the district’s five shelter-in-place communities were destroyed by the Witch Creek fire, although a few suffered minor damage.

In Australia, scientists at the Brushfire Cooperative Research Center in Melbourne have begun their investigation.

They plan to look at everything from the way fires behaved in the hot, windy weather to the methods that were used to warn communities about approaching flames, said spokesman David Bruce.

Even if the center concludes that the stay-and-defend policy is flawed, changing public behavior could prove difficult, he said. From the time of early European settlers, Australians have defended their homes from wildfires.

Sharon Merritt, a fire brigade captain in Macclesfield, Victoria, commanded a crew of 30 that fought the recent blazes. The 13-year veteran said the stay-and-defend program may need fine-tuning, but the strategy itself remains fundamentally sound.

“I still strongly believe it is the best thing to do,” she said. “We would have had to evacuate 500,000 because of the size of the fires, an impossible task . . . There are people who did stay and defend their homes and were quite successful.”

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Find this article at:

<http://www3.signonsandiego.com/stories/2009/feb/22/1h22stay194027-stay-and-defend-debate-intensifies/?home>

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MAKING WAVES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

FEB. 27, 2009

THISWEEK

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

The San Diego Chamber Orchestra celebrates 25 years of making music to entertain people in the area **3**

NEW FACE

Our new columnist Eric Murtaugh muses on the human draw toward nature in this week's "Outside Perspective" **4**

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REPEAT PERFORMANCE The Four Freshmen rehearse for their Rancho Santa Fe performance. From left, Vince Johnson, Bob Gerreira, Brian Eichenberger and Curtis Calderon. Photo by David Wiemers

Four Freshmen encore sells out

By David Wiemers

RANCHO SANTA FE — The Rancho Santa Fe Garden Club hosted The Four Freshmen on Feb. 13 for an encore performance as part of its Cabaret Series. The event was a fundraiser for the Garden Club and a complete sellout.

The Four Freshmen, still going strong since the group's inception in 1952, is comprised of a quartet of

singer/musicians. Brian Eichenberger, lead voice and guitar was born in 1976 (24 years after the group began) and joined the group in 1996. Curtis Calderon, second voice and trumpet, is 34 years old and joined the group in 2001. Vince Johnson, third voice and bass player, is 39 years old and joined the group in 1999. Bob Ferreira, the fourth voice and drummer,

is also 39 and joined the group in 1992. The Rancho Santa Fe performance was one of the last performances for this current tour, Eichenberger said. "We're off to Torrence next and then we're each going home — to Texas, California, Minnesota and Nevada."

The Four Freshmen first performed at the Garden Club 18 months ago. "We had 125 in attendance

that night," Hal Sexton, president of the Garden Club, said. "And we had 250 at this performance. Double! We could have sold more, but 250 is our capacity. These guys are wonderful."

"We'll keep coming back as long as Rancho Santa Fe wants us," Ferreira said, speaking on behalf of

TURN TO **ENCORE** ON 19

Activist, actor, local businessman lived full life

■ Pneumonia claims life of Bob Nanninga

By Wehtannah Tucker

ENCINITAS — Robert "Bob" Nanninga, the venerable renaissance man who worked tirelessly to change the face of a community, died of pneumonia Feb. 14. He was 45 years old.

"The lights have gone out on 'The Bob Show,'" Councilwoman Teresa Barth said when asked about the impact of Nanninga's death. He used the phrase often to describe himself.

Nanninga was a columnist for this paper for several years, writing "Observations from the Edge" in a way that provoked thought among readers and often controversy.

In addition to his work as an actor, artist, poet and journalist, Nanninga was also a businessman. With his longtime partner, Keith Shillington, he opened the popular E Street Café in downtown Encinitas on Sept. 3, 2004 — his birthday.

"We had 15 years together and not a single moment of it was dull,"

Shillington said.

When asked what he would miss most about Nanninga, Shillington paused briefly. "The enormous wealth of information and engaging in intellectual conversation," he replied. "Bob's articles represent at least one of the conversations we had every week."

At a crowded memorial

"He was a force of nature and none of those personalities that cannot be denied I don't know what we're going to do without him."

— Dody Tucker
 ON BOB NANNINGA

service Feb. 15, a diverse cross-section of people paid tribute to the man who lived life to the fullest.

"He was a force of nature and one of those personalities that cannot be denied," said Dody Tucker, executive director of the Downtown Encinitas MainStreet Association. "He was involved with so many service organizations in town," she said. "I don't know what we're going to do without him."

Tucker said Nanninga was in some ways a mentor to her. "He always had faith in me and I always appreciated that from Bob," she said.

From the environmental challenges of the area to theatrical, cultural and political issues, Nanninga had a hand in everything. "He was like a cultural icon, really," Tucker said.

One of his many passions was promoting the local arts community. Danny Salzhandler of the 101 Artists' Colony first worked with Nanninga a decade ago at the Full Moon Poets' Society Poetry Slam in Encinitas. Nanninga emceed the event and became synonymous with its success.

"He really did give his heart to the poets," Salzhandler said. "And he shined brighter than the moon."

"I heard someone say that 'we're just another boring town without Bob,'" Salzhandler said. "They were right."

Nanninga was a champion of open space preservation, smart growth urban planning and supported conservation measures. From volunteering at the San Dieguito Heritage Museum and teaching elementary students the finer points of theater to spear-heading the Environmental Film Festival and Environment Day, Nanninga was known for putting in long hours of hard work.

His service included traditional avenues for change. He served as a commissioner on the Parks and Recreation committee from 2001 to 2006.

His political ambitions led him to campaign three times for a seat on the City Council.

While he was never elected, Nanninga's name recognition and activism grew with each political cycle.

"There's a job opening in Encinitas but nobody to fill it," Salzhandler lamented. "It's going to take 20 or 30 people to finish all of the things Bob started."

"Encinitas has lost a brilliant star," Shillington

TURN TO **ACTIVIST** ON 19

Board to sell Dacus property to school

By David Wiemers

RANCHO SANTA FE — The Association's board of directors agreed Feb. 19 to sell the Dacus property to the Rancho Santa Fe School District. The property is vital to the school as it begins construction of its new campus this spring. The sale will pend for six months giving the Association time to notify the membership and to obtain an updated appraisal of the property.

The Dacus property was purchased by the Association in 1997 as part of the its Open Space Plan. In October 2000, the school approached the Association about purchasing the Dacus property in conjunction with its plans to build a new campus. The school plans to use the Dacus property for a construction staging area, allowing the entire school and playing fields to remain open during construction. Complications came about earlier this year when the Fire Department

TURN TO **PROPERTY** ON 19

Crime stats in Ranch rise in '08

By David Wiemers

RANCHO SANTA FE — Patrol Chief Matt Wellhouser presented the Annual Report of the Rancho Santa Fe Patrol to the Association's board of directors on Feb. 18. In a letter to the board, Wellhouser stated, "Over the past year, we have seen an increase in criminal activity in the village. We are addressing the issue with shift adjustments and working with the Sheriff's Department. We will be closely monitoring the activity there."

At the top of the list of crimes was the recent bank robbery at Bank of America; an attempted murder involving a fight between a husband and wife; and auto theft. "Most of the crimes are opportunistic in nature," Wellhouser said.

While criminal activity was slightly on the rise, vehicle collisions decreased from 129 to 104 in the past year. Wellhouser said that the average response time of 5 minutes and 34 seconds for any

TURN TO **CRIME** ON 19

Jilted sis must make motor home payments

Dear Bruce: After 25 years of being together, my sister and her same-sex partner split up one year ago. Her partner refinanced their home, taking my sister off the mortgage, which was a good move.



BRUCE WILLIAMS
Smart Money

My sister has moved on and purchased another home in her own name in a nearby town. However, there is a very expensive motor home they both still own, and each pays half of the monthly payment (my sister is listed as co-owner).

The motor home is in the possession of my sister's ex-partner, and the ex recently took a "new guest" on a trip, which emotionally crushed my sister. My sister contacted the ex and threatened to cut off payments on the motor home (which she is legally bound to for another several years on payments), if the situation reoccurred.

Her ex-partner did go for "round two" with the new guest, so now my sister feels totally disrespected and refuses to make any more payments.

She has since purchased a smaller camper for her own use, as she wants nothing to do with the motor home.

She consulted me, and I told her no matter how mad she may be, she is obligated legally, and if she stops

making payments on her half of it, her credit will go down the tubes if the motor home should be repossessed.

I don't want her mad at me for not taking her side, but this is a legal issue, not a moral one, and legally, I don't think she has a leg to stand on. — J.R., via e-mail

Dear J.R.: You have it right down to a "T." The hurt notwithstanding, your sister has an obligation, probably for the entire payment, as does the other woman.

No matter how she feels, there's no way that she can shimmy out of this obligation. If your sister is at all concerned about her credit, she is going to have to continue to make payments.

Dear Bruce: My husband and I were told that we needed to contact the owner of a condo to whom we sent a \$500 deposit.

We signed the contract in the summer for a month's stay in Fort Myers. The real estate rep told me that

there was a foreclosure on that property. We have contacted the owner several times, and she refuses to return our call. How can we retrieve this money from this thief who has already cashed our check? — B.D., via e-mail

Dear B.D.: I could give you a long song and dance about how it may very well be that you can recover the money through small claims court, but the reality is that for \$500, the owner who allowed the property to go to foreclosure will be difficult to nail down.

If you made your contact through a real estate office, however, my position would be that you brokered the contract and therefore the office has responsibility. If you mailed the check directly to the condo owner, even though the real estate agent was involved, I think it's probably too late to give chase.

Dear Bruce: I would like to fully support your statement regarding the wisdom of not buying a home till the first is sold. I am single, and moved about four years ago. I connected with a real estate agent to get an idea of the housing market in my new location.

I had this gentle nudge to not make a commitment

to another home till I had money in hand from the first home. The agent wanted me to make offers with the condition of pending sale of my old home. I was not comfortable with this.

I persevered and viewed homes the Monday following the receipt of the check from the sale of my old house.

A new home had just come into the market and met more of my desires than any of the previous houses I had looked at. Obviously the wait was well worth it. — J.R., via e-mail

Dear J.R.: Thanks for the kind words. Particularly in today's world it's absolutely crazy to buy a second home before the first one is sold — not "under contract," but sold, money in hand.

I have no problem as a potential buyer asking that the home I want to buy be held until my house is sold. It doesn't hurt me, though it's not smart for the seller. In no way is it reasonable to purchase a second house before the first one is sold unless the idea of having two mortgages is not troublesome. For most of us, it would be.

Send questions to Smart Money, P.O. Box 503, Elfers, FL 34680, or e-mail them to bruce@brucewilliams.com.



MAINLY MOZART

Bernhard Schmidt, the quartet's cellist, violinists Sebastian Schmidt and Nanette Schmidt, and violist Roland Glass make up Germany's Mandelring Quartet who will perform at 8 p.m. March 6 and March 7 at The Neurosciences Institute in La Jolla, and at 5:30 p.m. March 8 at The Inn at Rancho Santa Fe. Tickets at The Neurosciences are \$48 per person (tickets with dinner at Piatti restaurant in La Jolla are \$80 per person). At The Inn, tickets are \$60 per person, which includes a pre-concert reception. Tickets with an optional candlelight dinner at the Inn are \$120 per person. Call (619) 239-0100, ext. 2 or visit www.mainlymozart.org. Mainly Mozart is the Resident Ensemble of the Balboa Theatre, where the

PROPERTY

CONTINUED FROM 1

also took steps to acquire the property, which it needs for additional parking. The three parties have been working together to find a solution that will meet the needs of all involved.

On behalf of the school, Superintendent Lindy Delaney and President of the School Board, Charlie Headapohl, attended the Association meeting. Director Steve Shillington raised concerns that the 1.28-acre property was being appraised as a residential property, yet was zoned as a commercial property. While he didn't want to deny the school the opportunity to purchase the property, Shillington said, "I think the

members of the community should be recognized for their generosity. They may be selling this property for less than what it is worth."

The appraiser for the property was chosen by the Association, the school and the Fire Department. "We do appreciate the team approach," Delaney said. "And we are grateful."

"We've worked with the Art Jury and the Association," Headapohl added. "And I believe we have a better design for it. The school will be an asset to the community."

In other Association news, the board of directors renewed a contract with the California Highway Patrol for paid overtime enforcement. Since October 2004, the Association has contract-

ed with the CHP, which pro- volunteer for overtime duty for an average of 20 overtime hours per week. Prior to September 2008, the officers worked a four-hour overtime shift, but this was changed to an eight-hour shift due to changes at the CHP. Officers now work on their day off, which benefits the officers and the patrol hours. There is less time spent commuting to and from their Oceanside headquarters and officers are not coming off a long shift when exhaustion sets in.

The new contract begins April 1 and extends through December 31, 2011.

Associate Planner Liz Avalon also presented the board with a report on Del Dios traffic volumes. The

Association has been studying Highway at the intersection of El Camino Del Norte that count through traffic in both directions as well as west-bound vehicles turning right onto El Camino Del Norte. Their charts show that traffic dropped significantly in 2008. "There have been steady declines since 2004," Avalon said. "This is primarily due to high gas prices in 2008 and the loss of traffic that resulted in the opening of SR 56 in 2004."

"I do believe this is temporary," Avalon said. "It will return. It's time to push for improvements such as increasing the lanes on 56 and doing the roundabouts."

The next Association board meeting is scheduled for March 5.

ACTIVIST

CONTINUED FROM 1

said. "The shockwave is felt around the world."

"I will miss his exuberance and flamboyance," Tucker said. "He made me feel like I could do so much more than I even thought I could. He was meant to be center stage and he loved it."

"I so cherished every moment we had together," Shillington said. "It was an

honor and a privilege to be his partner."

In addition to Shillington, Nanninga is survived by his parents Clay and Sandra Nanninga; and siblings Tom Bill, Karen and twin sister Jessie Ruth Nanninga.

A poetry slam dedicated to Bob Nanninga is being planned for sometime next month at the La Palom Theater. Details will be published as soon as they are available.

ENCORE

CONTINUED FROM 1

The Four Freshmen.

Proceeds from the fundraiser will help finance Phase II and Phase III, repairs that need to be made to the Garden Club. Phase I was recently implemented as new sidewalks were put in place and the patio restructured.

The next program from the Garden Club is the "Spring Morning in the Garden," to be held at 9: a.m. March 18. April 25 the annual Garden Tour Luncheon, followed by spring floral exhibition.

For tickets or more information, call the Garden Club at (858) 756-1554 or visit www.rsfgardenclub.org

CRIME

CONTINUED FROM 1

incidents was "pretty darn fast. After all, we still have to drive there."

"Rancho Santa Fe has the lowest crime rate in North County," Wellhouser said of the overall picture. "But having the lowest crime rate can sometimes be a detriment because we (the people in the Covenant) drop our guard."

Wellhouser said that because crime is low, people often forget to set their alarms or lock their houses or cars when they leave. This, in turn, opens

the door for crimes of opportunity.

The Rancho Santa Patrol was formed in 1976; works closely with the San Diego County Sheriff's Department and California Highway Patrol. Both the county and City have storefront office space within the patrol office, allowing the teams to work together.

"Thank you for the support of the patrol," Director Bill Beckham said after the report was submitted. "The team is always very professional and courteous."

CARBON

CONTINUED FROM 16

that produces CO₂, which contributes to global warming," he said, adding that about 20 percent of global carbon dioxide production comes from burning tropical forests. "If the proposed 2,000 acres are destroyed, 160,000 tons of CO₂ would be produced," he said.

Gayler said NCI's goal is to "preserve the variety of life on the planet (and) preserve the planet's ecosystems that are absorbing the CO₂ that we are producing in the atmosphere."

Public comments overwhelmingly supported the project.

"This program is timely, and it's progressive, and to me, it's very Solana Beach," resident Gerri Retman-

Opper said. "People tell you to act locally and think globally," former Mayor Doug Sheres said. "This is a way to act locally and act globally ... all from the comfort of your living room."

In a letter to the mayor and city manager, however, resident Jane Morton suggested the city should be focused on local issues. "It just seems out of the realm of what a city should be involved in when the recipients of the dollars is Peru and Ecuador and other 3rd world countries," the letter stated.

"It's not just that we're saving land and setting it aside," said Councilwoman Lesa Heebner, who asked staff to research the possibility of creating the partnership with NCI. "What we're

also preserving is tradition and culture.

"We're teaching people there how to earn sustainably off this land so they can remain in their home and not destroy it while they're still earning off it," Heebner said.

Payments would be made to NCI, which would take ownership of the property in perpetuity.

"The Ecuadorians prefer that the title to the land be in international hands or in a local conservation affiliate's hands," Gayler said.

Gayler said NCI purchases land at the "local price" primarily from absentee owners who have moved, want to move or want to sell their land so "their children can get a college education and not have to toil as subsistence farmers."

"So it's people who very much want to release the land, and local people very much want to see it protected," he said.

Gayler said his company never pays more than market price for property because it would "limit the amount of area that we could protect, and it would destroy the local economy."

It is not yet known whether participation in the program will satisfy some or all of the city's requirement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions under new state laws since standards for those laws are still being developed.

"But as far as I'm concerned, it's really icing on the cake right now," Councilman Joe Kellejian said. "If we get it, fine. If we don't, this is just a very good thing."