

 **2008 VOTE: LOCAL PROPOSITIONS**

Fire tax's defeat puts supporters in a bind

**By Craig Gustafson**

UNION-TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

**November 6, 2008**

Now what?

The failure of a \$52, countywide parcel tax for fire protection has left its backers with few options for how to fund the regional agency envisioned in Proposition A.

Except the most obvious. The clarion call of the ballot measure's opponents was that the county's elected officials ought to pay for the costs – about \$26 million annually – out of their nearly \$5.2 billion budget.

The county Board of Supervisors has been reluctant to even discuss that option, preferring to ask voters for money instead. At the same time, the supervisors aren't shy about boasting of their fiscal discipline and robust reserves of \$819 million.

If the fire agency is to be launched next year as planned, there's probably no way to make it happen without county money.

Supervisor Ron Roberts, who pushed to place Proposition A on Tuesday's ballot, said he was disappointed that the measure didn't pass, but he dismissed the possibility of county funds for the project because of budget woes.

“There is no chance,” Roberts said.

The county, like many public agencies, is struggling with lower tax revenue. The county expects to receive about \$14 million less than expected this year from Proposition 172, a half-cent sales tax that generates money for public safety statewide.

Chief Financial Officer Don Steuer said the loss could reach \$22 million if retail sales continue to struggle. County departments probably would have to squeeze their budgets to make up the difference, he said.

Richard Rider, chairman of the San Diego Tax Fighters, isn't buying the county's excuses. He said they're similar to those offered when supervisors tried to increase taxes for libraries a decade ago. The measure failed, and supervisors found the money elsewhere.

“The idea that the only way we can do this is with a tax increase is ludicrous,” Rider said. “I have no doubt whatsoever that next year at this time we will have a regional firefighting agency. . . . They're going to pass it.”

Supervisor Dianne Jacob said it is time for public-safety officials from across the county to regroup and analyze how best to spend the money they already have.

Proposition A failed to meet the two-thirds requirement, or 66.67 percent, for passage. About 63 percent of voters were in favor of the tax, while about 37 percent opposed it.

The parcel would have generated about \$50 million the first year. Half of the money would have paid for firefighting aircraft, reserve engines and other regional equipment. The rest would have been divided among existing county fire agencies.

There's still a chance that supporters will push to place a similar ballot measure on the November 2010 ballot. Roberts said he's talking with local state lawmakers to try to lower the passing threshold for public-safety initiatives to make success easier in the second go-round.

---

■ **Craig Gustafson:** (619) 293-1399; [craig.gustafson@uniontrib.com](mailto:craig.gustafson@uniontrib.com)

**Find this article at:**

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/politics/20081106-9999-1m6firetax.html>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

Copyright 2007 Union-Tribune Publishing Co. ? A Copley Newspaper Site

Print Page

*Real News • Really Local*

**NORTH COUNTY TIMES**

*Real News • Really Local*

**THE CALIFORNIAN**

Last modified Sunday, November 9, 2008 12:13 AM PST

EDITORIAL: Fire tax result shows need for thorough look

By North County Times Opinion staff

San Diego County voters love to carp about federal pork-barrel projects. Yet Tuesday they showed an amazing willingness to OK an ill-crafted, hurried and larded plan to hike local taxes for improved wildfire protection.

Thank goodness the county's fire tax idea failed to hoodwink two-thirds of all voters needed for passage.

Proposition A was doomed for many reasons, but largely because of waste: For every buck it raised, only half would address the needs of the backcountry. Half.

Maybe now the Board of Supervisors will come up with a more dollarwise plan to address what most freely admit is a pressing fire-protection need: Better and more aerial and ground equipment for the backcountry.

And perhaps now our county government will give its nearly \$5 billion budget a thorough scrubbing of unnecessary and low-value spending before approaching the public with any new taxes.

One low-value example is the board's \$2 million slush fund, set aside for each of its five members to dole out to various groups for special projects ---- a total of \$10 million that our minders of the public till could not see fit to put to better use.

Last month, one supervisor asserted that this "community development" money is not readily available each year, thus not dependable for ongoing needs such as fire protection. Yet a quick check showed a similar-sized fund existed in the early 1990s.

The money was spent then. The money is being spent now. Odds are, all or part of that collective \$10 million will exist next year, and the year after, and the year after that.

True, such a sum is a fractional amount of what is needed. But it is a look at only a sliver of the county's overall spending.

But as a new start toward addressing backcountry needs, it should be reasonable to count on at least half of that \$10 million.

And half seemed good enough for the \$50 million Proposition A, after all.

Additional information:

REGION: Prop. A's narrow miss signals hope

EDITORIAL: Vote 'no' on Prop. A; refine fire tax plan

## Regional fire authority created to oversee county's backcountry

---

**By Anne Krueger**  
STAFF WRITER

**November 20, 2008**

A new regional fire authority that will protect more than 920,000 acres – about one-third of the county – in the backcountry became official yesterday.

The action by the Local Area Formation Commission will allow a newly created San Diego County Regional Fire Authority to oversee fire protection in rural East and North County.

“I think it's a pretty historic agreement,” county Supervisor Bill Horn said.

The authority will cover about 50,000 people in an area now served by six volunteer agencies and Cal Fire. It will be paid for by \$15.5 million that county supervisors set aside in June for fire protection.

The volunteer agencies will remain but will be better-funded and administered by a fire warden, a new position.

San Diego County is the most populous in the state without a regional fire department, and officials have worked for more than a decade to try to set up and find the money for a countywide agency. Officials tried to pass a \$52-a-year parcel tax earlier this month to pay for a regional fire agency, but voters narrowly turned it down. The tax money would have been used to pay for firefighting aircraft, reserve engines and other regional equipment and would have been divided among the county's fire agencies.

County officials said the authority can be formed although voters rejected the tax.

“It's taken a long time and it's been a tough road to get here,” Supervisor Dianne Jacob said.

The fire authority is one of the first steps in the process of creating a countywide agency. Jacob said she hopes to expand the regional authority within the next two years to include other parts of the unincorporated county now served by rural fire districts. After that, urban areas served by fire departments would be included.

The agencies included in the authority are De Luz Heights, Intermountain Fire and Rescue, Ocotillo Wells, Ranchita Fire and Rescue, Shelter Valley and Sunshine Summit.

Cary Coleman, chief of Intermountain, which serves the Ramona area, said that under the authority, the county can collect mitigation fees for fire protection from developers, unlike the volunteer agencies. With a regional authority, firefighters and equipment from all of the volunteer companies can be pooled, he said.

“It's my hope that one day we'll all wear the same uniform and drive the same trucks. But for now we've got to take these small steps,” he said.

---

■ Anne Krueger: (619) 593-4962; [anne.krueger@uniontrib.com](mailto:anne.krueger@uniontrib.com)

[»Next Story»](#)

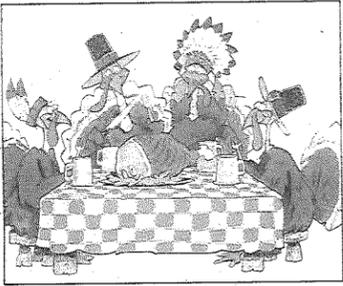
---

**Find this article at:**

[http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20081120/news\\_1m20fire.html](http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20081120/news_1m20fire.html)

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

Copyright 2007 Union-Tribune Publishing Co. ? A Copley Newspaper Site



Have a safe  
and Happy  
Thanksgiving!



## PHOTOS

For society  
photos,  
see pages 1-40, B1-B20.  
editor@sdranchcoastnews.com

WEB: www.sd Please review and forward: 2601  
Classifieds: classified 2602 2605 2606 2607  
2608 2640 2641 2642  
2643 Karlena 2644 last

Our e-mail addresses are:

Advertising: ads@sdranchcoastnews.com

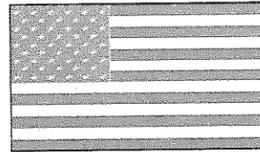
Editorial: editor@sdranchcoastnews.com

Classifieds: classified

National  
Award-Winning  
Newspaper

LOCAL  
REAL ESTATE  
LISTINGS  
PHOTO PAGES  
& FEATURES  
SECTION B

# Rancho Santa Fe REVIEW



Boxholder  
Rancho Santa Fe  
CA 92067  
ECRWSS

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
RSF, CA  
PERMIT 26

Providing The Ranch with Three Decades of Quality Journalism

Web site: www.sdranchcoastnews.com

VOLUME XXVIII / NUMBER 11 • Nov. 20, 2008

## RSF Association members pass bylaw amendment; Funding for future incorporation studies must first be approved by Covenant voters

By Matt Liebowitz

The vote is in and effective immediately, a Covenant bylaw amendment will mean the RSF Association board will not be allowed to put any time or money toward the study of incorporation without first receiving the approval of a majority of voting members.

The ballots, 1,994 in total, were sent out last month, and counted on Tuesday, Nov. 18.

Of the 1,221 valid ballots received, 875 voted in favor of amending the bylaw; 346 voted in opposition.

The vote was held after registered voters, at a special meeting Sept. 18, approved petitioner Bill Hinchy's request to send out ballots allowing voters to choose whether or not to amend the Association bylaws regarding the study of incorporation.

Bill Hinchy believes the more than 60-percent approval "showed pretty conclusively how this community feels about studying incorpora-

See AMENDMENT, page 38

## RSF School renovation proceeding on schedule

By Matt Liebowitz

The renovation of the R. Roger Rowe School is moving along on schedule, reported the Rancho Santa Fe School board at its Nov. 13 meeting.

Construction is set to begin on the project in early 2009 and be finished by the start of the school year in 2010.

Though it's a relatively short time span for the \$37 million renovation, admitted Tim Ireland, construction manager with Gafcon, Inc., the construction management company that, with architectural firm Trittipio Architecture and Planning, is heading the project, Ireland said he has,

See RENOVATION, page 38

## Break-in reported at Helen Woodward Animal Center, Horizon Christian Fellowship on Nov. 11

By Matt Liebowitz

The Horizon Christian Fellowship, and a building on the campus of the Helen Woodward Animal Center, were broken into early Nov. 11.

According to John Van Zante, public relations manager for the Animal Center, the burglar or burglars broke into the Toby Wells Therapeutic Riding Building through a window, stealing two digital cameras, an employee's

personal radio, a check made out to petty cash, and an iPod accessory an employee had purchased as a Christmas present for her husband. All the drawers in each of the four offices were opened.

Trisha Crawford, an adoptions volunteer coordinator, discovered the break-in when she showed up for work Nov. 11, reported Van Zante.

See BREAK-IN, page 38

## RSF 12-year-old takes burger recipe to national cooking competition

By Matt Liebowitz

Danielle Lampitt, a 12-year-old Rancho Santa Fe resident, is poised to take her burger recipe to the national stage.

The creator of the Oh So Gouda Burger, Lampitt, a seventh-grader at San Diego Jewish Academy, was recently selected as one of 10 finalists in "The Next Gourmet Burger Kids' Recipe Contest" sponsored by restaurant chain Red Robin International, Inc.

Lampitt's burger, a turkey patty with sliced apple, gouda cheese, balsamic tomatoes, romaine lettuce, and chipotle mayo on a focaccia bun, was chosen from more than 14,000 entrants from 6 to 12-year-olds submitted this past summer.

On Dec. 5, Lampitt and the nine finalists will compete in "The Next Gourmet Burger Kids' Recipe Contest" Championship, at The International Culinary Institute at The Art Institute of Colorado, in Denver, Colo.

The winning burger will be sold in Red Robin restaurants next summer. The creator of the winning burger will receive a family vacation to Universal Orlando Resort, and will be invited to serve as a special guest judge at Red Robin's Smiling Burger Championship in January 2009.

Lampitt's burger has already given her a bit of acclaim: her recipe will be featured in a kids' cookbook available online at www.redrobin.com next summer, the proceeds of which will benefit the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.



Danielle Lampitt

As a finalist, she will also, in addition to the all-expenses-paid trip to Denver, receive a Red Robin iPod nano and a \$100 Red Robin gift card.

Lampitt admitted she's a natural chef, and learned her way around the kitchen from preparing home-cooked meals — her favorites are macaroni and cheese and egg rolls — with her mother in their Fairbanks Ranch home for the past six years.

"I love to cook with my mom because she is excited to try new recipes and spend time with

See COOKING, page 38

## RSF firefighters sent to help battle Los Angeles-area wildfires

By Matt Liebowitz

Seven firefighters from the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District are helping battle two of the devastating wildfires blazing near Los Angeles.

Four firefighters were dispatched to the Sayre Fire, which, since Nov. 15, has been burning in Sylmar, near Los Angeles. Three firefighters were sent to help fight the Freeway Complex Fire, which began Nov. 15 in Corona, in Riverside County, and spread throughout Orange, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino counties.

The RSF firefighters, sent out on Saturday, Nov. 14, are working on assignment with strike teams made of up five engines, said Julie Taber, public relations coordinator for the RSF Fire Protection District.

Though no date has been set for their return, Taber said RSF fire chiefs have been in contact as often as possible with the dispatched firefighters.

There are 39 firefighters in the RSF Fire Protection District. Taber pointed out that despite sending the seven firefighters to Los Angeles, the RSF Fire District is still fully staffed.

Raging fires in the past week have destroyed



Last year's Witch Creek fire was another tough battle for local firefighters.

thousands of acres and hundreds of homes in in the Montecito area of Santa Barbara, and in Los Angeles, Orange and San Bernardino counties. Authorities are currently investigating the cause of the fires.

## Local planning board encourages Surf Cup to inform community in advance of special events

By Suzanne Evans

Despite huge crowds causing traffic jams, noise, and impacts on surrounding habitat, the San Diego Surf Cup soccer tournament may continue to balk at informing the surrounding community and Carmel Valley Community Planning Board in advance of such events.

"Clearly, it is not required to come before the board," board member Dave Bartick informed the board at its Nov. 11 meeting, noting he reviewed the administrative code with the city's Carolyn Wormser, director of special events. "The city encourages applicants to come before the board, but it is not required," Bartick said, emphasizing he would still like to send a letter to "invite" applicants to notify the board in advance about significant events that impact the Carmel Valley community.

Sports tournaments, auto shows and other special events held on the grounds of the San Diego Polo Club have caused noise, traffic snarls, thousands of cars, food stands, and trash littering the Polo fields near El

See EVENTS, page 38

## Former San Dieguito superintendent appointed to Personnel Commission

By Marsha Sutton

Over the objections of speaker Greg Brucia, school board members at the San Dieguito Union High School District's Nov. 13 meeting voted unanimously to appoint former SDUHSD superintendent William Berrier to serve on the district's Personnel Commission.

According to SDUHSD associate superintendent for human resources Terry King, the Personnel Commission oversees the operation of the district's merit system of employment for classified personnel. The commission consists of three mem-

bers: one appointed by the district, one appointed by the classified employees' union, and the third appointed by the other two commissioners.

The term for the district's current appointee, Joyce Ross, expires this year. Ross has served for 20 years and is stepping down. King said she recommended to the board that Berrier, who served as the district's superintendent from 1971 until his retirement in 2001, be named Ross's replacement.

Brucia is a resident of La Costa Valley in southern Carlsbad, where a contentious dispute has been raging between homeowners and the school district over the

eventual use of property the district owns in that neighborhood that was originally purchased in 1999 for a future middle school.

Speaking before the board, Brucia said the appointment of Berrier appeared to be a conflict of interest, charging that the position is paid and Berrier has donated money to several of the trustees' election campaigns.

King said the position pays a nominal \$20 per month, which is intended to cover fuel charges to attend monthly meetings. Regarding the conflict of interest, she added that Berrier will serve as

See COMMISSION, page 38

**NOW OPEN!**  
**SELF SERVE FROZEN YOGURT**

**Swirls**  
DEL MAR  
Frozen Yogurt

**50 Rotating Flavors**  
**30 Delicious Toppings**  
Non-Fat & Low Calorie\*

Next to Albertsons

**20% Off!**

Not valid with other offers  
Valid through 12/01/08



858.755.5564

2683 Via De La Valle, Suite E • Del Mar, CA 92014

## Small brush fires lead to call for vigilance

The Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District is asking for the public's help following three small vegetation fires that occurred on recent red flag warning days in the district. The causes of those fires are still under investigation, but given the dry conditions, the Fire District is not taking any chances.

"We are asking for residents and commuters to keep an eye out for any small fires or suspicious activity and to report it by calling 9-1-1 immediately," said Fire Chief Nick Pavone. "The sooner we are alerted to any potential problems, the more likely it is that we will be able to keep them from becoming dangerous situations."

The first two fires were reported on Monday, Oct. 13. The first was located on El Secreto near the

intersection of Cantaranas. A few hours later the second was located in the 16000 block of La Gracia. Both fires only burned about 4 square-feet of brush. The most recent fire occurred on Sunday, Nov. 16, in the 16000 block of La Gracia and was confined to only 20 square-feet.

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.

90% Financing Available



HACIENDA Del Mar

## Luxury Office Condominiums For Sale



An Office Environment Like No Other

When You Own Your Office, You Own Your Lifestyle

Welcome to Hacienda Del Mar, a building of stand-alone authenticity where you have the unique opportunity to own a luxury office condominium in an exclusive building in the premier Del Mar Heights business district. It's a neighborhood landmark with its open-air courtyard and views, timeless beauty, and classic architecture. Hacienda Del Mar is able to accommodate your unique office needs from a single office suite to a corporate headquarters.

www.thehaciendadelmar.com

For more information, call (858) 546-5472

Phillip Linton • Bob Kuzman • Justin Halenza • Danny Fitzgerald



**HACIENDA**  
Del Mar

12625 High Bluff Drive  
San Diego, CA

**Grubb & Ellis** BRE Commere  
Property Solutions Worldwide

Rancho Santa Fe  
**Record**

565 Pearl St.  
La Jolla, CA 92037  
(858) 459-4201

**ON THE WEB**

www.rsrecord.com

**INSIDE**

- News ..... A3
- Business ..... A13
- Opinion ..... A12
- Sports ..... A14
- 10 Questions ..... B1
- Social Life ..... B4
- Arts ..... B5
- Food & Wine..... B6
- Calendar ..... B10
- Lifestyles ..... B15
- Obituaries ..... B15
- Classifieds ..... B16
- Open Houses ..... B19

# Supervisors call for solar buy-back incentive

**BY JOE NAIMAN**  
Contributor

A unanimous San Diego County Board of Supervisors vote Nov. 18 directed the county's chief administrative officer to amend the county's legislative program to add county-sponsored legislation which would give residential solar energy customers the ability to sell surplus generated energy to local utility companies.

Supervisor Dianne Jacob, who introduced the resolution, noted that such legisla-

tion would provide another incentive for clean and renewable energy.

"Solar customers deserve fair market compensation for extra power they produce," Jacob said.

The state implemented the California Solar Initiative last year. The program provides \$3.3 billion to subsidize installations of photovoltaic systems. "More and more San Diegans are taking advantage of state incentives," Jacob said.

While the use of solar ener-

gy systems reduces energy costs, any surplus generation is carried forward on a customer's utility bill for 12 months. But any yearly excess is pocketed by the utility.

"The individual who has generated the energy gets nothing for it," Jacob said. "The need for action was brought to my attention by these very customers."

Energy experts believe that more homeowners would purchase residential systems if they were allowed to sell surplus energy to local utili-

ties. Current state law does not allow such sales, and an assembly bill which would have allowed "net metered" utility customers to sell surplus generation was not passed by the state legislature this year. Similar legislation is expected when the legislature convenes next month.

San Diego Gas & Electric and other utilities are under a state mandate to produce at least 20 percent of their energy from renewable sources by 2010. "The state can and should, I believe, allow

SDG&E to allow the residential solar towards its mandate," Jacob said.

SDG&E has registered support of legislation, which would allow residential solar energy customers to sell surplus power to the utility at a fair market rate.

"That's only fair," Jacob said.

Jacob believes that the county can obtain its needed energy from clean sources. "Today's action puts us a step closer to that exciting future," she said.

## Wildfire plan approved

The San Diego Region Fire Safe Council approved a community wildfire protection plan for Rancho Santa Fe and Fairbanks Ranch on Nov. 14. The plan calls for brush management in the San Dieguito Canyon and its smaller drainages, as well as a 100-

foot vegetation management buffer for homes along the canyons. Having a plan in place enables the association to apply for grants to help accomplish the plan.

## Roundabouts planned for RSF

Residents can go for a practice spin around two of

the three roundabouts planned by the County of San Diego for Del Dios Highway and Paseo Delicias. The Rancho Santa Fe Association staked out the proposed traffic circles at El Montevideo and Del Dios Highway, and Via de la Valle and Paseo Delicias. The association plans to submit comments on the project's environmental impact report by the Dec. 8 deadline. Resi-

dents can provide feedback to the association or directly to the county during the public comment period. For more information, call (858) 756-1174.

## Osuna loan debt decreased

The Rancho Santa Fe Association authorized another \$500,000 payment towards

paying off the loan for the Osuna Ranch, reducing the loan balance to \$2.3 million. The payment will be taken from the association's Open Space fund, which accrues \$100,000 each month, said General Manager Pete Smith. The \$5 million loan is expected to be paid off by 2013. The association recently renegotiated the loan's interest rate from 6.7 percent to 5.5 percent.

 <p><b>260 23rd Street Del Mar</b></p> <p>Views, 2 blocks to the beach, new construction, gourmet kitchen, roof top deck, top of the line finishes, end of cul-de-sac</p> <p><b>\$2,495,000 VRM</b></p> <p><b>BEACH COLONY</b></p>	 <p><b>5385 Linea Del Cielo, Rancho Santa Fe</b></p> <p>10 acres, best building site in Covenant, spectacular views, Westside location, can be split, plans &amp; approval for Spanish revival estate.</p> <p><b>\$5,900,000</b></p>
 <p><b>850 Highland Drive Solana Beach</b></p> <p>3BR/3.5 BA 3400 sq. ft. West of I-5, ocean, white water, race track views, hilltop estate, built in 2005, gated community.</p> <p><b>\$1,595,000 VRM</b></p> <p><b>SALE PENDING</b></p>	 <p><b>678 Via De La Valle Solana Beach</b></p> <p>3 BD/3 BA, 3700 sq. ft. ocean &amp; race track views, large lot, open floor plan, 3 master suites, gated community, best price per sq. ft.</p> <p><b>\$1,695,000 VRM</b></p> <p><b>BEST DEAL IN TOWN</b></p>



**Bob Angello & Kathy Angello**  
858.775.9100 bkangello@aol.com

Your Neighborhood  
Real Estate  
Specialist

**WILLIS ALLEN** REAL ESTATE