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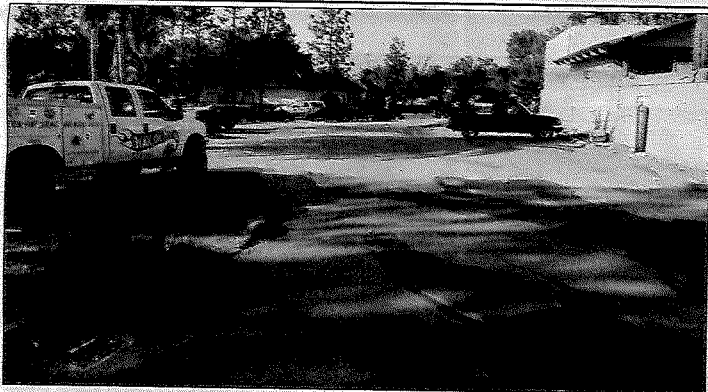
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Judge finalizes ruling in support of commercial use for gas station property, Association to appeal decision

• Association says it will now address 'clutter' concerns



The Rababys' property is located at the southeast entrance to the RSF Village. (The gas station is located on the northern portion of the property.) Photos/Jon Clark

By Matt Liebowitz

On Sept. 26 a Superior Court judge finalized his ruling in the ongoing battle between property owners Adele and Tony Rababy and the Rancho Santa Fe Association, finding that the Rababys have a legal right to use their entire village property for commercial purposes.

"His [Judge Michael B. Orfield] decision was a surprise," said Rancho Santa Fe Association Manager Pete Smith.

The litigation process regarding use entitlements for the site, known as the "gas station" property, located between Via De Santa Fe and La Granada at the southeast entrance to the RSF Village, was initially brought to court by the Rababys, and has gone on for years, during which time the judge reversed his decision several times.

Although the ruling was made, it is not official yet; the Association is given 30 days to file an appeal, and the ruling is stayed pending the outcome of the appellate court. The Association plans to file its appeal within the next two weeks, Smith said.

The ruling isn't binding until the appellate court makes its decision so the existing residential zoning stays in place and the Rababys cannot apply for a commercial building permit until the

appellate court's decision is made, Smith said. He added that he expects the appeal process to take another year-and-a-half.

"We obviously don't agree with the judge's decision," said Smith, who added that even if the judge's decision stands and the Rababys can build commercial facilities on the property they will still have to go through the Association's Art Jury process and comply with requirements such as parking, structure height, setbacks, etc.

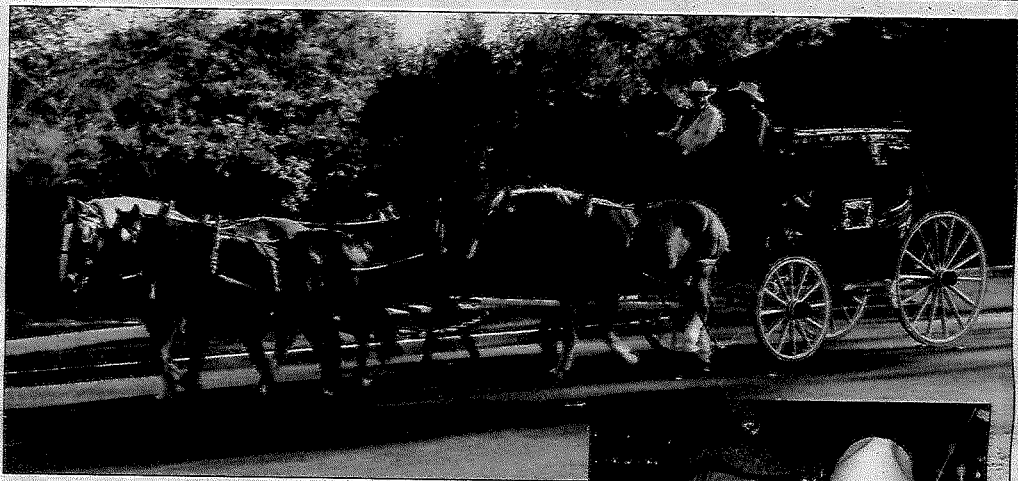
While the case was in court, the Association was advised by its attorneys not to address other issues related to the site, such as trash, storage, illegal signs, and visual clutter, all of which violate the Covenant's regulatory code, regardless of how the property is zoned.

The Association is now free to address those violations and plans to do so, Smith said.

When reached for comment, Adele Rababy said she was pleased by the judge's decision and eager to put an end to the ongoing litigation.

"I feel the judgement was correct," Rababy said. "I think the Association should accept the judgement."

See DECISION, page 37



Rancho Days 2008

RSF residents enjoyed a week of community celebration Sept. 20-27 at a variety of festive events, including the RSF Rotary Fall Festival Barbecue (above), which boasted the Wells Fargo stagecoach, and concluding with the RSF Golf Club Hoe Down (right) where Bibbi Conner and Dotie Rizzo had a great time. See more photos inside. Photo above/Jon Clark; Photo at right/Carl Smith.



County voters to decide on fire tax

By Joe Tash

Voters across San Diego County will decide in November whether to approve a \$52 per year parcel tax to pay for more fire engines, aerial support, communications upgrades and better training for the region's firefighting forces, a proposal triggered by the disastrous wildfires of 2003 and 2007.

The County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously in August to put the measure, called Proposition A, before voters in the November general election. A two-thirds majority is required for passage.

Supporters of the measure said it is an important step toward bolstering the county's ability to combat major fires, and even stop them before they pose a serious threat to life and property. They also said revenue generated by the parcel tax will help improve the effectiveness of local fire departments on a day-to-day basis, whether it's fighting fires or responding to medical emergencies.

Opponents said the money won't be spent in the area where it's needed most, East San Diego County, the location where major wildfires generally start. Other critics said local government agencies such as the county should find the funds to beef up fire protection from their existing budgets, without raising taxes.

August Ghio, chief of the San Miguel Fire District and president of the San Diego County Fire Chiefs Association, said recently that supporters of Prop. A do not have a "war chest" to get information out to the public. Rather, they are relying on media interviews and public meetings and forums to get out the message.

Ghio, a former city of San Diego fire official, said the measure will generate \$50 million per year over its 30-year life, which will be used in four key areas: purchasing of new fire engines, expanding the county's arsenal of firefighting aircraft, improving communications links between fire departments and enhancing training for San Diego County firefighters.

The measure falls short of what Ghio and other experts in the field

See TAX, page 37

Santa Fe Irrigation District to hold public hearing Oct. 16 on proposed Drought Response Policies and Procedures

The Santa Fe Irrigation District Board of Directors is holding a public hearing Thursday, Oct. 16, to receive and consider public comment on the proposed Santa Fe Irrigation District Drought Response Policies and Procedures. The public hearing will be held during a regular board of directors meeting at 8:30 a.m. at the district offices located at 5920 Linea del Cielo in Rancho Santa Fe.

The board of directors of the Santa Fe Irrigation District encourages attendance and participation of district customers at the public hearing on Oct. 16. Written comments may be submitted to General Manager Michael J. Bardin at P.O. Box 409, Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067-0409. After

See DROUGHT, page 37

DRUG

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"What he said is true — kids know everything. It's a bit scary." The father said he would share the details of the presentation with his child.

"It was very informative," said Michael Klein, who has a 15-year old son at La Costa Canyon High School and a 12-year-old daughter at Oak Crest Middle School. "Parents have to get involved to stop the problem."

Brenda Hill, a parent of three girls (one at Torrey Pines High School, one at Earl Warren Middle School, and a third in college), was strongly affected by

the realities Hubbs laid out.

"It's an eye opener," Hill said. "We think we know about alcohol and drugs, but some of the stuff, like Dust-Off, it makes you aware of what could go wrong."

"It's frustrating," said Peter Demarco. "It looks like a losing battle."

Demarco's wife, Gina, said, "This is a really great program. I'm grateful for it. It scares us as parents."

Addressing what he saw as the logical progression of Hubbs' presentation, Peter added, "It scares the parents, but what we really need to do is scare the kids."

Look for more on this topic in upcoming issues.

TAX

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believe is ultimately needed — a regional firefighting agency. But supporters say Prop. A will still provide incremental improvements.

"We have to ask ourselves all the time, is it ever enough. No, it's not enough to do the complete regionalization we've envisioned for decades in San Diego County. But it is another very positive step," said Ghio. "When you look at how much money it is, it's more than we have now."

In August, the board of the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District took an official position against the measure. Board members said Prop. A does not provide enough funds to make needed improvements, and creators of the ballot measure did not prepare a detailed list of the county's equipment and personnel needs.

In an interview, fire board president Jim Ashcraft said another shortcoming is that not enough money is focused on East County, where the major wildfires in 2003 and 2007 started.

"So, it's not the right approach. We've got to attack the problem in the East County," said Ashcraft.

With another fire season just about to start, Ashcraft concedes the need for improved firefighting capacity in

San Diego is "an urgent matter." But along with failing to allocate enough resources to East County, he said, the tax won't generate enough money county-wide to deal with the problem.

Prop. A calls for half of the \$50 million in annual revenue to be spent on regional assets, and the other half to be divided among cities and fire districts, to be spent within their boundaries.

"Twenty-five million a year of Supervisors for trying to get this thing going, but the truth of the answer is, the problem is bigger, we need to get down and get a solid plan and take that to the public," Ashcraft said. "People tend to forget, the public is smart, trust the public. They'll know when you have a good plan and they'll vote for it."

Five local officials signed the ballot statement in support of Prop. A: They include Ghio, San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders, Sheriff William Kolender, Mark Baker, president of the San Diego County Fire District Association, and Greg Cox, chairman of the county Board of Supervisors.

PARKING

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town became timed parking spots. In 2005, one-hour timed parking spots were put in on both sides of Paseo Delicias between Avenida de Acacias and La Granada; in 2006, those spots were changed to two-hour spots, and one-hour spots were put in on Via de Santa Fe between Paseo Delicias and La Flecha. In 2008, half of Via de Santa Fe was turned into two-hour spots, and two spots in front of Country Friends on El Tordo were turned into two-hour spots.

"All these changes have been done to help businesses have spaces for their customers," she said.

She added that the Association does not pay the Sheriff's department, and therefore has no control over its enforcement. The Association does hire California Highway Patrol for overtime enforcement, primarily to deal with safety issues such as speeding; CHP also has a full-time officer in Rancho Santa Fe. (The Association's RSF Patrol cannot issue parking citations, only warnings that are not binding.)

On a yearly basis, Avalon conducts a parking survey, and said, "Every year for the past three years we've made some kind of change to help businesses. The parking situation is better now than it has been in some time."

The Planning Committee meets the fourth Thursday of every month; at its last meeting, on Sept. 25, Dodson said she addressed the issue of redesigning the park in front of The Inn to help create more parking spaces in the Village area.

Scripps Clinic's Dalessio Headache Center offers free support group

Every other month the Dalessio Headache Center offers an evening of education about headache at Scripps Green Hospital Hastings Room (adjacent to the Scripps Green cafeteria) at 10666 North Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla, CA 92037. Next meeting is Wednesday, Oct. 29, from 6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Guest speaker is Dr. Robert Bonakdar, M.D. from the Scripps Center for Integrative Medicine.

DROUGHT

continued from page 1

the close of the public hearing the board of directors may consider adoption, revision, or modification of the drought response policies and procedures.

Santa Fe Irrigation District has made a significant effort to inform and alert its customers of the current water supply conditions and the district's proposed Drought Response Policies and Procedures. District staff has met with several homeowner associations and community groups to share this message and respond to questions from the community.

Drought Response Policies and Procedures, being adopted by area water agencies, are intended to serve as a tool in achieving demand reductions during shortages, and to provide regional consistency in the event of necessary reductions. The Santa Fe Irrigation District Drought Response Policies and Procedures references, and is intended to be implemented in accordance with, two important state statutes. California Water Code section 375 authorizes water suppliers to adopt and enforce a comprehensive water conservation program. California Water Code section 350 authorizes more restrictive water use regulations and measures such as water rationing, under the declaration of a water shortage emergency.

The Santa Fe Irrigation District Drought Response Policies and Procedures have four levels of drought response, which are determined by specific existing conditions. The levels require increasing levels of conservation from a voluntary 10 percent reduction of water usage up to a mandatory 40 percent or more

reduction. The district's intention is to inform customers in advance of official noticing of the drought condition levels, so they can prepare for reductions and consider water usage changes that could be implemented now.

Santa Fe Irrigation District has several helpful tips to reducing water usage available on its Web site: www.sfidwater.org as well as offering free residential water audits to help determine the most efficient methods of water usage for a residence.

Please contact the Santa Fe Irrigation District Water Conservation Department at 858-756-5672 for further information, to schedule a water audit, or to get answers to your water conservation questions. Also, view water conservation information on the customer care tab of the Santa Fe Irrigation District Web site: www.sfidwater.org.

The Santa Fe Irrigation District was formed in 1923 under the California Irrigation District Act. The district provides water and related services to residential, commercial and agricultural customers in the San Diego County communities of Rancho Santa Fe, Solana Beach and Fairbanks Ranch. The district provides service to about 22,000 customers in a 16-square-mile area. The district supplies over 4.5 billion gallons (or 14,000 acre feet) of water per year to its customers, utilizing a blend of local water from Lake Hodges and imported water purchased through the San Diego County Water Authority. The district administers and operates the jointly owned R.E. Badger Filtration Plant, a 40 million gallon per day water treatment plant. The district has historical rights to local water supplies from Lake Hodges and the San Dieguito Reservoir.

DECISION

continued from page 1

About the Association's plan to appeal, Rababy said, "They've already lost twice, I don't know why they want to appeal it. I don't know why they've fought me so much. Past board members could not believe that this was not commercial, and most people in the Ranch feel that this is commercial. If you ask anyone in the Ranch, they'll say it's commercial."

Rababy said she pays a landscaper to take care of the property every week, and added, "I don't know what else I can do. It's a gas station, people park their cars there."

As an example, according to Rababy, of the the Association's unwillingness to cooperate and the town's repeated vilification of her, she brought up the events that occurred when, in the recent past, she and her husband tore down the historic house that previously existed on the property.

"I've been crucified for tearing the house down," said Rababy. "The truth is, we offered it to

the Association, and they didn't want it. We offered it to the Historical Society, they didn't want it. We offered it to the Inn, they didn't want it."

Before tearing the house down — which was done on a Saturday as a conscientious gesture, according to Rababy, not to impede traffic — Rababy said they offered to pay for the moving and restoration of the house, and only asked the Association to find a spot for it.

"It wouldn't cost them anything," she said, "but they weren't interested."

Rababy said she was unable to get insurance for the house because nobody was living in it at the time, and that kids were repeatedly breaking in and vandalizing the house.

"They told us we could tear it down," she added, "There was no permission needed to tear it down, and then everybody had an opinion."

About two weeks ago, prior to the judge's final decision, the Rababys were paid a settlement by the Association's insurance company to drop the other courses of action in the suit against the

Association. Those actions included a complaint for breach of fiduciary duty, and a violation of Civil Code 1366.1, which states "An Association shall not impose or collect an assessment or fee that exceeds the amount necessary to defray the cost for which it is levied."

The Association's side of the matter has roots going back nearly a century.

When the Covenant was formed in 1928, the north half of the property (where the gas station currently sits) was zoned for commercial use. However, the owner of the Rababys' parcel, at that time, didn't immediately join; six months later, they joined under an "Acceptance Agreement," which defined the entire site as residential.

When the owners applied for a gas station in 1966, their application went through the Art Jury and was approved by the Art Jury with the Art Jury's incorrect belief that part of the property was zoned commercial, according to Smith.

The Rababys bought the gas station property in the early 1980s and at that time they were

aware of the fact that the gas station was operating under a non-conforming use and that the property the gas station sits on and the property behind it was zoned residential with the Association, according to Smith.

In the mid-1980s the Rababys began the process of changing the gas station property and the adjoining parcel (where they would like to build a commercial building) to commercial use zoning, according to Association records and Smith. In 1988, the RSF Association and the Art Jury approved a Covenant modification for commercial zoning and also approved the Rababys development plans for both properties. The membership has the right to oppose the modification by submitting a petition requesting a membership vote. A membership petition in opposition was submitted in November 1988 and a meeting of the Association membership was held on Dec. 1 1988, Smith said.

More than 500 people attended the meeting; 432 voted to keep the property residential, only 70 voted to uphold the Association board's decision to allow

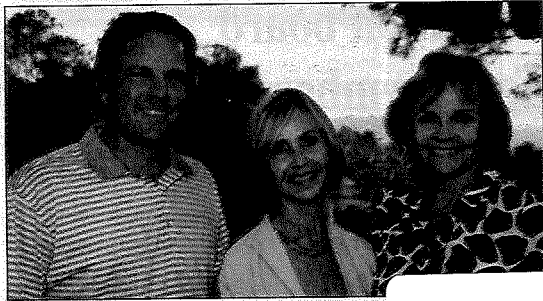
the commercial zoning.

That 1988 vote kept the property zoning residential, although the gas station was allowed to stay as a nonconforming use, Smith said.

The Rababys' lawyers initially sued the Association in 2005 with the understanding that the original covenant — which allowed for half of the site to be used for commercial purposes — was binding, and that they didn't have to adhere to the rules of the Acceptance Agreement, under which they initially joined. The judge's initial ruling was that the Rababys' argument was correct, but based on additional argument by the Association attorneys the judge reversed his decision.

After several more decision reversals, the judge ultimately made the Sept. 26 decision, based on the Davis Stirling Act, that the property should be commercially zoned, according to Smith.

"The Association's argument is that it's not for the judge or the Association to decide. It's for the members, and they want it residential," Smith said.



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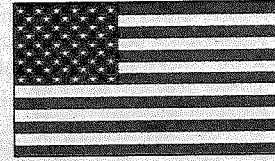
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Fire and emergency preparedness a top concern in RSF

By Matt Liebowitz

The Rancho Santa Fe Association board heard a draft report Oct. 2 from Dudek Engineering regarding Rancho Santa Fe's fire vulnerability and the need to mitigate the hazards that cause wildfires.

Led by Michael Huff, Dudek's urban forestry and wildfire protection planning services manager, the report focused on a 1.6-mile long portion of the San Dieguito River Canyon, which includes portions of Rancho Santa Fe as well as Fairbanks Ranch, that burned in the 2007 Witch Creek fire. Eighteen residences in the Covenant were destroyed in the fire and many more were damaged.

Analyzing topography, vegetation, slope, fire history, and potential weather conditions, Huff displayed a fire behavioral model, which showed that with 20 mph Santa Ana winds, flames in the canyon would reach nearly 40-foot high; at 60 mph, flame height would reach 65 feet.

Huff then outlined three separate areas where wildfire hazards, fuel mitigation, and habitat restoration need to be addressed.

Phase treatment area one

(PTA 1) is within 100 feet of residences; PTA 2 is what Huff referred to as secondary drainages, or native plants and exotic species that spread throughout the community; PTA 3 is the riparian corridor running along the canyon floor.

Dudek's report addressed the importance of removing from the landscape exotic and invasive species, dead or dying plants and foliage, and debris, all of which encourage and expedite a wildfire's ability to spread through an area.

Huff also indicated the need to thin and trim native plants, and to remove flammable landscape features, including umbrellas, patio furniture, and playground equipment.

Continuing with the discussion of preventative measures, Huff targeted structural upgrades, including the importance of enclosing decks, fitting vents with metal screens to keep embers out of homes, replacing wood fences with a fence made of non-combustible material, installing dual pane, tempered windows, and installing masonry walls.

See FIRE, page 38

RSF Association green lights mailing of emergency contact cards and evacuation steps

RSF Association Planning Director Ivan Holler presented for approval by the RSF Association Board of Directors Oct. 2 the mailing of emergency contact cards and suggested evacuation steps created by the RSF Patrol, both projects which resulted from the Fire Aftermath Review Committee's June 5 meeting.

The emergency contact cards contain numbers for the RSF Patrol, the RSF Fire Department, the San Diego County Sheriff, California Highway Patrol, the Rancho Santa Fe Review, RSF Rowe School, Torrey Pines High School, and San Diego County Animal Services.

The board approved the cards and the list of suggested evacuation steps; they will be mailed to the membership within 10 days and posted on the Web site.

"I think this is a great thing to send out to the community," said Director Bill Beckman. Noting the inevitability of another fire in the area, he added, "We need to be vigilant and active and not get complacent. This is a great start."



AROUND TOWN—RSF residents enjoyed a number of fall activities the past week, including (top left) Grandparents Day at Horizon Prep (Julia Thesing, Madison Hougard); (top right) A production of "Our Town" by the Village Church Community Theater (Alexandra Scott (Emily Webb), Dylan Martin (Wally Webb)); and (bottom left) the Rancho Santa Fe Education Foundation's annual Newcomer's Cocktail Party (Nancy Jo Cappetta, Dan Meader, Cathy Austin, Lori Budano). For more photos, see inside. Photos/Jon Clark

RSF School District approves construction delivery method for school renovation

By Matt Liebowitz

At its Oct. 2 meeting, the RSF School board unanimously approved the Lease/Lease-Back option as the construction delivery method they will use for the renovation the R. Roger Rowe School, set to begin early 2009.

On Aug. 26, the board met with Gafcon, Inc., the construction management company who, with architectural firm Trittipio Architecture and Planning, is heading the project.

At that meeting, Gafcon's project manager, Katy Wright, presented the most common construction delivery methods: Design-Bid-Build (DBB), in which the school works with a general contractor, who, in turn, hires several subcontractors, and Lease/Lease-Back, a system in which the district selects a builder based on qualifications, and then leases the land to the builder. The

builder, in turn, leases the land back to the district for use during the construction process; monthly lease payments made by the district effectively become payments for construction.

By law, under the DBB system, the school must award the contract to the lowest bidder, while the Lease/Lease-Back method tends to ensure higher quality.

Wright, with Gafcon's construction manager Tim Ireland, was on hand again on Oct. 2 to speak to the advantages of the Lease/Lease-Back system, and quell the board members' concerns.

"One of the advantages you get with the Lease/Lease-Back is that the entity you choose will let you know the subcontractors they like and trust. It tends to work much more smoothly," said

See SCHOOL, page 38

Informational meeting on Lilian Project to be held Oct. 15 at RSF Garden Club

An informational meeting will be held Wednesday, Oct. 15, at 5:30 p.m. at the RSF Garden Club regarding the proposed "Lilian" project. The project site is located in the RSF Village at the corner of Avenida de Acacias/El Tordo. The purpose of this meeting will be to provide the community, Art Jury and Association board updated information on the revised project which is currently proposed as seven (7) residential units, retail space, parking structure, grading and landscape. The architect, Association staff, members from the board of directors and Art Jury will be present. No formal decisions will be made on the project at this meeting. This meeting will be informational only.

The RSF Garden Club is located at 17025 Avenida de Acacias.

Letters to the Editor/Opinion

Many reasons not to vote for Covenant bylaw amendment

During the next several weeks you will be asked to vote by mail ballot on a proposed bylaw amendment. The proposed amendment, in short, precludes the RSF Association, its board of directors, and any of its committees, employees or agents from expending any time, resources, or money on the issue of incorporation, now and forever. This amendment deserves to be voted down for the following reasons:

First, it is unnecessary. The Association Board of Directors has, has had, and will always

have the discretion to decide whether to consider the incorporation issue and whether to expend any of its resources and money on incorporation. That they spent money in the past on investigating the feasibility of incorporation was strictly voluntary on their part; no one made the directors do so. They should retain this discretion.

Second, it is undemocratic. The amendment is a restriction on the board's inherent powers. It is essentially a vote of no confidence on the current board's and

any future board's ability to govern the affairs of the Association. It deprives the membership from having its elected trustees examine the issue of incorporation even if in the future incorporation might benefit the Association membership.

Third, it is unnatural. Changing a non-profit corporation's governing documents — its bylaws — to address what is essentially a fiscal issue makes no sense. Traditionally, amendments to corporate bylaws are generally reserved for fundamental governance issues (e.g., voting, creation of committees, and description of officers duties and powers). Amendments are not generally used for finance issues. Financial issues should be directed to the Association's Finance Committee and the board itself. They should not be the subject of an in perpetuity bylaw amendment. This amendment has no place in our governing documents.

Fourth, it is unwise. Approval of this amendment would set a bad precedent. What if another group of 100 Association members opposed roundabouts, a

community swimming pool, a senior shuffleboard court, purchase of open space, acquisition of playing fields or supporting the Fourth of July Day parade and then sought to preclude the board of directors from spending a dime on any one of those issues. All they would have to do is propose a bylaw amendment and get the membership to pass it. This is a recipe for governance disaster.

Fifth, it is un-American. We have a right to free speech. That right applies to Association meetings. This is relevant because the appellate courts have determined that the Rancho Santa Fe Association is a quasi-municipality. Passage of the proposed bylaw amendment would entitle our board to rule "out of order" any member who wanted to express his or her opinion on incorporation in a public forum. This amendment simply would not be enforceable because it infringes on a First Amendment constitutional right.

I ask you to consider this scenario: Assume that 20 years from now demographic and political pressures require the County Board of Supervisors to build four

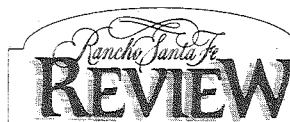
lane roads on the county's 60-foot right of way along Paseo Delicias, Via de la Valle, La Granada, La Bajada, Linea del Cielo, and/or El Camino Norte. This proposed amendment would preclude our Association from even considering incorporation as a method to take local control over our roads to prevent major arterials from bisecting our beautiful community. Consider also this scenario: A cash-starved California state legislature passes a law enabling counties and incorporated cities to adopt, assess, and collect a local income tax. If this seems fanciful, ask your East Coast friends whether they pay a local income tax in addition to federal and state income taxes. The proposed bylaw amendment would deprive the Association Board of Directors and Covenant members from considering whether an incorporated city could minimize the impact of such a local income tax. We must keep our options open.

Please join me and others in voting against this unnecessary, undemocratic, unnatural, unwise, and un-American bylaw amendment. Preserve country living.

Dave Moon

These are opinion/letters to the editor pages provided to give readers an opportunity to express their views. The writings that appear on these pages are the authors' *opinions only* and have *not been verified as fact*. Readers may send letters to: editor@sdranchcoastnews.com or fax: (858) 756-9912. Please limit letters to **500 words or less**. Letters must be signed using full first name and last and a contact number. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for space and clarity.

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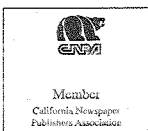
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FIRE

continued from page 1

The board recognized the importance of Huff's report.

"We need to take action now," said Director Bill Beckman, who noted a Sept. 28 article in the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, which listed Rancho Santa Fe as one of three areas most vulnerable to wildfires in San Diego County. "It's important we follow through."

RSF Fire Marshal Cliff Hunter was on hand to speak to the importance of implementing the report's recommendations.

Speaking to a question about water cannons designed to stop wildfires from spreading, Hunter said, "They are ineffective with these types of high wind fires. It's better to look at a fuel reduction plan."

Hunter outlined PTA 1 and PTA 2 as the highest priorities.

An issue that could influence the board's implementation of the report's suggestions is cost.

SCHOOL

continued from page 1

Wright.

Reinforcing that it's a performance and quality-based delivery method rather than one based solely on price, Wright said, "You're not going with a lowball entity."

District superintendent Lindy Delaney reported that she wrestled between the Lease/Lease-Back and DBB options, but ultimately her decision came down to quality.

"The fact that is we're in a community that will demand a high-quality project. That leads to the Lease/Lease-Back."

Delaney consulted with several people prior to recommending the Lease/Lease-Back option, including Steve Ma, assistant superintendent of business services with the San Dieguito Union High School District, and Rodger Smith, director of human resources and facility

Reducing fuel and restoring habitat in the 39.5 acres of PTA 1 (the area immediately surrounding homes), would cost between \$4,500 and \$5,000 per acre; initial treatment was estimated at \$177,750, and annual maintenance was estimated at \$82,950.

The 22.3 acres of PTA 2 had the same per-acre cost, but annual maintenance and initial treatment were slightly lower, at \$46,830 and \$100,350 respectively.

Removing hazardous plants and restoring the 74 acres of the riparian corridor on the canyon floor would be significantly more costly, with a per-acre price of between \$5,000 and \$17,600, an initial treatment cost of between \$370,000 and \$1,302,400, and an annual maintenance cost of \$155,400. The higher cost of PTA 3 was attributed not only to the larger amount of land, but also the eucalyptus trees, which would have to be removed.

The amounts were based on consultations with fuel reduction contractors.

Huff reported that PTA 1 and

planning with the Del Mar Union High School District.

"Every single one of them said use the Lease/Lease-Back option," she told the board.

Delaney said the selection process for finding a construction company would begin Oct. 3, with a decision to be made by December or early January.

"We're moving at a good clip," she said, "but doing it in a methodical fashion."

Wright presented the board with a tentative schedule for the renovation, with building set to begin in April 2009 and to finish by the opening of the 2010-2011 school year.

"We are going to work with the contractor to do everything we can to finish by the opening of the year," Ireland told the board.

Ireland then told the board to "be prepared for the contractor to think the schedule is a little aggressive."

Board member Carlie

PTA 2 have categorical exemptions from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Although fire management activities are allowed on PTA 3, work on the area, which Huff called "highly sensitive," due to habitat preserves, would require CEQA studies and a mitigated negative declaration for removing fuels and putting in native plants.

"The hurdles are not as big as with other projects," Huff said.

The wildfire protection project is eligible for grant funding from FEMA and other national organizations.

"There's money out there," said RSF Association Planning Director Ivan Holler, "it's just a matter of going through the steps."

The board agreed to work with Huff and Hunter and to take into consideration Dudek's Wildfire Hazard Report and use it as template to prepare a Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Headapohl, with support from her fellow members, urged the board and Gafcon to focus on staying under budget and ensuring quality, rather than racing to finish by the start of the year.

The discussion turned to finances; Gafcon's estimated construction cost came in at \$41 million, but Wright assured the board they would look to identify alternatives on a "line-item by line-item" basis and reduce costs to come in under the allotted \$37 million budget.

"We're not recommending anything be taken out of the plan," Wright said.

To offset the construction costs and stay under budget, board member Ty Miller suggested involving the business owners in the community, calling on them to donate building supplies and materials.

RSF Review Web site:
www.sdranchcoastnews.com

Last minute tips to prepare for the next wildfire

By Ron Lane, director of the County of San Diego Office of Emergency Services

Although fire season is already upon us, it is never too late to double-check to make sure you have done everything possible to look out for the safety of you and your family. For those that think they are prepared, a quick look at the "top ten" items below might change your mind. All the items listed require little or no money and minimal time to complete, but checking off these tasks could go a long way to reduce your family's risk to wildfire.

1. Have you and your family registered your cell phones with AlertSanDiego, the county's emergency notification system? You can register by visiting www.ReadySanDiego.org and click on the cellular phone logo. By registering your cell phone, you will receive a reverse 911 call to alert you to fire updates or evacuation information during an emergency even if you're not home. Why is it important to register? Some residents do not have a landline phone, and would not receive any emergency notifications unless they registered their cell phone.

Cost: \$0; Time Involved: Less than a minute.

2. Have you removed fire hazards near your home? Most residents who live in high fire risk areas have given their home a fighting chance by creating and maintaining a 100-foot-radius of defensible space around their home. However, now is the time to make sure that there are no combustible materials next to your home. Many homes, even ones with good defensible space, were lost in the 2007 fires because flying embers ignited flames in trashcans and woodpiles next to homes, as well as ignited dead leaves on roofs and in rain gutters.

Cost: \$0; Time Involved: Less than an hour.

3. Have you checked to make that sure none of your tree branches are touching or are located too close to your roof or home? Remember to trim and thin plants and trees. While more than 1,700 homes were lost during the 2007 Firestorm, more than 17,000 homes in the path of the wildfire were spared as a result of firefighters' efforts, but also due to homeowners who used defensible space concepts.

Cost: \$0; Time Involved: Less than an hour.

4. Have you scheduled a high-fire hazard inspection from your local fire agency? Consult with your local fire department or district about specific fire codes and the risk to your individual property, as well as your community.

Cost: \$0; Time Involved: Approximately 1 hour.

5. Have you completed a Family Disaster Plan?

Having a plan can help you and your family remain calm during an emergency.

Cost: \$0; Time Involved: 20 minutes.

6. Are you ready to evacuate your home in just 15 minutes? During last year's wildfires, many residents had only 15 minutes to gather their essential items, pets and family members before the fire reached their area. Conduct an evacuation drill with your family at least twice a year and have items you want to take with you in an evacuation within easy reach.

Cost: \$0; Time Involved: 15 minutes.

7. Do you have emergency supplies to last you and your family at least 72 hours? The Office of Emergency Services recommends that people store at least one gallon of water per person for each day as well as non-perishable food. Residents should also have at least a week's worth of medications on hand. Special items for children should also be included in your kit. For a full list of items, visit www.ReadySanDiego.org.

Cost: Approximately \$30; Time Involved: 1 hour.

8. Have you removed any outside furniture or other items that could be blown into your home if you have to evacuate? Several homes were lost last year when patio furniture crashed through a window allowing burning embers inside.

Cost: \$0; Time Involved: 10 minutes.

9. Do you have a non-cordless phone that does not require electricity to charge and a battery-powered radio? In the event of a power outage, having a rotary phone or push button phone that doesn't rely on electricity works best. It should only have a line that plugs into the phone jack and doesn't require a charge. Cordless phones will not work if the electricity is off. A battery-powered radio and extra batteries will allow residents to listen in to media reports about an emergency, including information about what the public should do and where they should go.

Cost: Approximately: \$40; Time Involved 30 minutes.

10. Do you have a plan for your pet? Include your pet in your disaster plan. Be sure to have a carrier, leash or way to transport your animal to a kennel or shelter, and include sufficient food and water for your pet in your emergency kit. If you have large animals, practice evacuating with your animals.

Cost: Approximately \$15; Time Involved: 30 minutes.

This month, the County of San Diego Office of Emergency Services mailed out more than one million Wildfire Awareness Guides to people living in a high wildfire risk areas. By utilizing the information in the

guide, in addition to this information, you could end up saving yourself and the lives of your family, along with your property in the face of another disaster.

To register your cell phone with AlertSanDiego, download a copy of the Wildfire Awareness Guide or our Family Disaster Plan, and to get tips on creating an emergency home kit, visit www.ReadySanDiego.org.

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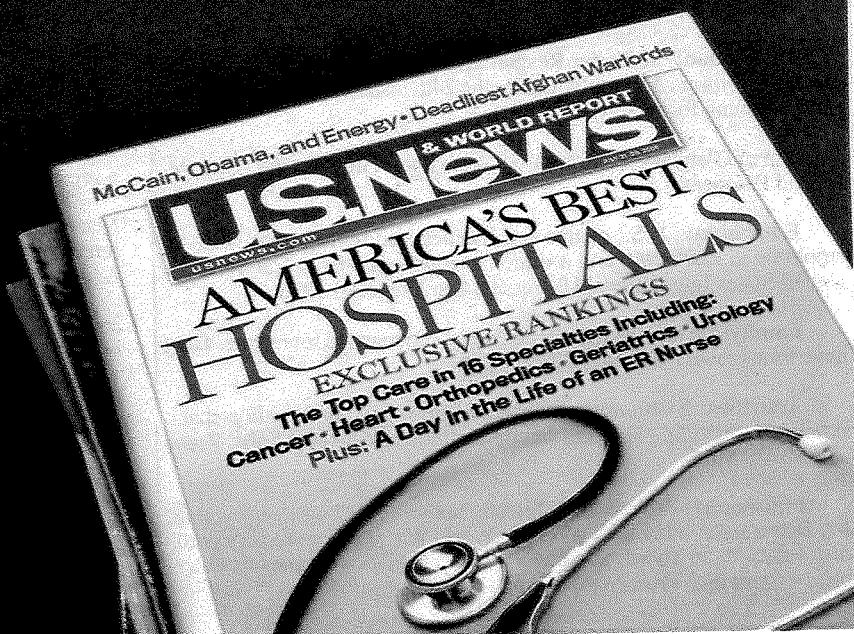
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Man hit by vehicle sustains serious injuries

On Sept. 26, at 12:31 p.m., Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District and San Diego Medical Services Enterprise personnel responded to the report of a pedestrian that had been hit by a vehicle in the 15000 block of El Camino Real. Upon arrival, they found a 61-year-old male had been hit by a pickup truck. Paramedics treated him at the scene and he was then transported via Mercy Air to Scripps Memorial Hospital La Jolla with chest and abdominal injuries.

Four firefighters and two paramedics responded to the scene along with Rancho Santa Fe Patrol, California Highway Patrol, and San Diego County Sheriff officers. Linea del Cielo was temporarily closed in both directions to allow Mercy Air to land. The California Highway Patrol is investigating the incident.

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.

Informational meeting on Lilian Project to be held Oct. 15 at RSF Garden Club

An informational meeting will be held Wednesday, Oct. 15, at 5:30 p.m. at the RSF Garden Club regarding the proposed "Lilian" project. The project site is located at the corner of Avenida de Acacias/El Tordo.

The purpose of this meeting will be to provide the community, Art Jury and Association board updated information on the revised project which is currently proposed as seven (7) residential units, retail space, parking structure, grading and landscape.

The architect, Association staff, members from the board of directors and Art Jury will be present. No formal decisions will be made on the project at this meeting. This meeting will be informational only.

The RSF Garden Club is located at 17025 Avenida de Acacias.

New RSF wireless system should be ready soon

As reported in August, wireless phone coverage in RSF will soon improve when wireless service broker ExteNet Systems finishes its installation of seven new phone poles and 43 node locations used to extend wireless service throughout RSF. According to RSF Association Manager Pete Smith, the system should be up and running in about 30-45 days. ExteNet is not a wireless service company; rather, they act as a broker service for cell phone companies, building a facility from which multiple carriers can operate. Currently, Verizon Wireless is the highest functioning wireless carrier in RSF; ExteNet's RSF service will accommodate for the effective operation of eight different wireless carriers.

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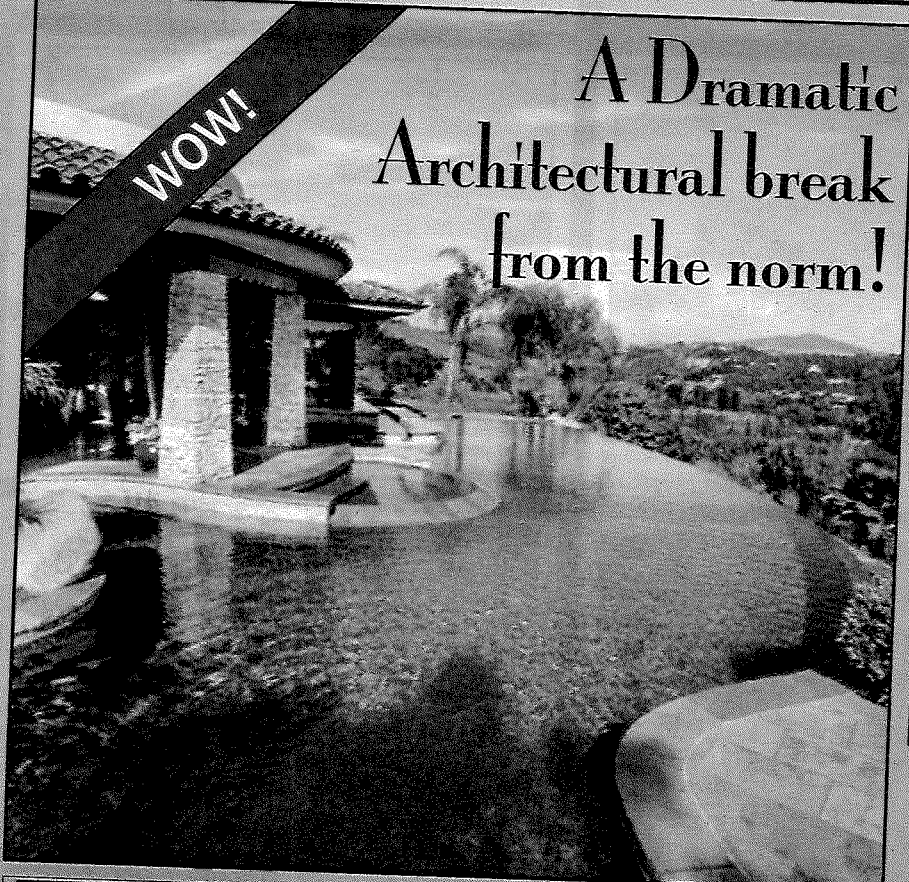
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VOL. 4, NO. 21

THE RANCH'S BEST SOURCE

OCT. 10, 2008

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Fandango one for the history books

By David Wiemers

RANCHO SANTA FE — What do you get when you mix chilli, Mexican food, Prairie Fire and hot weather? The Rancho Santa Fe Historical Society calls it a Fandango!

On Sept. 26, the Rancho Santa Fe Historical Society hosted its annual Fandango and chilli cook-off at the La Flecha House, Rancho Santa Fe's historic first home. Next to the house's patio is Via de Santa Fe, which was blocked from traffic giving room for more celebration. And plenty came to celebrate! Attendance far exceeded expectations. "We planned for 200, but soon ran out of plates and cups," Administrator Sharon Fabry said. The folk-rock band Prairie Fire had attendees dancing in the streets. A buffet of Mexican food was available for all, catered by Rodeo's, but it was the annual chilli cook-off that had everyone talking ... and tasting.

Competition was fierce. Society members were asked to bring their best and most creative chilli to the table. At least 10 individuals or teams were up for the challenge. First-timer Demetri Melekos entered his Chipotle Chilli Colorado and if there had been a "Hot & Spicy Award," Melekos would have won. But this year's First-Place Winners were Kent Jesse and Carol Freeman, serving their KJ Elk Chilli. So what gave them their competitive edge? According to chilli cook-off chair Debi Holder, the winning team hunted, cooked, set up early and secured that special spot in the line-up. It also helped they brought friends to sing their culinary praises! In the end, it was

TURN TO **FANDANGO** ON 23



AND THE WINNER IS Kent Jesse, co-creator of the KJ Elk Chilli, which won the chilli cook-off. Photo by David Wiemers



SECRET RECIPE First-timers Erin Leahey and Morgan Whalen enter their East Coast Chilli, which included "secret ingredients" shipped in from the East Coast. Photo by David Wiemers

Residents sought to serve, lead community

By David Wiemers

RANCHO SANTA FE — Association Manager Pete Smith announced 17 openings on 10 committees at the Oct. 2 meeting. "This is a big opportunity to serve the community," Smith said. Committee vacancies include: Historical Preservation, three openings; Osuna Adobe, three openings; Parks and Recreation, two openings; planning, two openings; Road and Traffic, four openings; and Trails, three openings.

Members wanting to serve on any committee should make their interest known — in writing — to Smith on or before Oct. 31. Also, any member in good standing may nominate another member in good standing to serve. The list of volunteers and nominees for each committee, along with board member recommendations, will be submitted by Smith to the appropriate committees for their consideration and recommendations back to the board.

Board Director Bill Beckman felt strongly that residents should step up to the plate. "It's important to serve your community," he said. "Too often we become complacent. We need to get out there and recruit people." Others on the board agreed. "On the Trails Committee, we recruit individuals and it's been very successful," Vice

TURN TO **SERVE** ON 24

School board OK's delivery method

By David Wiemers

RANCHO SANTA FE — On the evening of Oct. 2, the school board overwhelmingly approved "lease-leaseback" as the delivery method for the new R. Roger Rowe Modernization Project.

With the lease-leaseback method, a contractor is hired based on qualifications, not necessarily the lowest bid. "We live in a community that demands high quality in a project," Superintendent Lindy Delaney said at the meeting. Delaney spoke with many other school districts that faced similar challenges when building new schools. "All of them recommended lease-leaseback — Del Mar, Solana Beach and many other districts that build more schools than we do."

The decision to go lease-leaseback, however, does not mean that the school board isn't concerned

TURN TO **SCHOOL BOARD** ON 24

Association moves swiftly on wildfire hazards

By David Wiemers

RANCHO SANTA FE — On Oct. 2, the Association board of directors heard a report from Dudek Engineering regarding their evaluation of wildfire hazards and fuel reduction for a 1.6-mile-long portion of the San Dieguito River Canyon. Forester and Fire Planner Michael Huff from Dudek and Fire Marshal Cliff Hunter gave the presentation.

It was one year ago that major wildfires swept across a large portion of San Diego County. The Witch Creek Fire, which originated near Ramona, spread westward into Rancho Santa Fe through the San Dieguito River drainage, destroying 18 residences in the Covenant and damaging 14 others. Working with the Rancho

Santa Fe Association, the Fairbanks Ranch Association, the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Department and the San Diego County Department of Planning and Land Use, Dudek Engineering performed analysis of the fire's behavior.

Dudek conducted fire behavior modeling by utilizing geographic information systems data and other software to predict the likely behavior and spread of wildfire in the San Dieguito River Canyon. This model was then used to develop recommendations for prioritizing fuel reduction and modification treatments, including the removal of exotic and invasive plants, trimming vertical and horizontal vegetation and thinning native shrubbery. "We want to plan for a worst-case

scenario," Huff said.

The Dudek report recommended several different types of fuel reduction treatments: removal of exotic plants and invasives; removal of dead and dying plants; trimming and maintenance of native plants; removal of dead foliage; and debris removal and removal of flammable landscape materials, such as umbrellas.

The Dudek report recommended that fuel reduction be rolled out in three phases. Phase one would begin with homeowners removing dangerous fuel within 100 feet of their homes and structures. Phase two would involve both the Association and homeowners working in conjunction to clear

TURN TO **WILDFIRE** ON 24

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SERVE

CONTINUED FROM 1

President Tim Sullivan said.

The majority of board directors served on committees prior to serving on the board. "It's a great way to gain experience," Beckman said.

At the Oct. 2 meeting, the board of directors also drew lots from a list of eligible persons who are in good standing and are former Art Jurors or board members. These individuals will establish a committee for the selection of Art Jury candidates. In total, 15 members

were drawn in the lot and the first three Art Jurors and first two board members who are willing and able to serve will comprise the committee.

In other Association news, Covenant Administrator Ivan Holler presented the board with emergency contact phone numbers and evacuation procedures that will be mailed out to the community. The distribution of these numbers and procedures comes as part of the recommendations from the Fire Aftermath Review Committee, a committee that looked at the actions that occurred during

last year's Witch Creek Fire. The board approved the printing and mailing of the materials. Residents can expect to receive this information by mid-October. The information will also be posted on the Association's Web site. Beckman was enthusiastic about the materials. "This is very helpful," Beckman said. "We need to be vigilant and active. This material is a great reminder that we are still at risk."

Holler also informed the board that work is to begin Oct. 7 to rubberize specific roads in

the Covenant. The special rubberized asphalt slurry coat not only reduces road noise, but also helps with wear and tear on vehicles.

Smith said that ballots would be mailed to residents during the week of Oct. 13. At issue is the bylaw change that members overwhelmingly supported to be placed on a ballot last month. Members have until Nov. 17 to cast their votes; the results will be tallied on Nov. 18.

For more information on the committee openings, call Pete Smith at (858) 756-1174 or e-mail pete@rsfassociation.org.

SCHOOL BOARD

CONTINUED FROM 1

with budget restraint. Gafcon, Inc., the construction management company hired by the board to work with Trittipio, the architectural design company, will immediately begin its search for general contractors.

The board is looking to receive at least three competitive bids.

Even though the lowest bidder isn't assured of the contract, the board urged Gafcon to negotiate the lowest possible profit margins from all contractors.

"Most contractors negotiate between 2 to 3 percent on projects like this," Katy Wright, project manager for Gafcon, said.

Board member Ty Miller quickly pointed out that the difference between 2 and 3 percent was substantial on a \$37 million project.

Representatives from Gafcon assured the board that they would do their best in negotiations, but ultimately the decision will be the board's.

"We expect competitive bids from contractors," Gafcon representative Tim Ireland told members. "The economic environment is tough these days. The big portion of work available is government work. Even large companies will now take a look at this project."

With the economy on everyone's minds these days, board members asked if labor and material costs were expected to increase during the next two years as the school is being built. Wright said that Gafcon expected materials to go up anywhere from 8 to 10 percent in the next 12 months, but expected labor to remain relatively stable.

The budget has contingency plans for such cost increases.

Other money-saving measures were discussed, such as the recycling of materials during the demolition phase. Doors, roof tiles and windows are materials that may be recycled, but there are considerations. "We have to be careful because some materials may be hazardous," Ireland said. "If lead paint has been used, for instance, it isn't salvageable. Also, many tiles may not be earthquake proof."

Early in the meeting, Diana Burdick, a local resident and mother of three, urged the school board to consider a formatted homework Web site.

"We need a reliable 'go-to site' where teachers post homework assignments. It should be an easy-to-use homework template."

Burdick complained that her children had 13 different teachers and all of them had different Web sites — some with password protection — making it difficult for students and parents to keep track of homework assignments.

The board felt that Burdick's recommendation merited consideration and Delaney will discuss the proposal with the administration in the near future.

The next school board meeting is scheduled for Nov. 13.

WILDFIRE

CONTINUED FROM 1

fuel from commonly owned areas. Phase three included the clearance of 74 acres in the canyon. There are many eucalyptus trees that must be cut, but are difficult to reach. Hand crews would be required to go in for this removal.

The cost of fuel reduction comes at a price. Homeowners would be required to remove dangerous fuel vegetation within 100 feet of their homes as a preventative measure. As

for commonly owned property, such as the canyon, Dudek recommended getting estimates from fuel reduction contractors. In the San Dieguito River Canyon, approximately 300 acres, the cost would be as high as \$5,000 per acre to remove exotic vegetation and dangerous fuels. In the places where hand crews would be required to remove eucalyptus trees, the cost could rise to \$20,000 per acre.

According to Dudek, grant money is available to help mitigate the costs if a Community

Wildfire Protection Plan is prepared. "There is money out there, but it's a matter of initiating and rolling out a program," Huff said.

Other nearby communities, such as Laguna and Scripps Ranch, have used goats on hillsides to help reduce fuel vegetation in the past. Goats are a less expensive method, but require intense management. Huff said that the use of goats may be worth a study.

Board Director Bill Beckman asked whether homeowners would be required to

remove all dangerous fuels within 100 feet of their homes and structures?

"We have the authority," Hunter said. "If homeowners don't get the job done, we will — and they will be assessed." Hunter assured the board, however, that in the past most homeowners have complied and have cooperated with the fire department.

"This has been an excellent report," Association President Lois Jones said. "There's lots of valuable information here."

WHO'S NEWS?

CONTINUED FROM 12

Achievers" raised \$50,000 to help finance school projects, Boy Scout troops, scholarships at local high schools, Pop Warner sports, young people in need of financial assistance and more. The club meets at the El Camino Country Club on Vista Way in Oceanside at 8 a.m. every Saturday morning.

Fall Cedros bash

SOLANA BEACH — Solana Beach's Cedros Avenue Design District is throwing its 11th annual Fall Street Bash and Open House. Starting with its traditional Third Thursday event, shops will be open until 8:30 p.m. Oct. 16. Throughout the weekend Oct. 18 and Oct. 19, art galleries clothing and accessories boutique and area bars will be taking part, with savings of 10 percent to 25 percent. There will also be a farmers market from 2 to 5 p.m. Oct. 19.

Try a new skin

OCEANSIDE — Destiny Boutique is a local skincare manufacturer using natural products. On Oct. 4, it began an eight-week demonstrations program in Boney's Marketplace in Oceanside. Tuula, the chief executive officer and founder of Destiny Boutique, will do demos each Saturday at noon through Nov. 28. During the demos, the customers will have a chance to

test the products, learn about the natural skin care and take home free product samples.

McAuliffe gets newspapers

OCEANSIDE — Marko Mardonovich of TenTen Oceanside and Ray Schmidt of Greenroom Financial Inc. presented checks to McAuliffe Elementary school to cover the cost of Scholastic Newspapers for first-graders this 2008/2009 school year.

Schmidt was Principal for a Day and was troubled after a budget meeting showed the budget could no longer afford Scholastic newspapers. When Schmidt told of his concern to Marko Mardonovich, TenTen's business development manager, he suggested the two companies split the cost of the Scholastic Newspapers, and a check was cut the next week.

Little dog with a big heart

COAST CITIES — Author Nancy Stanley will do a book signing at the Encinitas Barnes & Noble book fair on Dec. 1 and Dec. 4 for her book "Pillow With A Heartbeat." Stanley wrote the story of a little dog finding his big purpose. When teenager Michelle Butler was battling leukemia, her wish through the Make-A-Wish Foundation involved Stanley's miniature chocolate poodle, Truffles. Stanley promised Butler she

would publish a book about those experiences, which Butler treasured until she died almost a year ago.

Ethanol comes to town

CARLSBAD — Pearson Fuels began a statewide roll out of new E85 stations with the grand opening of North County's first ethanol alternative fuel station by partnering with the San Diego Regional Clean Fuels Coalition on Oct. 7 at the Bressi Ranch Shell, 2740 Gateway Road.

Pearson Fuels, which is celebrating its fifth anniversary of being the world's first alternative fuel station, has announced the ribbon cutting and ground breaking of eight new stations throughout California.

Pet sitting pro

VISTA — Diana Cindrich-David a Vista, owner of The Pawsitive Pet, has earned the distinction of being a Pet Sitters International Accredited Pet Sitter.

"Becoming a PSI Accredited Pet Sitter will demonstrate to local pet owners that I am dedicated to being my professional best and committed to the highest industry standards," Cindrich-David said.

For details, call (336) 983-9222, visit www.petsit.com or e-mail info@petsit.com.

Doggie treats

DEL MAR — Three Dog

Bakery will open a new franchise store in Del Mar. The Del Mar store will be at 1555 Camino, Suite. 114 in Del Mar Plaza, and is slated to open in November.

Word on weight-loss

ENCINITAS — Nutri-Sport, at 207 S El Camino Real, will host a book signing from 3 to 5 p.m. Oct. 11 for the new book "How Much Fat Are You Carrying? The Ultimate Fat Loss Guide for People Who Are Sick of Diets." Come and meet the authors, Candace Booth and Max Wettstein, and get a signed copy of the book at a discount price.

God's Pedal Power

ENCINITAS — Bill Bargfrede, an Encinitas-based partner with LTC Financial Partners LLC insurance agency, helped purchase and assemble 10 bikes that were then donated to God's Pedal Power Ministry an all-volunteer, multi-denominational partnership, headquartered in Florida.

Time to read

OCEANSIDE — A free monthly reading series hosted by the Café des Artistes and the Book Nook, Fallbrook Writers Read, will begin at 5:30 p.m. Oct. 15, at 103 S. Main St., featuring Oceanside fiction author Dan McClenaghan and Kate Harding.

For more information, contact Kit-Bacon Gressitt at (760) 522-1064 or kbgressitt@aol.com.

Gift of books

CARLSBAD — In honor of its 60th anniversary, Point Loma Credit Union donated 60 new children's books to the Carlsbad City Library. On hand at the presentation were, from left, Mayor Bud Lewis, Mayor Pro Tem Ann Kulchin, Library Director Heather Pizzuto, PLCU Business Development Manager Rebecca Moore, PLCU Vice President Retail Operations Deborah Foley, PLCU Carlsbad Branch Manager Simin Bruck and Carlsbad City Council members Julie Nygard, Mark Packard and Matt Hall.

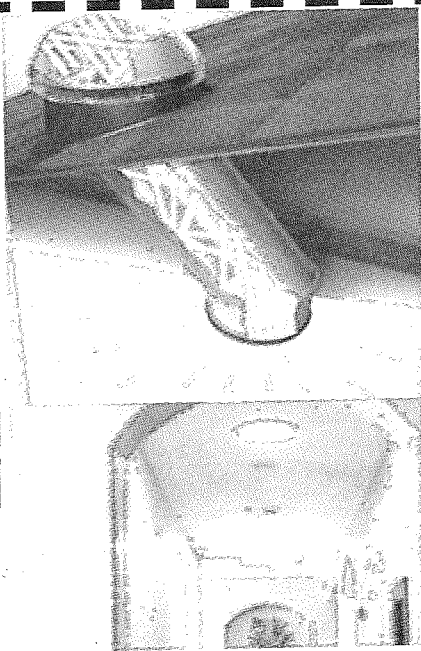
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Suspects plead not guilty in teen kidnapping case

By Randy Kalp

OCEANSIDE — A fourth person accused of kidnapping an El Cajon teen with the intent of selling her into prostitution pleaded not guilty Oct. 3 at an arraignment in a Vista Superior Court.

Dominique Willis, 19, is charged with a single count each of kidnap for extortion, human trafficking, robbery, sexual battery by restraint and pimping. Shawndrea Nicole Dorrough, 22; Patrick Jones, 20; and Dywane

Pierre Tousant, 22, are also charged with the aforementioned counts. The trio pleaded not guilty to the charges a day earlier. Bail has been set at \$500,000 for all four defendants. If convicted, they each face up to life in prison.

The 14-year-old girl was taken to the Oceanside Inn on Sept. 30 and forced to disrobe, Deputy District Attorney Brenda Daly said. Pictures were then taken of her with the intent to

post them on Craigslist.org in order to solicit her for prostitution.

Due to the ongoing investigation, Daly said she was limited to what she could say about further specifics in the case.

Police said the victim got lost while riding the trolley in San Diego. She was walking to a friend's house in North Park when the defendants offered her a ride. The teen was able to escape and get to a phone to call

the police after the foursome fell asleep.

Despite the traumatic incident, Daly said the victim is doing "remarkably well."

"She certainly went through an ordeal that she'll never want to go through again," the prosecutor said.

All the defendants are scheduled to be back in court Oct. 14 for a readiness conference. An Oct. 16 trial date has been set.

Man to stand trial for molesting girlfriend's daughter

By Randy Kalp

CARLSBAD — A 34-year-old man pleaded not guilty Oct. 2 to charges relating to the molestation of his former girlfriend's daughter.

Juan Hernandez Vasquez is charged with six counts of a lewd and lascivious act with a child under the age of 14. The victim, whose name has been withheld to protect her identity, was 12 during the eight-month ordeal, said Deputy District

Attorney Marnie Stein outside the courtroom.

In addition, Stein said each count carries the special allegation of substantial sexual conduct, which, if convicted of even a single count of, means mandatory prison time for Vasquez.

Vasquez, who remains in jail on \$300,000 bail, faces up to 18 years in prison if convicted on all the charges. He is scheduled to be back in court Nov. 20 for trial.

The victim testified she had been sexually molested on numerous occasions by Vasquez from August 2007 to April 2008. Throughout her testimony, she faced away from the defendant.

The victim's mother testified she found Vasquez, her boyfriend of four years, sound asleep with her daughter when she arrived home from work around 3 a.m. April 8.

She said the two were asleep in her daughter's bed

under the covers. After calling the police, she said her daughter told her about the molestations she'd endured.

The teen's mother said she was surprised to hear about the abuse her daughter suffered at the hands of Vasquez. She said it wasn't uncommon for Vasquez and her daughter to be alone for several hours after he returned home from work around 11 p.m. "I trusted him," she said.

Property owner accidentally runs over napping gardener

RANCHO SANTA FE — A 61-year-old gardener, reportedly napping in the bushes, was accidentally run over by a Rancho Santa Fe property owner Sept. 26 at 12:31 p.m., in the 15000 block of El Camino Real, according to the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District and San Diego Medical Services Enterprise personnel.

According to a California Highway Patrol spokesman, the gardener regularly napped on the property, and was off the road. However, his employer, driving a pick-up truck, was unable to see the man and ran over him. The victim reportedly suffered injuries to his torso, but at press time, no additional information on the gar-

dener's condition was available from the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District spokesperson.

Paramedics treated the victim at the scene and he was then transported via Mercy Air to Scripps Memorial Hospital La Jolla with chest and abdominal injuries.

Four firefighters and two paramedics responded to the scene along with Rancho Santa Fe Patrol, California Highway Patrol, and San Diego County Sheriff officers. Linea del Cielo was temporarily closed in both directions to allow Mercy Air to land. The California Highway Patrol is investigating the incident.

ODD FILES

CONTINUED FROM 5

woman in distress were actually the mating cries of a badger. And officials at the Bristol Zoo in England promised neighbors they would temporarily house gibbons inside during the night

because of their loud mating duets.

Family Values

— Wealthy advertising executive Robert Schwartz died in 1997 and left a sizable estate, including a special "Party Trust" for his relatives, but with one

condition: They must all celebrate Schwartz's birthday every August for at least 10 years at a posh party in Naples, Fla., with all expenses paid, and people missing two straight, or two in five years, would forfeit their inheritances. The Naples Daily News reported in September

that each adult relative would receive up to \$2,500 per party attended, and a final Party Trust accounting is now in the hands of a judge.

— David Norris never knew his father, who left home when Norris was 5 months old. Now 22, Norris is serving a minimum-12-year sentence for killing a man after an earlier rape conviction and is housed in Peterhead prison, which is the primary lockup for Scotland's sex criminals. Soon after arrival, according to a Scottish Daily Record report, Norris ran into David Gilles, 39, serving life for the

MEMORY LANE The Encinita Historical Society will host a historic walk in Old Encinitas from 10:30 a.m. to noon Oct. 11, 188 Schoolhouse, F and 4th St. For details, call (760) 753-5726.

OCTOBER 12

ALUMNI LUNCHEON I Schreiberman, Professor Emeritus Biology at Brooklyn College, will discuss his work and theories at Brooklyn College Alumni Luncheon at noon Oct. 12, Lomas Santa Country Club. All Brooklyn College alumni are invited. For details to make reservations, contact Elaine Eisenberg at (858) 623-

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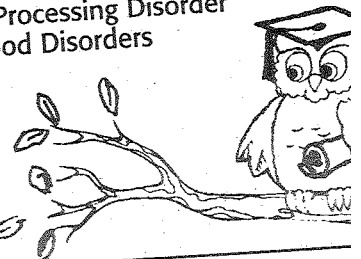
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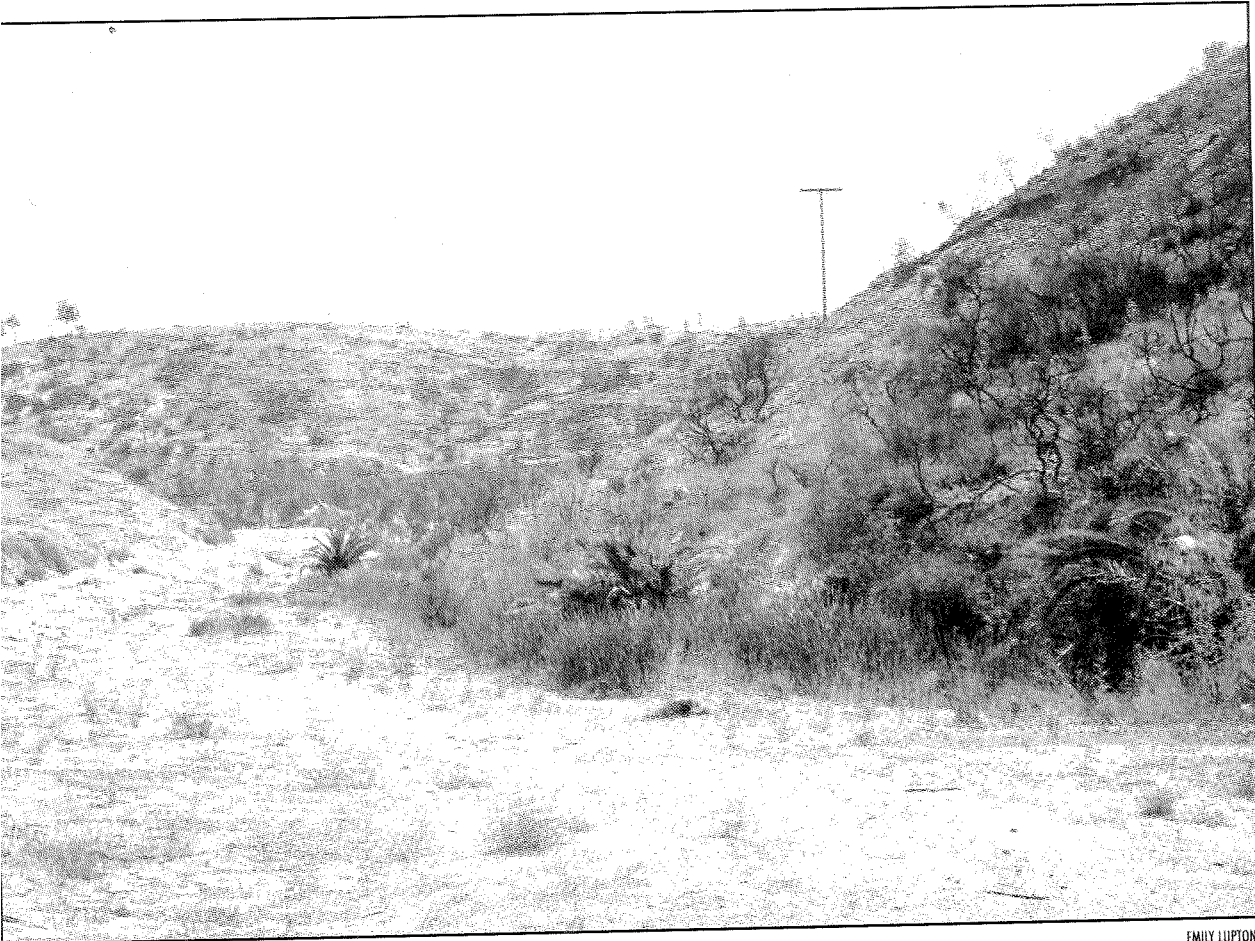
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OCTOBER 10, 2008
PUBLISHED WEEKLY

Clearing canyon brush key to fire protection



EMILY LUPTON

The Rancho Santa Fe Association is considering fuel reduction measures to decrease the fire hazard posed by non-native plants and dead brush in San Dieguito Canyons, including the Arroyo property.

Association minimizes fire danger

By Laura Petersen

Firefighters do their best, but it's homeowners who have the greatest power to protect their property from wildfire.

The most effective tool to protect a home from wildfire, especially those bordering the San Dieguito Canyon and its smaller

drainages, is to create 100 feet of defensible space around it, said Fire Marshall Cliff Hunter.

Potential fuel sources, primarily landscaping and vegetation, must be strategically thinned and positioned to create a buffer between naturally growing brush and the home.

"It does not mean bare dirt," said Ivan Holler, planning director of the Rancho Santa Fe Association. "It's you creating defensible space."

The cost to homeowners around the canyon could range between \$4,500 and \$5,000 per acre, according to a report presented the as-

sociation board of directors Oct. 2.

The estimate was based on a brief telephone survey of contractors, said Michael Huff, a fire protection planner with Dudek, the environmental engineering firm that prepared the "San

SEE FIRE, PAGE A6

Wanted: more women candidates

By Laura Petersen

Women make up half the population, but not half the elected officials serving on city councils, school boards, the state legislature or Congress.

Run Women Run is a new California Political Action Committee hoping to change that imbalance in San Diego County. The advisory board contains members from Del Mar, Carmel Valley and other local areas.

"The primary focus is to identify, endorse and financially support qualified, pro-choice women running for office in San Diego," said founder Barbara Bry, a La Jolla resident. "And to have them win."

Women, and men, are invited to the committee's inaugural meeting Oct. 19.

Congresswoman Susan Davis will moderate a "Progressive San Diego Women Candidates Forum," featuring several female city council and school board candidates from around the county, including Sherri Lightner and Marti Emerald, who are running for San Diego City Council this November.

The discussion will not simply be about the candidate's positions, but the issues and challenges facing

women running for office. The meeting will also be an opportunity to get involved with the organization, which is looking for a broad range of individuals willing to take action.

When working on Hillary Clinton's campaign, Bry said she met numerous people who never participated in politics before.

"What I wanted to do is create an organization that would keep everyone involved after this election," Bry said.

Given Bry's history of success with starting companies and nonprofits, including Proflowers.com, Voice of San Diego and Athena, Run Women Run has serious potential to change the face of San Diego politics.

"It's all about building the best team," Bry said, who pulled together an impressive group of women to jumpstart this organization. The 37-member advisory board includes female chief executive officers, financial officers, political leaders and consultants, attorneys and volunteers.

"We're at a unique time in history to really tap into the strength women have to offer the political process," said advisory board member Julie Bronstein, former president of the Los Angeles chapter of

SEE WOMEN, PAGE A5



Triple Crown match
at polo fields

Story on page A3



Club has 'smart'
transportation

Story on page B1

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PINES, FROM PAGE A4

Area private school enjoys small classes

One hundred and fifty four students attend the school. About 50 percent are from the immediate area of Carmel Valley and Del Mar but they also have families from Escondido, Poway, Scripps Ranch and Carlsbad.

Each class has two teachers, except for kindergarten, which has three teachers for its 22 children. Having two teachers allows classes to break into small groups for instruction and discussion. "In a group of 20 children, you can hide—you don't have to be actively engaged," Panton said.

In a group of seven or less, students have to be involved, Panton said.

Last week, students sat in the small rooms off each main classroom having discussions about everything from what syllables are to what novels they next

wanted to read in fifth grade.

Building on success

"They are engaged in the process," said McCord. "They love coming to school. It's a good positive place where they're not bored or stressed out, just successful."

Panton prides herself on the fact that her students are reading a lot, developing good study habits and writing a lot, going beyond the "five paragraph essay."

Students start learning Spanish in kindergarten and regularly have art and music classes.

"We believed in art and music right away," said Panton. "We never looked at those as enrichment courses, they were always integral parts of the curriculum."

Panton said all the children who have come through the school for the last 30 years have left their footprints and have helped make the school what it is today.

"The footprints build and it just gets better and better and better," Panton said.

FIRE, FROM PAGE A1

Report calls for clearing brush in canyons

Dieguito Canyon Wildfire Hazard Reduction Project" report.

The report analyzed how to best reduce likely fuel sources in and around the 26-mile long canyon, which is bordered by Rancho Santa Fe and Fairbanks Ranch. Such a study was recommended after the October 2007 wildfires destroyed homes within the Covenant.

Holler cautioned actual costs could be higher or lower. Either way, fuel modification within the 100-foot zone would be borne by homeowners, even if it includes vegetation on public land beyond a homeowner's property line.

The association cannot require homeowners to modify their landscaping. However, the fire district can under current fire codes and state law.

Hunter said he rarely comes across a homeowner who refuses to comply and prefers a voluntary approach.

"I think education is more positive and you get better results," Hunter said.

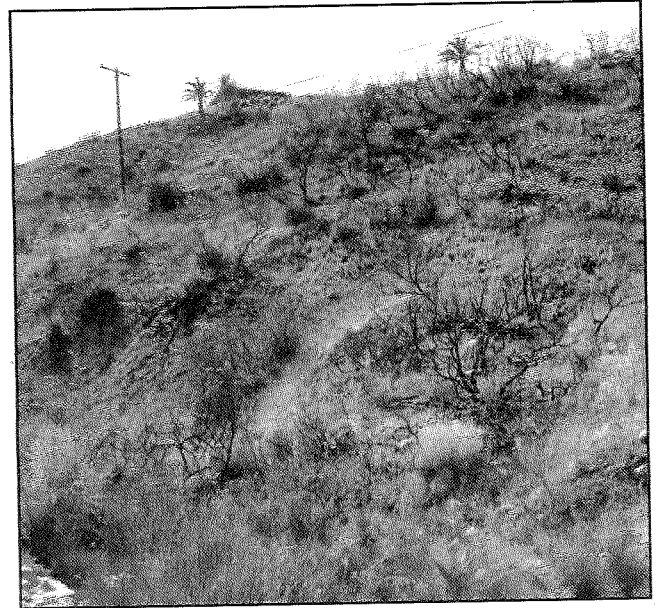
The fire hazard reduction report also analyzed fuel modification in the 26-mile long San Dieguito Canyon.

Removing flammable non-native and dead plants and restoring riparian habitat along the canyon's bottom would cost between \$370,000 and \$1.3 million. Final costs would depend on the number of trees removed and replaced, Huff said.

There are some environmental hurdles to clearing vegetation in these areas, which are home to the federally threatened gnatcatcher, but Huff said they were not insurmountable.

Whether the association will move forward with the project is still to be determined.

The association board was supportive of taking proactive steps to keep the community safe, but some members wondered if money



EMILY LUPTON

Burned areas are still visible from last year's fires.

would be better spent focusing on other prevention measures.

Hunter said the canyon habitat restoration would be beneficial, but that the higher priority was the 100-foot buffer for homes bordering the canyon and its smaller drainages.

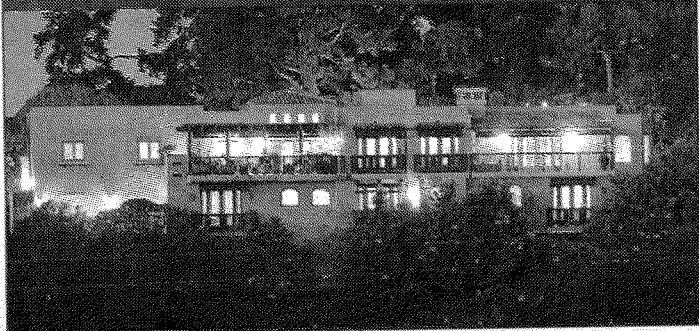
Huff suggested applying for grants, perhaps through

the recently founded Rancho Santa Fe and Fairbanks Ranch Fire Safe Council or Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The board did not take any position on the project, and directed staff to review the report's recommendations and develop an implementation plan with the fire district.

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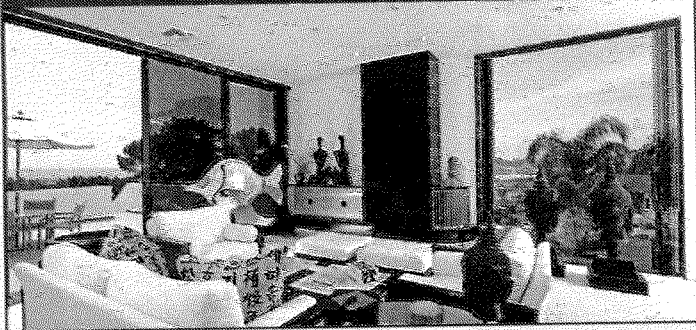
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Yes on Proposition A

San Diego County residents will vote this November on a proposed parcel tax to fund continuing efforts to protect our

OUR VIEW

area from the devastating effects of wildfires. If approved by two-thirds of voters, Proposition A would raise an estimated \$50 million with half going to local fire departments and fire protection districts and the other half toward purchasing new fire-fighting equipment such as fire engines and aircraft.

We can understand voter pessimism over the ability of various agencies to work in concert, as their track record has been less than perfect. But strides are being made.

For instance, fire districts have moved forward with a voluntary plan to consolidate and county officials are working with the state to lift bans on night flying in situations where aerial drops are needed. Proposition A properly adds more assurances to ease resident concerns.

A joint-powers agreement under the proposition would create a 10-member board to

oversee exactly where all that money goes and citizen oversight committees will add to that supervision.

Opponents of the proposition say fire protection problems should be addressed in East County where the majority of our fires start. But the harsh reality is we live in a dangerous fire area that reaches beyond that area. That point was driven home in last year's wildfires where evacuations occurred less than a mile from the ocean.

We acknowledge those evacuations were rare and in some cases probably unne-

cessary. As the area continues under an unprecedented drought, it's unwise to assume that we will return to normal conditions anytime soon or to assume that conditions will ever achieve normality in a desert region where conditions grow ever more uncertain due to climate change.

The property owner expense associated with this proposition must also be balanced with the enormous financial impact that large-scale fires have on our county. Upwards of 1,700 homes were lost during the 2007

fires, about 500 of which were underinsured.

With our prevailing economic conditions, those insurance issues will undoubtedly increase, as will hesitancy to reach into our pocketbooks for more taxes.

But it's in the best interest of all of us to ensure that natural disasters don't exacerbate our manmade financial ones and \$52 a year (some larger parcel will be charged more) seems a reasonable amount in the quest to make our region fire safe.

We recommend a yes vote on Proposition A.

LETTERS

Yes on H

This November, Del Mar residents will vote on Proposition H — a measure that authorizes the City to raise the hotel room tax rate (TOT) up to 13 percent. Vote "Yes" on Proposition H. Here's why.

Del Mar, a city of just over 4,500 residents, annually receives more than two million visitors to its fine attractions. These visitors regularly use and require city services, including fire and emergency medical, traffic and law enforcement, and lifeguards to name a few. All of these services are provided by the city from its general fund revenues.

How can Del Mar's 4,500 residents and 1,800 property owners support the cost of these services to more than two million visitors? It is because the city relies on several sources of revenue to support its general fund programs.

The largest single revenue category is city property taxes — paid mainly by residents. Property taxes contribute nearly one-third of all general fund revenues.

The TOT is the next largest revenue category — paid mainly by visitors. The TOT contributes just over 16 percent of all general fund revenue. TOT and sales tax revenues combined about equal the property tax revenues.

Until recently, TOT alone contributed more than 20

percent of general fund revenue. But TOT revenues have not kept pace with the rising cost of general fund services. It's time to adjust the TOT rates.

Because visitors, not residents, pay the TOT voter approval of a TOT rate increase normally would be a "no brainer." But in this election strident opposition to Proposition H has arisen in the form of a ballot argument signed by a small group of former council members. Why would this group oppose increasing the TOT rate?

Their ballot argument accuses the City Council of "sleight of hand" and of not telling the "whole story" to the public. These charges stemmed from a City Council action last August that loosely related the TOT rate to a possible special assessment on hotel rooms, part of a tourism marketing district or TMD suggested by hotel owners last June.

The council wanted everyone to be aware of the hotel owners' suggested TMD even though the owners haven't decided whether to go forward with it. The council's action clearly was premature. But the opponents were angered by the council's action and they hastened to file their ballot argument in opposition.

The council members asserted the opponents were confused by the TMD proposal and misinterpreted the Council's intentions. Such things do happen. To show their good faith, the council took the unusual step of re-

scinding the action they had not yet finally approved.

The opponents have claimed a victory in letters to editors and have withdrawn their opposition to Proposition H. Unfortunately; their opposition argument still appears in the voter information materials.

Don't be confused by the argument opposing Proposition H. Vote "Yes" to ensure that visitors will continue paying a fair share of the cost of essential city services.

WAYNE DERNITZ
DEL MAR

Support for Rotary

The Rotary Club of Del Mar was founded in 1954, and is one of over 2,000 clubs in the world. Our club has over 90 active members, and we boast an eclectic smorgasbord of professions; from hazelnut farming to nanotechnology.

We are open to membership to anyone with a passion for service and who can meet the criteria for being a great Rotarian-having the time, talent, and treasure to support the greatest service organization in the world.

Our projects range from the final push to eradicate Polio from the world to helping to organize beach clean-ups in Del Mar. We support open-heart surgeries for kids in China -and spend Saturdays with kids in orphanages in Tijuana. We have Interact clubs for students at Torrey Pines and Cathedral Catholic High Schools, teaching them leadership, ethics, community

service and world peace and understanding.

Our local Rotarians share their talents both internationally and locally. We have dentists and doctors that visit Baja and perform miracles for children-and often the same folk work nights and weekends at St. Leo's Community Health Care Clinic in Solana Beach. The boardwalk from the fairgrounds to the polo fields at San Dieguito River Park is being built by Rotarians and if you have ever admired the striking village clock at 15th Street in Del Mar, that's us too.

Simply put if you are the type of person that enjoys networking and being involved in your community along with many talented individuals, then this is the club to join. We are always looking for motivated individuals who are willing to share a little bit of their time and talent to better serve our community and those within it. If you're interested then please join us any Thursday at noon at St. Peter's Church Hall, 14th Street, Del Mar.

I would be honored to have you as my guest.

ROB MULLALLY
PRESIDENT, ROTARY CLUB OF
DEL MAR

Opposition to Prop 2

I wish that people would read the small print. Proposition 2 is not just about egg-laying hens. It is also about veal calves and breeding pigs. These are warm-blooded mammals that are confined to tiny cages barely larger

than their bodies for their entire lives. They are forced to lie in their own excrement and filth...how can this be good or healthy for us? This proposition will stop cruel and inhumane treatment of animals, ending the practice of cramming farm animals into cages so small, they can't even turn around, lie down or extend their limbs.

You don't have to be a vegetarian to realize that these animals deserve to be treated with compassion even though they are being raised for our consumption. We would not treat our pets this way. We have dominion over all animals — it's the right thing to do.

PATTY
SCHOBELOCK
WEST COAST ESCROW, DEL
MAR

Global warming and animals

Global warming is affecting our planet in many ways. It affects us economically and environmentally. Seeing it happen before our eyes should allow us to have a greater desire to take action, but some people don't realize that it is actually happening quite yet, thinking it's a phase or theories. Unfortunately it is all true.

Maybe the hardest hit is the life around us that we tend to forget as we go on with our daily schedule. Scientists have agreed that our endangered species list is growing rapidly. Extinction is forever; the life on this planet is irreplaceable. As we count the number of species

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that could soon be lost, we remember that we have caused most of the problems — deforestation, illegal hunting, over-fishing and global warming.

Global warming affects mostly the north, where 5 percent of the northern ice is melting each year. But if we watch closely we see it affecting animals in our state too. For example, the brown pelican that flies along our coast. The list has a saddening length. Each animal is an important part of the ecosystem. Our leaders and we should work together to lower greenhouse gases protect our irreplaceable wildlife.

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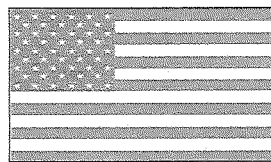
PHOTOS

For society photos (left) and Democrat event (far left), see pages 1-40, B1-B20. editor@sdranchcoastnews.com

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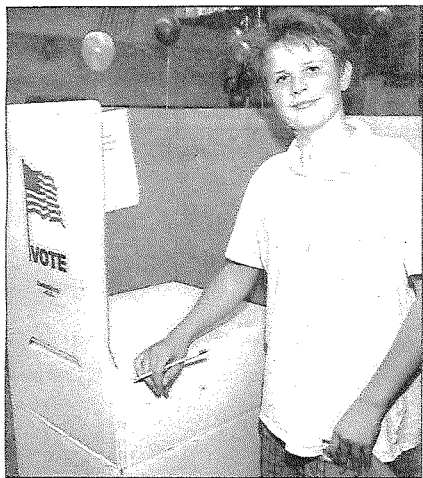
Students hit the polls in RSF Middle School primary elections

By Matt Liebowitz

Rancho Santa Fe Middle School was abuzz with political activity on Oct. 8 when the school held student body government primary elections.

For the first time in the school's student government history, this year's election employed a two-party system, patterned after the U.S. government's.

At the end of September, when candidates from fifth through eighth grade began campaigning for the positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Philanthropy Commissioner, the 390



Hunter Barrera at a voting booth.

middle school students registered for one of two parties: Exceptional Character and "Caring Community." In addition, students were given the chance to vote for a governor at each grade level.

The winners of the primary (see below) will advance to the general election, held Oct. 15 (day after presstime for this newspaper. Look for final results on www.sdranchcoastnews.com the evening of Oct. 15 and in next week's *Review*).

In the past, elections were held in each homeroom, and there were no separate parties.

See *ELECTION*, page 37

Demolition underway on Village Church, construction to start in December

By Matt Liebowitz

Demolition has begun on the RSF Village Community Presbyterian Church, with construction on two new buildings set to begin in early December.

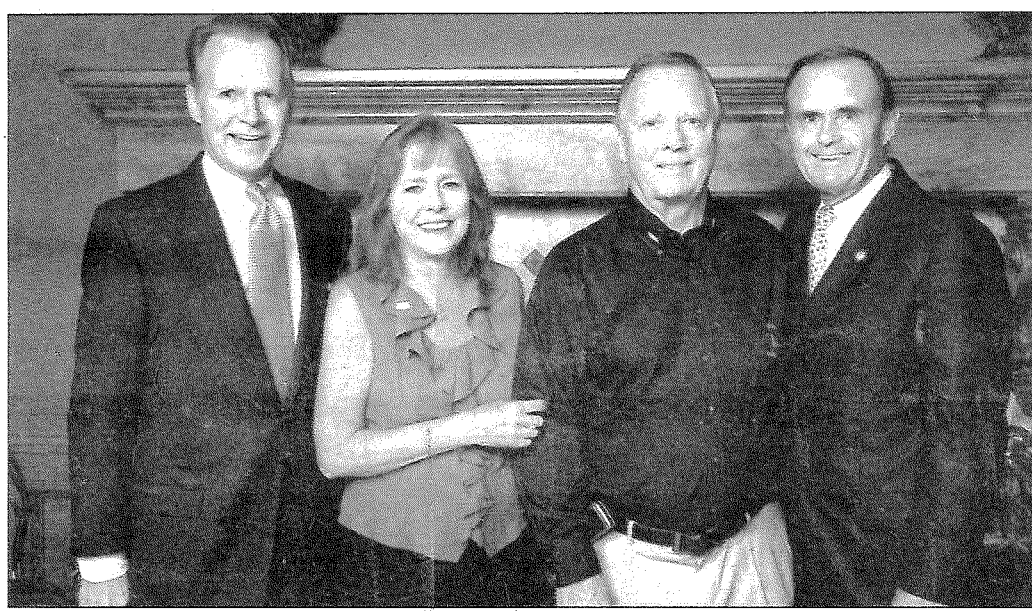
A new 24,000 square-foot building will house the sanctuary as well as offices and a meeting room, and a new Christian education building with 11 classrooms will occupy 8,000-square-feet on a new plot of land on the property near the existing Fellowship Center.

The new sanctuary will be built on the site of the already demolished administration build-

ing, and what remains after the demolition of half the old sanctuary will become a new chapel with capacity of 120 people.

Working with Domini + Associates Architects and ROEL Construction Company, the renovations, with a budget in excess of \$15 million, have been in the works for more than five years. The designs received a provisional approval from the county of San Diego a year-and-a-half ago, and a Major Use Permit (MUP) was awarded Sept. 19, allowing for demolition to begin.

See *CHURCH*, page 37



BILBRAY RECEPTION — Congressman David Dreier (left) came to San Diego to support Congressman Brian Bilbray (right) as they visited Sapphire Energy's Clean Energy Algae Biofuel Facility, and then met with friends for a reception in Fairbanks Ranch at the home of Gene and Patti Hanken (center). See inside for more photos of this event and another with Michael Reagan.



RSF Witch fire — One Year Ago

Hard to believe, but it will be one year ago Oct. 22 that a wildfire birthed in the scrubby chaparral northeast of Ramona whipped westward from the mountains and, fanned by speeding Santa Ana winds and parched fall air, surged into Rancho Santa Fe, leaving behind dozens of smoldering properties and hundreds of acres of blackened open space, and causing residents to evacuate. Top photo/SFID



Armed robbers reportedly tie up two, steal more than \$100,000 worth of cash and jewelry in home burglary near racetrack

By Matt Liebowitz

On Oct. 14, at approximately 10:45 a.m., three masked men reportedly broke into a home near the Del Mar racetrack (on David Way) and stole more than \$100,000 worth of cash and jewelry.

Elan Akin said he was sleep-

ing in an upstairs bedroom when the men entered through an open side door. He said the housekeeper, Martha (her last name was not disclosed), was vacuuming upstairs, and did not hear anybody enter the home.

Elan is the son of Steve Akin,

the owner of D.Z. Akin's, a restaurant located at 6930 Alvarado Road.

Martha, who had been the Akin's housekeeper for only two weeks, was allegedly hit in the head with a "metal object,"

See *BURGLARY*, page 29

mb

VOLUME XII,
ISSUE 42

Rancho Santa Fe Record

WWW.RSFRECORD.COM

OCTOBER 17, 2008
PUBLISHED WEEKLY

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Rancho Santa Fe Record Web site now online

The Rancho Santa Fe Record launched its new Web site on Thursday, Oct. 16.

The new site, which has a Web address of www.rsfreord.com, boasts video and photo galleries, fully searchable online classifieds, and lots of breaking news.

Rancho Santa Fe Record Publisher Phyllis Pfeiffer said her intention in creating the site is to have a news source that offers daily updates and plenty of interactive options for Rancho Santa Fe.

"We are making this a usable and interactive site that Rancho Santa Fe residents will find value in visiting. It will be a big plus for our readers. It will give us a dynamic venue to share news, photos and video with the community, and it will offer first-rate opportunities for our advertisers to reach an expanded market," said Pfeiffer.

Make it your destination for Rancho Santa Fe events and community information, she added.

The site also features comments at the end of stories with "red phone" and "green phone" options that allow readers to blog to the editorial staff.

The red phone is for local news issues and the green

What's online?

- **Classifieds:** Fully searchable online classifieds using Kaango.com with the option to place your own classifieds online.

- **Post your comments:** Post comments about the stories online. After reading a SEE ONLINE, PAGE A7

phone is for local sports. These online "phone" options allow readers to have a chance to post comments online and get answers to what's on their minds.

Also, the Rancho Santa Fe Record is now using Legacy.com searchable obituaries, with an option to leave loved one's "guest book" entries.

The Rancho Santa Fe Record hired Amy Lynne Bowes to oversee the design in a newly created online content manager position.

"I'm excited to bring Rancho Santa Fe residents a complete Web site with up-to-date daily news," Bowes said. "Also, the comments section after the stories creates a great place for community dialogue."

She added that the site includes great ways to submit news items and is fully interactive.

Fire storm: one year later



LAURA PETERSEN

Rancho Santa Fe homes destroyed by the Witch Creek fire in 2007 are beginning to be rebuilt a year later.

Burned into memory

Strides made one year after Witch Creek

By Laura Petersen

The 2007 Witch Creek fire was a frightening wake-

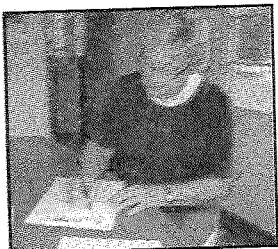
up call for Rancho Santa Fe, Solana Beach and Del Mar.

"I think most of us felt that we would never experience fire in our neighborhood," said Bill Beckman, who serves on the Rancho Santa Fe Association board. "We were made very, very aware that's not true at all."

In the year since the fire, with fires lighting up in the North and East Counties earlier this week, one thing is clear: Residents are getting the message that Rancho Santa Fe is one of the top three areas in San Diego County most likely to burn, as stated in a recent report.

And if the Ranch's oil-rich eucalyptus forest lights up, Solana Beach and Del Mar are vulnerable to flying embers and fire coming through the San Elijo Lagoon and San Dieguito River Valley.

SEE FIRE, PAGE A6



Vital emergency
forms for seniors

Story on page A3



Student assists
hurricane victims

Story on page A12

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FIRE, FROM PAGE A1

Defensible space called key

All three communities are taking the threat seriously, evidenced by the formation of fire safe councils, record enrollment for Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, and the adoption of ordinances requiring safer roofing.

Clearing the way

Homeowners are now volunteering to clear brush and maintain 100 feet of defensible space around their homes — the most effective way to protect structures from large fires.

"People are more much receptive to things they can

do," said David Ott, fire chief for Solana Beach and Del Mar. "In years past, it was a harder sell to get people to do fairly small things to make their property and structures safer from fire."

Rancho Santa Fe and Fairbanks Ranch plan to pursue grant funding to clear dead brush and restore San Dieguito Canyon, where the Witch Creek fire spread into those two communities.

Even though this area burned last year, it is still a fire hazard.

"Although we've had quite a bit of area burn, we have a lot of native grass in those areas," said Nick Pavone, chief of the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District. "While it does not burn as intensely as vegetation that hasn't burned in 30 years, it can still move a fire very, very quickly through the area."

Be Prepared to Evacuate

1. Register cell phones with AlertSanDiego emergency notification system at ReadySanDiego.org.
2. Gather important documents in one place.
3. Pack irreplaceable items, clothes and medications to last a few days.
4. If ordered to evacuate, don't wait; leave early.

Coming back

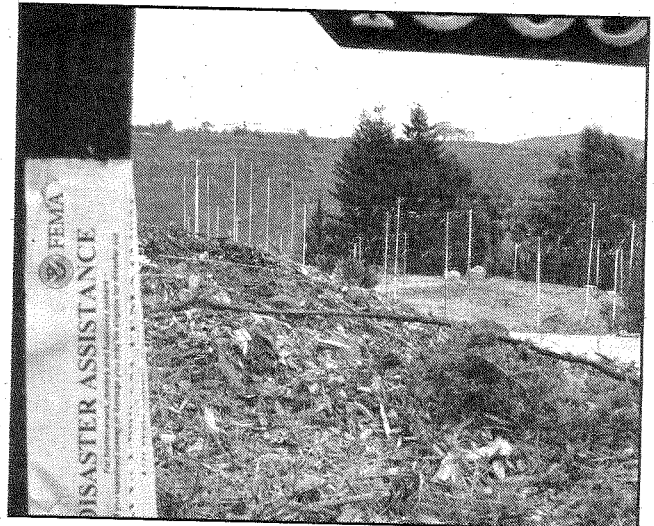
Of the 18 homes destroyed in the Covenant, a few have received building permits and bulldozers are already at work. Nine more are in the permitting process, according to the association's building department.

Many of the homes that burned along Zumaque and in other parts of the Rancho Santa Fe Fire District had single paned windows, which could not withstand heat from vegetation burning nearby, Pavone said. The new homes must

abide by newer and stricter fire and building codes, such as installing double-paned windows, covering vents, boxing eaves, and planting fire-resistant landscaping.

"We know the homes we're building now are a little more fire-safe, a little more defensible," Pavone said.

These actions are good things for all homeowners to do, not just those adjacent to a lagoon or canyon because 60-mile-per-hour winds can send embers flying a mile ahead of the fire line, Pavone said.



Laura Petersen

Story poles rise from the ashes.

Urgency increases

As Santa Ana's whipped up flames at Camp Pendleton, Campo and near Carmel Valley this week, and dry conditions were expected in to next week, residents across

San Diego County were reminded why it's critical not to fall back into complacency. "Hopefully, it doesn't happen," Ott said of another massive fire. "Preparedness makes all the difference."

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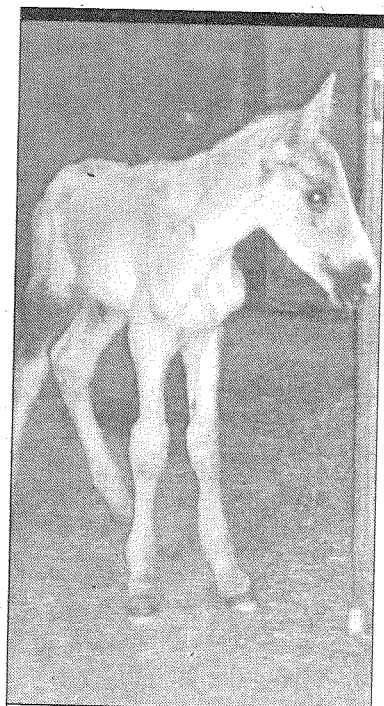
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Firefighters prevent fire from spreading to homes

On Oct. 14, firefighters from Rancho Santa Fe, San Diego, CalFire, Miramar, and Poway responded to a vegetation fire in the 16000 block of Camino del Norte. Upon arrival they found a hill covered with light to medium brush with flames and smoke visible.

A unified command was established and firefighters, with the help of two helicopters, were quickly able to contain and extinguish the 6-acre vegetation fire. Structure protection for homes in the area was an initial concern, but no homes or structures were damaged or destroyed. Crews remained on scene until late afternoon to ensure there were no flare ups. The cause of the fire is under investigation. No injuries were reported.

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.

Worker dies after accidental fall in RSF

An Orange County man was killed Oct. 17 after falling more than 30 feet while putting up skylights at a barn in Rancho Santa Fe, according to RSF Patrol Chief Matt Wellhouser.

Frank Riggio, 52, of Trabuco Canyon, was working inside a barn at Buena Vista Farms on El Montevideo when he fell just after 2:30 p.m. Wellhouser said the emergency call was received at 2:39 p.m.

Riggio was transported by helicopter to a hospital in La Jolla where he died soon after arriving.

RSF Association establishes 2008-2009 assessment rate

By Matt Liebowitz

The Rancho Santa Fe Association board finalized and approved the assessment rate for 2008-2009 at its Oct. 16 meeting.

Approved at 14 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation per the San Diego County Assessor's roll, 11 cents of the 14 cents will be applied to General Services and 3 cents will go towards Open Space.

The rate was originally presented by Chief Financial Officer Steve Comstock at the Finance Committee's June 5 meeting with the RSF Association, during which they approved the 2008-2009 fiscal operating budget. Per the July 1, 2008 edition of the San Diego County Assessor's roll, the total valuation for all Covenant properties is \$4,155 billion. The total assessed valuation represents a 5.22 percent increase over last year's valuation of \$3,949 billion (that increase is slightly lower than the approximate 6.5 percent initially projected). President Lois Jones thanked Comstock for his "astute" managing of the budget. The assessment rate will be mailed to the membership by Nov. 1. Also approved at the meeting were the audited financial statements for 2007-2008, presented by Comstock and Ron Mitchell, a partner with the Association's auditing firm of ATK, LLP.

Director Bill Beckman expressed his "tremendous confidence in the accuracy of the audit." Association members will receive a copy of the financial statements by Nov. 1.

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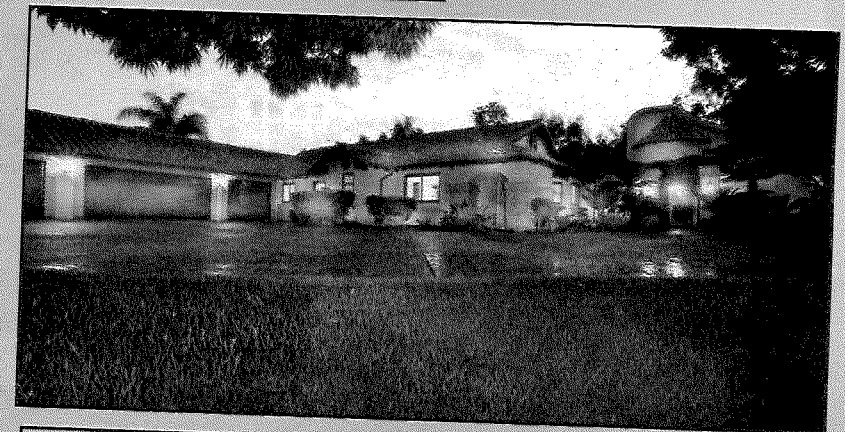
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Fire victim makes prevention his business

By Joe Tash

One year ago this week, wind-driven flames encircled Gene Magre's horse barn as he and his friends worked to save the structure and his animals.

It was just after midnight, and the flames raced through a creek bed behind the property on Zumaque Street, and up a hill where his house stood.

"I'm here watering the horses and saving the barn and watching the house burn to the ground," Magre said this week, as he surveyed the empty piece of land where the home once stood.

Magre and his partner, Annie Fonte, will soon start rebuilding the home. The plans include landscaping on the adjacent slope to protect the property in the event of another destructive wildfire like the one that struck in October 2007, when hundreds of homes were destroyed in San Diego County, including 23 within the covenant, and half a dozen on Zumaque alone.

But Magre isn't stopping at his own home — he is shifting the focus of his contracting and home restoration business, Historic Ranch, Inc., to assist Rancho Santa Fe residents in creating a defensible space around their homes.

He has recruited two experienced wildland firefighters, William Leon and Miguel Garcia, to work with him on his new venture. Through his new business, Magre said, he will help homeowners come up with a landscaping plan to protect their homes.

Workers will clear the property of hazardous trees, weeds and brush, before re-planting with drought-tolerant and fire-resistant plants, Magre said. They will also install irrigation systems.

"I think there's a thirst for more knowledge and education about what they can do" to prevent their homes from damage or destruction in a wildfire, Magre said. "I think it's going to be extremely important for every homeowner to consider."

The cost of creating a defensible space around a home will vary based on such factors as the existing vegetation and topography of the property, Magre said. Homeowners can request a free estimate by calling his office at (858) 756-5714.

Magre also lost a second home, near Lake Hodges in Escondido, during the wildfires. His own experiences during last year's fire prompted him to launch the fire-prevention division of his contracting business.

"I want to reduce the possibility of this ever happening again to residents inside the Covenant," he said.

Cliff Hunter, fire marshal for the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Protection District, said a service such as Magre's "would be very helpful," if homeowners follow through and take recommended actions to protect their homes from wildfires.

The fire protection district requires a 100-foot "defensible space" around homes, with fire-resistant plants within 50 feet of the home, and at least half of brush and dead limbs cleared from the next 50 feet.

Homeowners should focus on four areas to provide maximum protection, according to Hunter. First, if they have a wood-shingle roof, it should be replaced with fire-resistant material. Those with tile roofs should seal up any openings where embers could land under the tile.

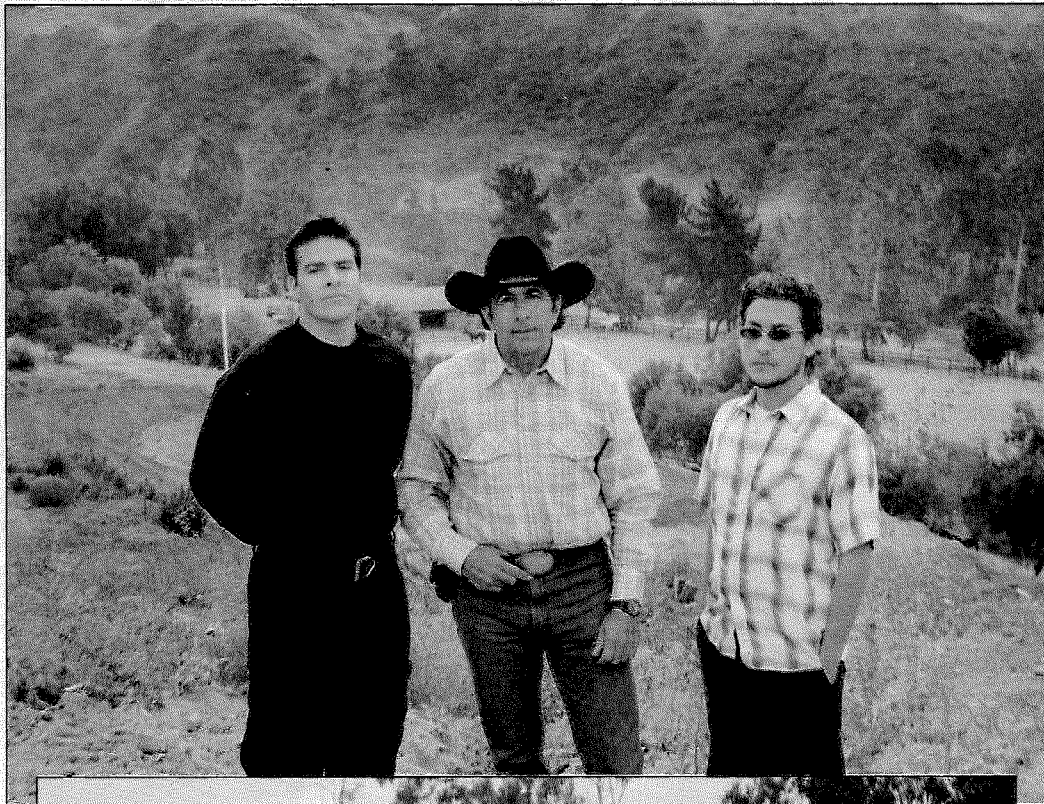
Second, they should look at the trees around their home. Less-flammable trees, such as sycamores or oaks, should be trimmed at least 10 feet from the home. Eucalyptus trees should be properly trimmed, so branches are at least six to 10 feet from the ground, and any leaning trees, should be removed.

Next, combustible mulch such as wood chips should be kept at least 12 inches away from the home's foundation. Finally, he said, trash cans should be at least five feet from the home, and trash should not be stored outside of trash cans.

Residents are very concerned about fire safety in the wake of last year's fires, said Hunter. "The awareness is very high."

Magre said he expects to be busy now that the 2008 fire season has begun.

"I'm hoping people take this stuff seriously," he said. "It's overwhelming when you lose everything you own in a matter of hours."



(Top) RSF's Gene Magre was not able to save his home during the 2007 fires, which has prompted his new interest in a business to help prevent home loss to fires. William Leon, Gene Magre and Clay Merritt stand on the corner of Magre's lot.
(Bottom) All the remaining debris of Gene Magre's house; the property overlooks a Rancho Santa Fe valley. The house was lost in the October fires in 2007 along with other nearby homes. Photos/JonClark



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Community CALENDAR

Got an item for the calendar?
Send the details via e-mail to
calendar@coastnewsgroup.com.

OCTOBER 24

CHAIRMAN OF THE TABLE
The Chairmen's RoundTable invites the San Diego business community to the inaugural CRT Executive Mentorship Series event from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. Oct. 24, Cal State San Marcos, Markstein Hall, Room 125. The CRT plans to present important and useful information to the local business community. E-mail cobaevents@cusm.edu to learn more.

OCTOBER 25

BAMBOO SHOW The American Bamboo Society will host the Rare and Unusual Bamboo Show and Sale beginning at 9 a.m. Oct. 25, MiraCosta College, 1 Barnard Drive, Parking Lot E, Oceanside. This event will include an auction of rare bamboos, in addition to the sale. For details, call (760) 723-0677.

OCTOBER 26

BARK AT THE PARK Join the North County Humane Society for a special street fair from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Oct. 26, NCHS Dog Park, 2905 San Luis Rey Road, Oceanside. This free event will include raffle prizes, live music and a dog/owner look-a-like contest. Anyone interested in having a booth at the event can call the NCHS Development Department at (760) 757-4357, ext. 1230. Visit www.nchumane.org to learn more.

OCTOBER 27

TOOT YOUR FLUTE The Encinitas School of Music will host guest artist Janet Parish-Whittaker from 7 to 8 p.m. Oct. 27, 775 Orpheus Ave., Encinitas. Flutists are invited for this special event, which includes a performance and workshop. Parish-Whittaker has a Master of Arts degree in flute performance from UCSD. The cost for this event is \$10. For details, call Ron at (760) 757-3096.

WE'RE ALL TRYING The Carlsbad Playreaders will present the award-winning play "Trying," by Joanna McClelland Glass, at 7 p.m. Oct. 27, Dove Library Schulman Auditorium, 1775 Dove Lane, Carlsbad. Suggested donations are \$5 for adults, and \$1 for students. Visit www.carlsbad-playreaders.org to learn more.

OCTOBER 28

LUNCH WITH BILBRAY U.S. Congressman Brian Bilbray and State Assemblyman Martin Garrett will be the guest speakers at the October meeting of the Carlsbad Republican Women at 11 a.m. Oct. 28, The Windmill, 890 Palomar Airport Road. Cost for the lunch is \$25. Call Beverly at (760) 434-6478 for reservations.

THE FINAL STRETCH The Encinitas Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a forum featuring the candidates running for Encinitas City Council at 7 p.m. Oct. 28, MiraCosta College San Elijo Campus, Student Center

TURN TO CALENDAR ON 22

Rowe School celebrates Red Ribbon Week

RANCHO SANTA FE — Rancho Santa Fe's R. Roger Rowe School kicked off its annual Red Ribbon Week on Oct. 24.

Red Ribbon Week is a national campaign promoting drug and alcohol awareness in youths and their parents and the prevention of their abuse. This educational campaign encourages students of every age to choose to live healthy and positive lives and provides parents with the tools to help.

Parents are strongly encouraged to attend a kick-off meeting at 9:15 a.m. Oct. 27 in the LGI meeting room at the school. This meeting, with guest speakers, will emphasize the window of opportunity parents have dur-

ing this week to talk to their own children about their views relating to drugs, alcohol and tobacco use. All parents with children attending school within the San Dieguito School District are welcome.

Topics and speakers will include:

— "How to talk to your kids about alcohol and drugs" by Keith Kanner clinical child and adolescent psychoanalyst and host of "Your Family Matters."

— "I never met a parent who saw it coming," by Judi Strang, executive director, San Dieguito Alliance for Drug Free Youth.

Parents will have an opportunity to see "Natural High 2"

(an age-appropriate drug awareness video) which will be played for fifth- through eighth-grade students. Also provided are resources about how to raise children who are confident, responsible and self-reliant.

Red Ribbon Week commemorates the memory of Drug Enforcement Agent Kiki Camarena, who was murdered by the drug cartel in Mexico in 1985.

Each day of the Red Ribbon Week, the school will sponsor different events or activities to impress upon the students the importance of making healthy choices in their own lives, while keeping the lines of communication open with their parents.

An essay contest for fifth-through eighth-grades offers prizes include \$50 gift certificates to the winners choice of iTunes, Sports Authority or Circuit City. Topics to choose from include "Dream of an America without Drugs, Alcohol or Tobacco ... What would it be like?," "Saying no to a friends who party means I am free to ...," and "Write yourself a letter to be opened when you are 16. What will you tell yourself about Drugs, Alcohol and Smoking."

At 1:10 p.m. Oct. 29, all students wearing red will line up on the football field in the shape of a heart for an aerial photograph, to show a symbol of unity and commitment to healthy living.

2009 San Diego County Fair to be virtually smoke-free

By Bill Arballo

DEL MAR — Directors of the 22nd District Agricultural Association (San Diego County Fair) voted unanimously to make the 2009 fair (June 12 through July 5) a smoke-free event except for limited designated areas.

This action was taken during the regular monthly directors' meeting held Oct. 14 at the fairgrounds and was in response to a request from representatives of several family-oriented organizations who appeared last month and complained that marijuana smoking was rampant last summer, particularly during reggae concerts.

Five speakers praised the

board for its timely and positive response to their concerns.

Judi Strang, executive director of San Dieguito Alliance for Drug Free Youth, said a recent report on drug use showed that 74 percent of school-age students indicated marijuana was the drug of choice and 21 percent of those from the local area indicated they had smoked pot within the last 28 days.

Under the adopted policy, reggae concerts will be presented in the grandstand and will require a paid admission ticket with the minimum age for attendance being 21 years in accordance with the statewide alcohol law. Attendees will be given wrist bands to ensure age. Increased security at concerts will be present to enforce the no-smoking edic. Anti-drug signs will be strategically located

and no smoking announcements will be made during concerts. The district will be more diligent in enforcing its standing policy prohibiting the sale, promotion and advertising of drug paraphernalia and merchandise. Performance contracts of entertainers will include language prohibiting the use and promotion of illegal drugs and paraphernalia

while performing and while they are on the ground.

General Manager Tim Fennell said the district will do everything possible to enforce the prohibition; however, it will require the cooperation of fair visitors as well.

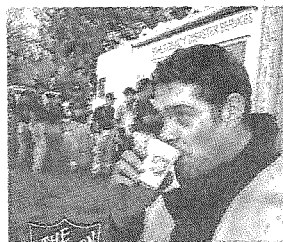
Continued violations could cause the fair to impose additional stringent regulations, Fennell said.

Firefighters to host pancake breakfast

RANCHO SANTA FE — The Rancho Santa Fe Professional Firefighters Association is hosting an open house pancake breakfast from 7:30 to 11 a.m. Oct. 26 at Station 1, 16936 El Fuego. District firefighters will be on hand to serve up pancakes, eggs, sausage, orange juice and coffee for a requested donation of \$4.

In addition to breakfast, the open house will include fire engine rides, fire hose spraying and fire engine displays. For more information, visit www.rsffire.org or call (858) 756-5971.

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66	6.1%	73	6.8%	80	8.0%	87	10.2%
67	6.2%	74	6.9%	81	8.3%	88	10.6%
68	6.3%	75	7.1%	82	8.5%	89	11.0%
69	6.4%	76	7.2%	83	8.8%	90+	11.3%
70	6.5%	77	7.4%	84	9.2%		
71	6.6%	78	7.6%	85	9.5%		

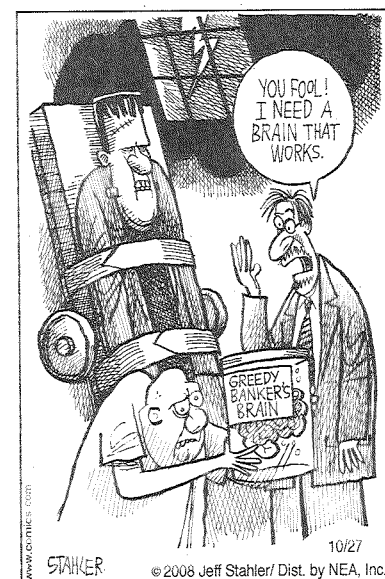
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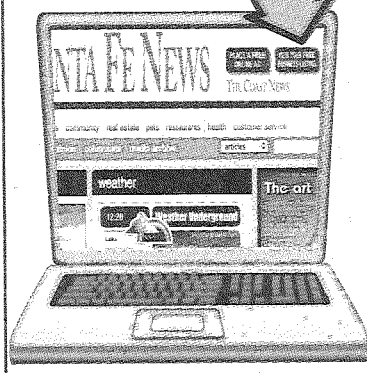


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ASSOCIATION BUZZ

It has been a year since the wildfires – are you ready?

By Lois Jones



Lois Jones

Incredibly, it has been a year since the wildfires swept into our community. In the aftermath of that horrific week, the Association board remains focused on the never-ending threat of recurrence of another firestorm. Over the last year we have made significant strides to be better prepared in the future. We formed a coalition with our neighbors and experts to assess our communities and developed plans to protect our properties from future fires. Our plans are solidified and implementation is in process. We have crews cleaning canyons and high-risk areas. Shortly, you will be receiving some emergency information in the mail to help each property owner to be better prepared. Included in the information is an Emergency Contact Card as well as suggested Evacuation Procedures. If you would like more than one copy of these important cards, please feel free to stop by the Association office.

The Emergency Contact Card is designed to be carried in your planner, wallet, or handbag and includes important emergency phone numbers for our community, as well as spaces to record important personal phone numbers.

The Evacuation Procedures card is a checklist that was assembled by the Ranch Patrol with suggested steps when evacuation becomes necessary and includes a list of important items to take with you. It's a good card to keep by your telephone.

The recent Santa Ana heat and winds is a strong reminder that now is a good time to review your personal emergency plan, make sure it is updated and familiarize your family so everyone knows what to do. We have learned from first-hand experience how emergencies can happen when they are least expected. Many of us realized how unprepared we were with the last fire and made a commitment to be better prepared in the future. It has now been a year— are you ready?

RSF resident attacked at home

A RSF resident was attacked in her Rambla De Las Flores home around 10 p.m. on Oct. 20 when she returned to her house, according to RSF Patrol Chief Matt Wellhouser. The suspect was wearing a hood and mask. The victim fled from her house and called for help on her cell phone. A search of the house and surrounding areas by foot, police dog and air was made. The suspect took the victim's Cadillac Escalade from the house. Nothing else was taken. The victim was treated for minor head trauma from being hit with a frying pan. Suspect is still at large.

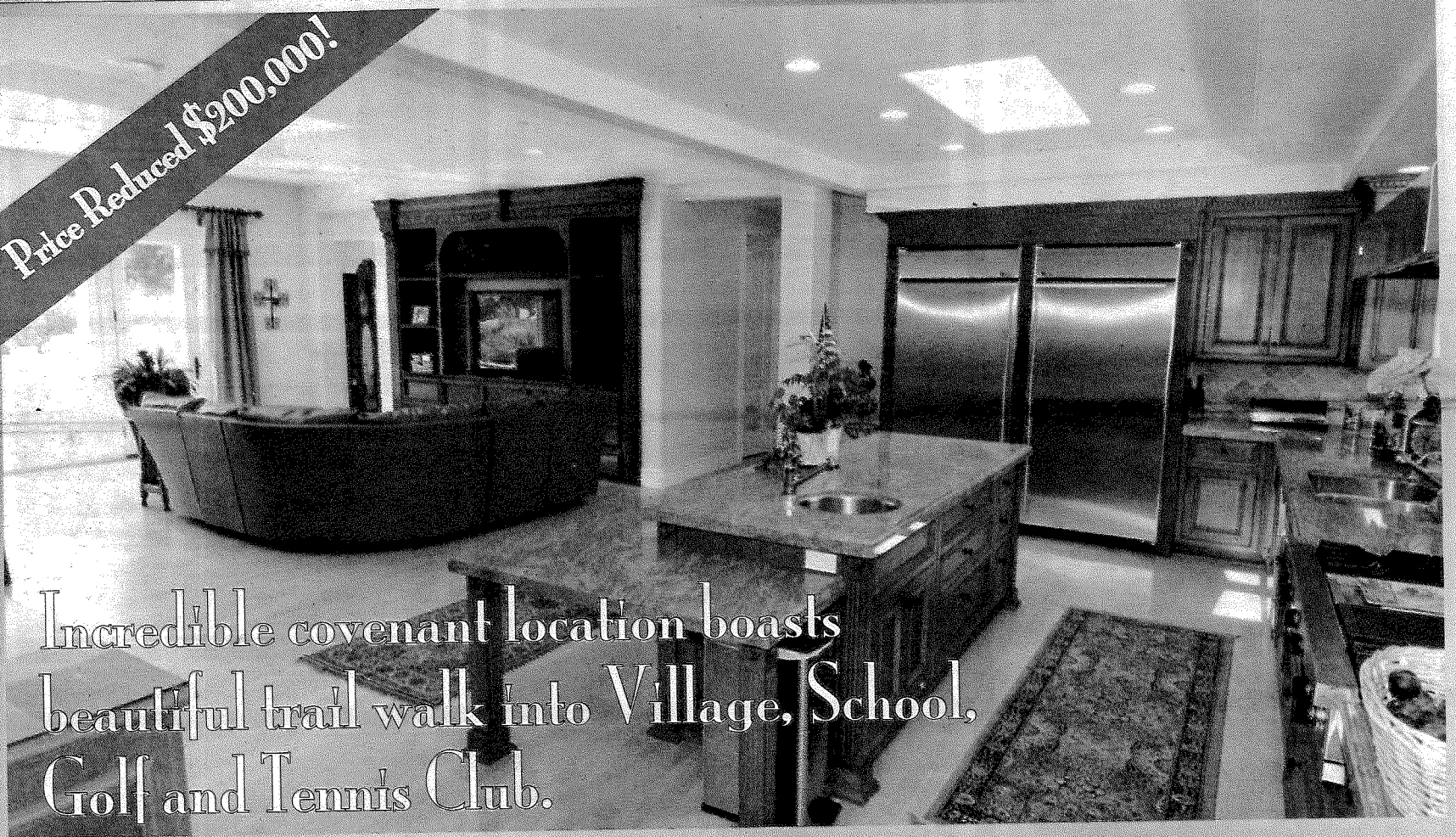
Crime report:

Oct. 25: 6000 El Tordo, burglary; Loss: Merchandise. Alarm was activated by the suspect. — RSF Patrol

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RSF Firefighters gets authentic fire training thanks to resident's donation of soon-to-be demolished home

By Matt Liebowitz

For three days, the Rancho Santa Fe Fire Department's firefighters had the opportunity to train in an entirely new, unfamiliar environment thanks to a generous donation from a RSF businessman and resident.

From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Oct. 22, 23, and 24, the fire department performed search and rescue training in a soon-to-be demolished home at 17144 Via de la Valle, owned by Lynn Kunkle, owner of Kunkle Construction.

After a 16-month review period by the RSF Association's Art Jury, Kunkle's proposal to build two town homes designed by Dena Gillespie on the site — at the corner of Paseo Delicias and Via de la Valle across from the Village Community Presbyterian Church — was approved.

Rather than immediately demolish the home he's owned and rented out for seven years — he got the demolition permit in August, and will begin demolition in the next 30 days — Kunkle decided to donate the house to the fire department.

"After the [Witch Creek] fire in 2007, I saw what the firefighters did for the community," said Kunkle. "There's no money involved in this, this is my contribution to help train the young firemen."

Kunkle said RSF Fire District Captain Greg Rainville, who put together the training program, told him that in 15 years nobody had ever allowed the fire department to use their home.

"He just jumped on it," said Kunkle. Tony Michel, deputy chief of the RSF Fire District, outlined the different training programs the firefighters practiced at the donated home, including search and rescue missions, ventilations drills, forcible entry, and wall breaching, in which firefighters perform rescues by cutting holes in the walls from the outside.

"It's very important to us to have this house to train in," said Michel. "We don't get this opportunity very often."

The fire department's training facility is located at the 4-S Ranch fire station, but, according to Michel, "All our guys are used to it. It's the same thing over and over again."

"Everybody knows that facility really well," added Captain Rainville. "Practicing on unfamiliar territory with different roof construction and floor plans is an excellent learning opportunity."

At Kunkle's home, firefighters performed their training routines by filling the house with theatrical smoke, and worked without the spatial familiarities of the 4-S facility.

"If somebody was passing by, it would look like a real structure fire," Michel said. "You'd be surprised how disorienting it was inside."

Michel said that residents occasionally approach the fire department eager to offer their soon-to-be-demolished home as a practice site, but decide against it upon realizing they have to do a hazard abate-



Home donor Lynn Kunkle (in white shirt above) with RSF firefighters who used the donated home for training (right). Photos/Jon Clark



ment, a process of ensuring there are no hazardous materials the firefighters would encounter during training.

"It never really happens," he said, adding that all houses must go through a hazard abatement, and that it shouldn't deter people from offering their home. "It's a great opportunity. When we use a real structure, it's invaluable training we can't get anywhere else."

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County confirms emergency plan in the event of Lake Hodges dam failure

By Matt Liebowitz

With the area's susceptibility to fires and earthquakes, local residents have often voiced concerns about what would happen if a massive earthquake were to hit and destroy Lake Hodges Dam.

Lake Hodges Dam, located just east of Rancho Santa Fe along the Del Dios Highway corridor, is one of 10 dams owned by the city of San Diego, and holds approximately 30,000 acre-feet of water, a volume that's remained constant since its construction in 1918, reported Jim Fisher, deputy director of the city of San Diego's Water Operations Division.

In the event of a Lake Hodges dam failure, there is an emergency response plan on the books, as well as a chain of command, which Yvette Urrea Moe, spokesperson with the San Diego County Office of Emergency Services, outlined.

The dam facility notifies the San Diego County Office of Emergency Services if there's a dam break; Emergency Services then notifies several local groups, including the San Diego Police, CHP, area schools, local media outlets, retirement communities, the RSF Fire Protection District, the Del Mar Racetrack, the Del Mar Hilton, Fairbanks Ranch Country Club, Morgan Run Country Club, and the Helen Woodward Animal Center.

Flooding would take a westward course down the San Dieguito riverbed; water would travel down Del Dios Highway from the dam, and enter through the southern portion of RSF and Morgan Run Golf Course, and cover the area in and around the racetrack on its path toward the ocean.

A full dam failure would produce water rushing toward RSF at a level of eight to 10 feet; it would

take approximately 8 minutes to reach Morgan Run.

To seek shelter, Urrea Moe said there are temporary evacuation centers designated by the American Red Cross: one at Del Mar Pines Middle School in Escondido, one at RSF Middle School, and one at Torrey Pines High School.

Residents would be notified of evacuations through door-to-door efforts and a public address by the sheriff's department and the police, as well as through AlertSanDiego, a reverse 911 system that sends messages to residents' cell phones.

A full collapse of Lake Hodges Dam, however, is very unlikely according to Fisher and

Urrea Moe.

"Usually when there's a dam failure, the whole dam doesn't just go," Urrea Moe said. "More than likely, if it was an issue due to a natural disaster, it would become compromised, but we'd have a couple of days."

See DAM, page 36

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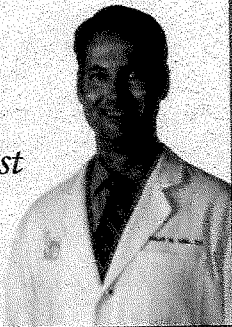




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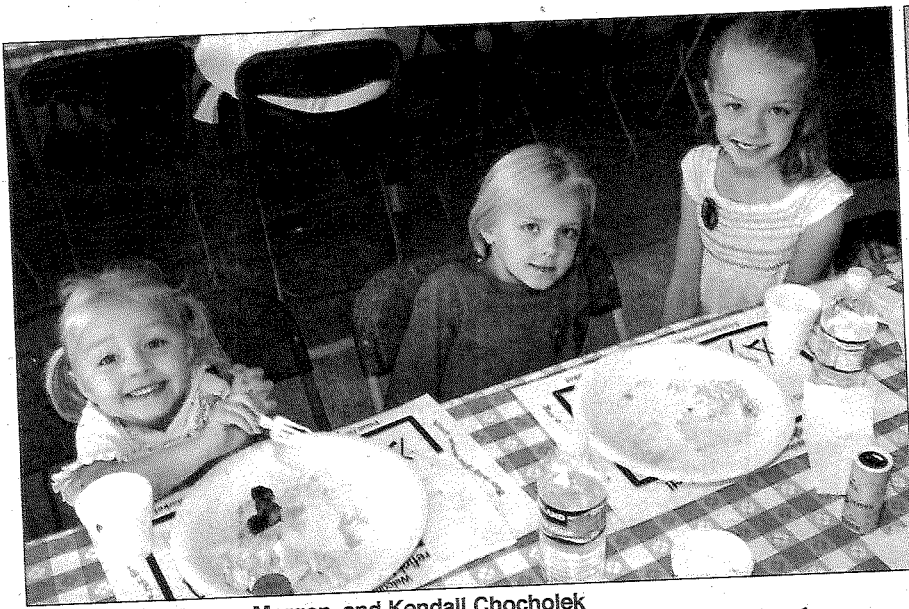
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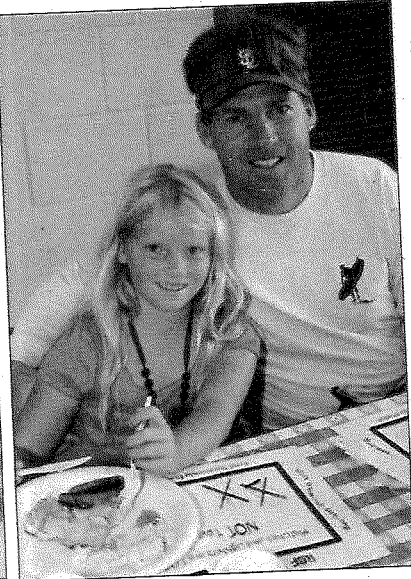
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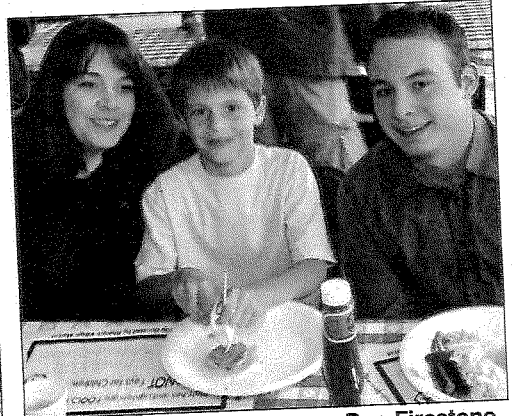
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solar electricity



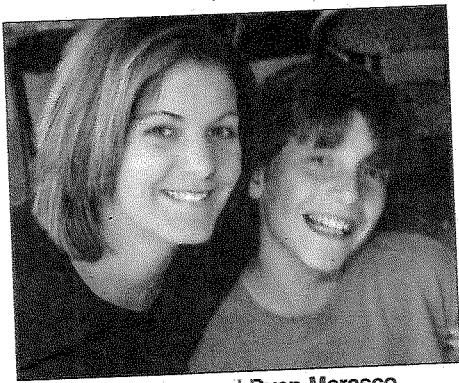
Devon, Morgan, and Kendall Chocholek



Elle and Scott DeGoler



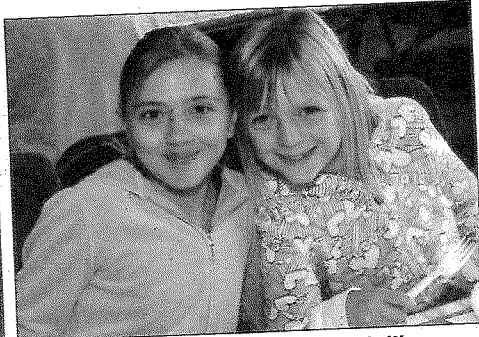
Jennifer and Ethan Marasco, Dan Firestone



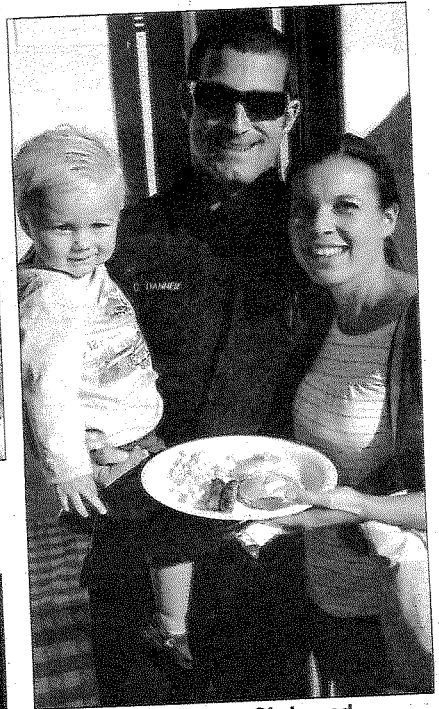
Lauren and Ryan Marasco



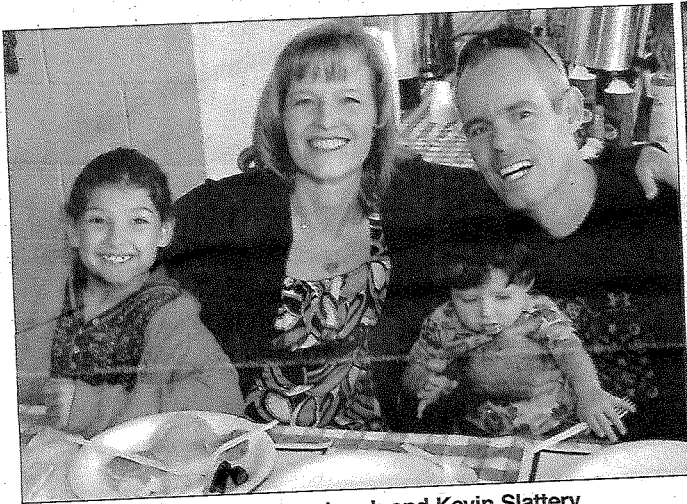
Drew and Laurel Chocholek



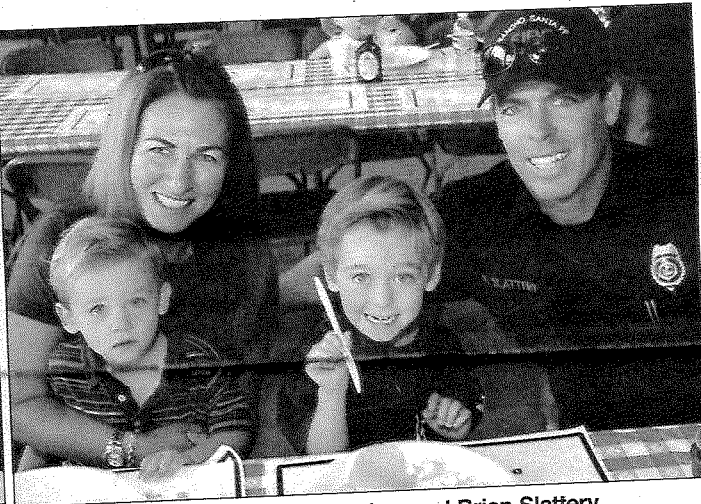
Diana Fisher, Carly Threadgill



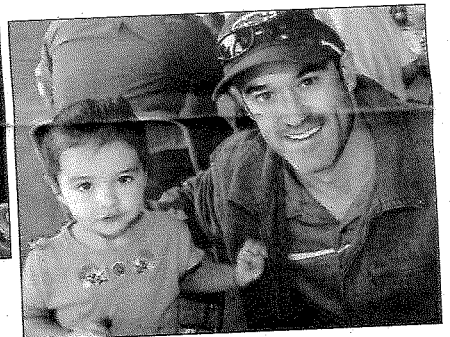
Jameson, Chris and Christina Danner



Hannah, Kim, Jonah and Kevin Slattery



Michelle, Eli, Christian, and Brian Slattery



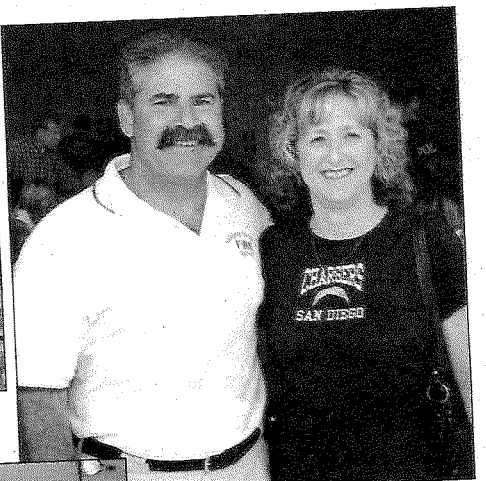
Cassandra and Allen Cinzori



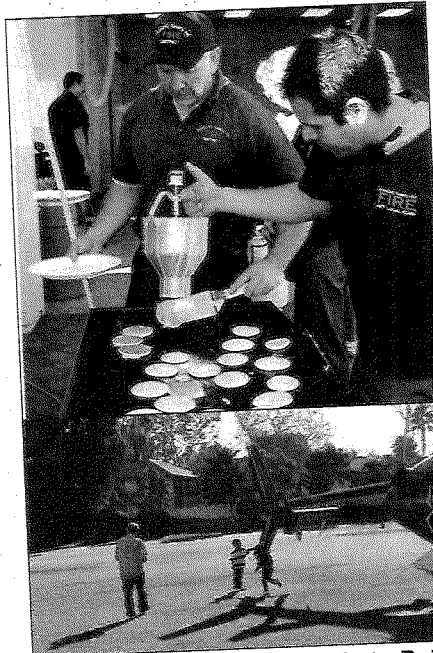
Ellyanna and Leslie Cinzori



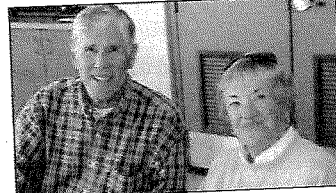
Brennan, Cole, Lyndee, Greg, and Connor Kaminsky



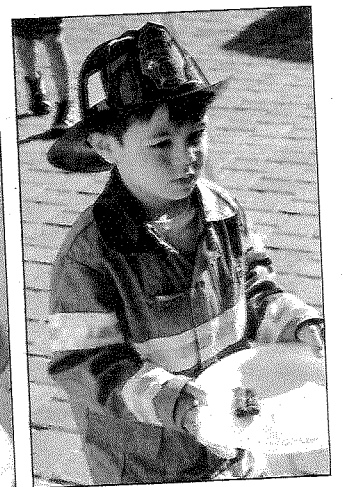
Nick and Karen Pavone



RSF Firefighters Pancake Breakfast
 The Rancho Santa Fe Professional Firefighters Association (RSFFPA) hosted an open house pancake breakfast Oct. 26 at Station 1 in Rancho Santa Fe. District firefighters served up pancakes, eggs, sausage, orange juice, and coffee for a requested donation of \$4. In addition to breakfast, the open house included fire engine rides, fire hose spraying, and fire engine displays.
 Photos/Jon Clark



Jim Ashcraft, Janet Best



Greyson Goldberg wore his firefighter suit to the breakfast.



Brian Schmid holding Callissa, Troy Elliott, Rene Hill holding Ryan



Top: Fred Cox and Abel Martinez; Bottom: Mercy Air helicopter was on display at the pancake breakfast