



Dedicated to a continuing rural atmosphere

From The Chair

By Evelyn Alemanni

According to what you told us in the recent survey, one thing elves don't like is change. We even proudly proclaim it as our keynote: ...a *continuing rural atmosphere*. As a community we have worked hard on this goal of keeping things as they are or, at a minimum, mitigating the inevitable damage that change drags along with it.

The County, on the other hand, is in the business of change and, by law, is required to update its plan. Once again we will have county planners at our town council meeting to explain the scope and extent of the changes that the County is planning in conjunction with their update of the general plan, GP2020. Their presentation will include the latest concepts of the Harmony Grove "village." How can a village with businesses, school, retail, and more be integrated into a rural atmosphere? Come and give your input.

This is a very important topic for our community and we need as many people at the next town council meeting as we can get so that the county is very clear as to our desires. The meeting is on the **second Wednesday** of January, January 8th, 2003.

From our entire town council board, we wish you a happy, safe, and prosperous new year, and a continuing rural atmosphere.

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***Town Council Meeting – Wednesday, January 8th @ 7:30 pm.
 At The Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Fire Station***

**Topic: GP2020 – proposed changes for Harmony Grove and Elfin Forest
 Guest speakers: Dahvia Locke, Howard Blackson, and LeAnn Carmichael
 from the San Diego County Department of Planning and Land Use**

Nominations For Town Council Board

Nominations for the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove town council board will be taken at the town council meeting on January 8th, 2003. The town council board consists of nine members who work on a variety of community projects. The time commitment is two meetings each month, help with the 4th of July parade and picnic, and to lead at least one or two special projects (you don't have to do it yourself!) Terms are for two years. To be eligible, you must be over 18 and own property within CSA 107.

Serving on the Board is a great way to meet lots of new people, understand what's going on in the community and make a difference. If you have any questions, please contact any of the current board members.

Elections will be held at the February town council meeting.

Fire Advisory Board of Directors Elections

By Nona Barker

An Advisory Board of seven locally elected officials and one paid Chief oversee the operations of the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Fire Department. Elections are held in February of each year. Terms are two years. This next election for the Fire Advisory Board of Directors has three positions up for election. One seat remained vacant this past year. Now is the time for interested parties to add their names to the ballot for the upcoming election. The Fire Advisory Board of Directors meets the 2nd Monday of each month at 7pm at the fire station. Below is a list of the items the BOD worked on this year:

Budgets, sleeping quarters, ambulance acquisition, parcel audit, grants, bylaws, Chief's contract, billing contract, taxes, policies, and insurance.

Interested parties can contact Nona Barker at ecllamas@aol.com or 760-471-5559.

University Commons Contact

If you need to report any problems with the University Commons project that is currently in progress along San Elijo and Rancho Santa Fe Roads, please call David Poole at 858-481-8500.

Elfin Forest Community Foundation Elections in February

By Betsy Keithley, Secretary EFCF

The Elfin Forest Community Foundation (EFCF) was established in 1995 with the mission to enhance the quality of rural life in the community of Elfin Forest. The Foundation provides funds for project supplies or community events. To date, the most visible projects have included fencing along trails and trees along Elfin Forest Road and other roads throughout the community. The EFTC Board of Directors decides Foundation policy and what projects will get funded. They are also financially responsible for the funds in the Foundation.

The bylaws require annual elections. The election will occur in February 2003 at the time of the Town Council and Fire Board elections. The term is three years with a minimum of two face-to-face meetings per year to review grant applications that are due in April and October.

If you would like to run for election, please submit to the EFCF, a letter so stating and include signatures from two community residents. Also please include a statement that you would like to be included in the February issue of the Chaparral. Just mail to, or drop off your letter at the fire station mail drop slot.

If you have any questions, call a member of the board, Steve Barker, Mike Vallee, Betsy Keithley, Martha Blane, Virginia McManus, Trey Fairman, Patti Newton, Philip Brailsford, or Frank Twohy or contact Betsy Keithley at ekeithley@ucsd.edu.

New Community Guide

A brand new edition of the community guide is being prepared. The community guide reflects all of us. One of the themes to emphasize in the next edition is helping new neighbors understand things that they might not know about if they've never lived in a rural community.

If there's something you'd like to see in the community guide or there's an article you want to write or update or you have photos (historical or recent) to share, please contact Evelyn Alemanni (alemanni@allea.com or 760-471-7224).

Attention Eden Valley!

By Carolyn Floyd

There are some very important issues on our horizon concerning the development of the remaining open land in our lovely valley. Although the City of Escondido seems to have backed off from industrialization at this time, it is not over yet.

Consider the following: Major landholders are now selling to developers and the County is preparing plans for a small village by the corner of Harmony Grove and Country Club Drive, and Escondido is considering a request from the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council (EFHGTC) to have Harmony Grove, and possibly Eden Valley, removed from Escondido's sphere of influence.

Do you want a voice in this?

At this time, Eden Valley has no citizens' group representing us or speaking for our best interests. Our previous representative group, the EVHG Citizens Group, has disbanded. Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove have an established town council. Members of the EFHGTC have been working closely with the County regarding the village concept, designating a wonderful trail system, and controlling overall population.

For the purpose of giving Eden Valley homeowners a voice and keeping us informed, a petition is being circulated requesting that the EFHGTC accept Eden Valley residents for a trial membership (there is no charge for town council membership). Unfortunately, when the EVHG Citizens Group disbanded, a majority of the Citizens Group board voted to give away all of the funds donated to them (nearly \$7,000!) This left our community with no funds to help us reorganize and is why this petition is being hand circulated, rather than mailed, throughout the neighborhood.

The EFHGTC has decided to help our community to communicate and reorganize and is sending this complimentary copy of their newsletter to all Eden Valley and Harmony Grove residents.

What you can do!

As so many very important issues are occurring so fast we need your support. If you haven't had a chance to **review this petition**, please contact me for a copy. **Come to the next meeting** of the EFHGTC

on January 8th at 7:30 pm at the Fire Station to hear the County talk about their plans for the proposed Harmony Grove Village. You may want to continue to receive this newsletter. Send \$15 for a one-year subscription (*subscription details found on the last page of this newsletter*) to keep apprised of the latest news. **Send us your email address** so we can let you know the latest information on upcoming meetings and recent decisions. And be very sure to **attend the Escondido City Council meeting** in February to voice support for removing us from their sphere of influence.

For further information, contact Carolyn Floyd at 760-741-6449 or email me at Sundance913@cs.com
THANK YOU!

Wanted: Part-time Heroes

Benefits include working with sick and injured people; long hours with frequent training; midnight pages and exciting, hard and dangerous work. Little or no pay. Must be at least 18 years old.

Call Chief Frank Twohy @ 760-471-8825

Why should you become an emergency services volunteer?

Simple. Because if you don't, someday you may call for help and find there's no one to answer the call.

You don't need to fight fires to volunteer.

According to a recent survey, the root cause of decline in active participation in our volunteer fire department can be directly attributed to the fact that those who fight fires are also burdened with the many other necessary tasks to keep our fire department afloat. It's the biggest contributor to "burn out" among active volunteers. So, in addition to thinking about becoming a trained volunteer firefighter, please consider helping in other ways as well, such as: fund-raising, vehicle and facility maintenance, record keeping, accounting, and community relations.

Answer the call.

Your participation, and that of your neighbors, is crucial if we are to keep our volunteer fire department alive and well. Think you can't make a difference? Think again. No matter how you choose to help out, you'll find schedules are flexible, new friends are assured, and the long-term personal and community rewards from performing this critical public service are immeasurable. So, volunteer today. Do it for others and discover all it can do for you!

Harmony Grove Village Update

By Mid Hoppenrath

A lot is happening in the Harmony Grove area these days! The 100 acre parcel located at the southwest corner of Country Club Drive and Mount Whitney Road has been sold. Rumor has it that it will be developed as a horse property. If this is true, it will fit in nicely with the residents' plan to promote a rural, equestrian community.

The plan for development of Quail Hills as a high-tech business park, the Escondido Research and Technology Center (ERTC), has been approved by the City of Escondido. If the State Energy Commission gives its approval, construction could start as soon as the first quarter of 2003. Many of us are anxious for the two-mile perimeter multi-use trail to be completed. I asked the City of Escondido to allow Sempra to spend some of its traffic mitigation money to add landscaped trails along portions of Country Club Drive and Kauana Loa and across the SDG&E hill south of the project. These trails will not only beautify our community but will help encourage residents, especially those in the proposed Harmony Grove Village (the other side of the SDG&E hill), to walk or bicycle to work in the ERTC. This will reduce the amount of rush-hour traffic. In addition, the County is considering acquisition of land on either side of Escondido Creek along Harmony Grove Road for a regional park ranging from the quarry area to the Elfin Forest Reserve and would, hopefully, include a creekside trail.

The maps for Harmony Grove Village are posted on the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council web site: www.efhgtc.org. The County's plan for the village core was well received by the San Dieguito Planning Group. To get more information, please come to the next Elfin Forest/ Harmony Grove community meeting on January 8th, where you will be able to get details direct from our guest speakers, Howard Blackson and Dahvia Locke, county planners. The next steps for the village plan are to gain approval by the County Planning Commission at the end of January, and ultimately, by the Board of Supervisors.

Petitions are circulating around Eden Valley with a request to join the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council. Please read the article by Carolyn Floyd elsewhere in this issue of the *chaparral* to find out

more on this important opportunity to gain a voice for Eden Valley.

The next steps for this community are to attend the public hearings on modifications to the Escondido sphere of influence (SOI): tentative date for the Planning Commission meeting on the SOI is January 28th, and for the City Council meeting, February 26th. It is important for everyone to attend these meetings to let Escondido know we want to leave the sphere of influence and develop our own community within the county.

Elfin Forest Garden Festival

By Evelyn Alemanni

Mark your calendar for **May 3, 2003** – that's the date of the first ever Elfin Forest Garden Festival. In July 2001, when "Good Morning America" named my garden one of the five best in America, the phone started ringing with people asking



for a tour. It hardly seemed fair, since my garden is the result of the inspiration and gifts of plants from many of our neighbor's beautiful and imaginative landscapes. By this past spring, 13 garden clubs had toured my garden and I felt sorry that they were missing out on other exquisite neighborhood gardens... so the garden festival was born.

At first, it was planned to be a tour of eight of Elfin Forest's gardens to benefit the Elfin Forest Landscape Foundation. Then, people wanted to sell things, have lunch, and so on. Soon it evolved into a full-fledged garden festival with its own web site, **www.elfinforestgardens.info**.

Besides eight open gardens, there will be a garden marketplace at the fire station, a gourmet lunch, raffle prizes, and a silent auction. Elfin Valley Nursery will be open that day and will donate 10% of their sales proceeds to the Elfin Forest Landscape Foundation.

We have already arranged a LOT of media coverage and received great garden items that you can win as raffle prizes.

So, mark the calendar and tell your friends. Then, call me (760-471-7224) or email (alemanni@allea.com) and tell me that you want to help in some way by volunteering a few hours.

Harmony Grove Village

The following maps are drafts of the proposals that the county has developed for a village center in Harmony Grove. The full-color version of the Community Working Copy Map (for those not receiving the PDF version of the *chaparral*) can be found at the town council web site: www.efhgtc.org.



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO



GENERAL PLAN 2020

HARMONY GROVE

Community Working Copy Map - September 2002

CAUTED INFORMATION
Information contained on this map has been, or is in the process of being modified and is subject to change

	Village Residential (VR-29), 29 du/ac
	Village Residential (VR-24), 24 du/ac
	Village Residential (VR-14.5), 14.5 du/ac
	Village Residential (VR-10.9), 10.9 du/ac
	Village Residential (VR-7.3), 7.3 du/ac
	Village Residential (VR-4.3), 4.3 du/ac
	Village Residential (VR-2.9), 2.9 du/ac
	Village Residential (VR-2), 2 du/ac
	Semi-rural Residential (SR-1), 1 du/ac
	Semi-rural Residential (SR-2), 1 du/2 ac
	Semi-rural Residential (SR-4), 1 du/4 ac
	Semi-rural Residential (SR-10), 1 du/10 ac

Questions About Landscaping?

People who have questions about landscaping issues (trails, signs, etc.) please contact Frank Oddo at frankoddoarts@aol.com or 760-744-6393.

Calendar for January 2003

Date	Time	Event
Weds 1/8	7: 30 pm	EF/HG Town Council Meeting
Tues 1/7, Tues 1/21	1:30 pm to 3:30 pm	Bookmobile@Firehouse
Tues 1/7, Tues 1/21	7 pm	Fire Training@Firehouse
Every Fri	10 am – noon	Playgroup
Every Thurs	6:30 pm	Yoga
Mon 1/13	7 pm	Fire Board@Firehouse
Weds 1/15	7 pm	Fire Auxiliary@Firehouse
Sat 1/25	8 am	Fire Training@Firehouse

Minutes Of Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council Meeting

By Patti Newton

DATE: December 4, 2002

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Telesco, Evelyn Alemanni, Patti Newton, Nancy Reed, Mid Hoppenrath, Janet McGurk, Karen Gardener

CALL TO ORDER: 7:40 p.m.

UPDATES: **Mid Hoppenrath** said developers have optioned a few large parcels on the Harmony Grove valley floor. So far the planned village densities are as currently planned; some properties are back to the original zoning and some are even lower than originally slated. Some owners are facing a major downzoning; this may be problematic in that it may force them to seek annexation to the City of Escondido to remedy their situations. The County Board of Supervisors is looking into the Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) as a possible solution. Mid encouraged people to contact the supervisors with their opinions on the subject. The county planners will make a presentation to the San Dieguito Planning Board on Dec. 12th. You can find out more by visiting the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove web site.

Janet McGurk reported that the EIR and archival library has been created on the second floor of the firehouse. Please dig up any old EIRs or other appropriate archival materials for cataloging and storage.

Evelyn Alemanni announced the availability of several different varieties of bulbs available for sale. Please contact her for purchase. She also distributed Grangetto's 10% discount cards to garden club members.

ITEM #1: Town council board member nominations were announced. **Rob Hill** nominated **Ari Franken** who accepted (but we'll believe it when we see it!).

ITEM #2: Natalie Chaffer announced the recipients of the community service awards. Fourteen people were nominated. They were: **Evelyn Alemanni, Joe Alemanni, Eric Anderson, Lynda Clerke, Paul Curtis, Doug Dill, Rob Hill, Mid Hoppenrath, Janet McGurk, Frank Oddo, Peggy Petitmermet, Nancy Reed, the EF/HG Fire Department, et al.**

ADJOURNED: 8:00 p.m.

Community Service Awards

At the December town council meeting and holiday party, new resident Natalie Chaffer presented Community Service Awards to our friends and neighbors who have, through their talent, time, and goodness, made a difference to our community. Nominations were solicited via the newsletter and email.



Awards were presented to:

Frank Oddo and Lynda Clerke: for the beautification of Elfin Forest Road.

Jennifer and Charles Coburn: for the gorgeous signs that mark our roads.

Eric Anderson: for donating wildflower seeds that were spread along Elfin Forest Road.

Nancy Reed: for work on trails and GP2020.

Mid Hoppenrath: for work on GP2020 and Harmony Grove.

Doug Dill: for excellent work on the San Dieguito Planning Group.

Peggy Petitmermet: for heading the block captains.

Frank Twohy, Nona Barker, and all the firefighters: for all the wonderful things they do.

Rob Hill: for putting up signs for the town council meetings.

Janet McGurk: for co-chairing the 4th of July picnic and establishing the EIR library.

Rachel Barnes: for co-chairing the 4th of July picnic and taking on the job of town council treasurer.

Paul Curtis: for volunteering to review EIRS.

Jan Denny: for volunteering to review EIRS.

Joe Alemanni: for editing the newsletter.

Evelyn Alemanni: for reviewing EIRs, working with the County, and other outside agencies.

Frequently Asked Questions about the Sphere of Influence

By Mid Hoppenrath

1. What is a SOI?

A sphere of influence (SOI) is a plan for a county area that is subject to the influence of city planning because it is destined to become annexed. The SOI means that certain policies apply to help the area become more and more urban, to make annexation easier. The city takes a special interest in how the county area within a SOI develops because it is the "probable ultimate boundaries"¹ of the city. For example, all building permits issued by the county for Harmony Grove/Eden Valley are reviewed by Escondido. Here are some excerpts copied directly from our current North County Metropolitan Area community plan text:

**The county will cooperate in planning and regulating growth of unincorporated territory within each city's sphere of influence. Future county decisions on proposed projects in the sphere areas will take each city's planning objectives into consideration*

**Identify potential commercial locations because identification of the potential commercial use of these sites if annexed to a city will serve as an incentive for the property owner to seek annexation in order to realize a more intense use of the property.*

**Conduct county studies on the feasibility of amending county road standards to make them consistent with each city's standards. Conduct a study on the feasibility of amending county ordinances relating to regulation on signs within the unincorporated area of each city's sphere of influence.*

Because the residents of the rural Harmony Grove and Eden Valley did not want the intense urban planning that characterizes the North County Metro Area, they petitioned the California State agency that regulates annexation, LAFCO, to leave Escondido's SOI. The residents also asked the county to change the boundaries of the San Dieguito Planning Group (SDPG) that plans for Rancho Santa Fe, Fairbanks Ranch, Elfin Forest, and Del Dios, among other unincorporated areas, so it includes Harmony Grove and Eden Valley. The residents submitted a new community plan text to the SDPG.

2. Won't Prop S save us from increased density if we annex to Escondido?

Prop S was instituted in 1998 and did not forestall Escondido's last attempt at annexation of Harmony Grove. Some will say that Prop S has since been tested and proves that the Escondido voters do not want higher density. What has been proved is that Escondido voters did not want the zoning on a few small parcels to change from residential to industrial. But whether the Escondido voters will feel the same way about rezoning almost a thousand acres that can provide enough revenue from sales tax, permitting, and mitigation fees to help build new schools, improve the roads, create public parks, and add hundreds of jobs, all at no cost to them, is a very different issue. The Escondido voter may feel, as the current mayor does, that the Harmony Grove area represents one of the last remaining places to site the employment lands that Escondido so badly needs. Reliance on Prop S leaves decisions about Harmony Grove and Eden Valley property values and lifestyle in the hands of urban voters, while leaving the SOI puts the county resident in a position with the most political control.

3. The Escondido city council says it will not try to industrialize, but rather will give us nice large lot homes. What could be wrong with that?

Remember Prop S? It is not up to the mayor nor the city council to decide if Harmony Grove or Eden Valley gets homes or industry, it is up to the Escondido voter. If the voters in Escondido decide they want more jobs, better schools, improved roads, and more parks, they can vote to industrialize our valley. There are no policies to eliminate this risk.

4. Will it cost me more money to be annexed to Escondido or to leave the SOI and let the county create the village?

There are both city and LAFCO fees associated with annexing to Escondido that must be paid by the property owners in the annexed area, including fees for environmental review, rezoning and application processing, LAFCO fees, State Board of Equalization fees, fees for any election that may be required, and additional fees that may be imposed to finance necessary improvements. These fees can be paid through a variety of financing mechanisms (assessment district, Mello-Roos district, Bond

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(FAQs About The SOIC - from previous page)

Measure, etc).¹ So whether the dairy and egg ranchers decide to put luxury homes or an industrial park in the city, if we stay in the SOI those homeowners along the path to the city will be annexed and assessed; this has been estimated at \$20,000 to \$25,000 per acre in the past. In contrast, even if the county zoned for high density on the dairy and egg ranches, nearby homeowners would not be assessed.

5. What if we leave the SOI and the large land owners decide to try for more density, more houses, than our village plan allows?

The whole village concept is designed to prevent urban sprawl. Any landowner who wants more homes than is allowed by the village plan will have to ask for a General Plan Amendment. Briefly, here is the county's process for accepting changes to the General Plan. First of all, there will be moratorium on any change to the 2020 GP for 3 years following approval of the plan. After the moratorium has ended, the Board of Supervisors hears only 3 GP amendment requests each year, for the entire county, not just our area or even the north county area (they actually will hear four, but they generally reserve the last one for emergencies). It can take many years for an applicant to have their amendment request heard, depending on the number of GPA requests. Then the applicants need to do an area EIR (which is much more expensive than the site-specific EIR required by the village plan), and there must be public hearings. And unlike at Escondido public hearings, Harmony Grove and Eden Valley residents are actually the voting constituents at Board of Supervisor public hearings! It will be very difficult, and very expensive, for landowners to make a change to the county's village plan.

6. Can't we just stay in the SOI, and wait to see if the county or the city will be the better place?

Staying in a SOI means, to all county and city authorities, that the residents expect the area to be annexed. So if Harmony Grove and Eden Valley willingly stay in the SOI, it becomes much more difficult to defend the position that we want to stay rural. The county may not approve our request to join the SDPG. The current North County Metro plan is geared toward urbanization and has no rural village concept. If we later decide to leave the sphere,

LAFCO may be reluctant to burden Escondido with another expensive sphere update so soon after the last. There are no guarantees. Staying in the SOI means the residents must confront continual annexation and industrialization issues. Leaving the SOI makes it more difficult for Escondido to annex the area.

7. If we stay in the SOI, can't we just vote to stop our annexation?

An annexation does not require a vote of those being annexed. However, if enough registered voters in the area oppose the annexation, LAFCO can hold a special election for the county residents. Fully half of the all the registered voters must oppose the annexation to prevent it from happening. However, strong opposition from those in the SOI may not be enough, because "the annexation area may be adjusted to include only areas of strong support."¹

8. What happens next?

LAFCO will hold a public hearing on whether to allow Harmony Grove to leave the SOI. It is very important that the area residents attend these hearings or at least submit written statements to LAFCO with their opinion. LAFCO will be counting each and every one of these comments, so every one is important.

For more information:

Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO)
Joe Convery, LAFCO, 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 452; San Diego, CA 92101
Phone: 619-531-5400

Harmony Grove Village Concept; County Policies
Dahvia Locke, Planner I, Department of Planning and Land Use County of San Diego, 5201 Ruffin Road, Suite B, San Diego, CA. 92123-1666
Phone: 858-495-5873; Fax: 858-694-3373;
email: dahvia.locke@sdcounty.ca.gov

Escondido Annexation/SOI Policies
Jay Petrek, Senior Planner, City of Escondido Planning Division,
201 North Broadway; Escondido, CA 92025
Phone: 760-839-4556; Fax: 760-839-4313

San Dieguito Planning Group
Ken King, Chairperson
P.O. Box 2789
Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067

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(FAQs About The SOIC - from previous page)

Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council
Evelyn Alemanni, Chairperson
20223 Elfin Forest Road, Elfin Forest, CA 92029
Phone: 760-471-7224

References:

1. *User's Guide to Annexation*. City of Escondido. September 12, 2001. Available by request.

Disclaimer: This information is meant to inform area residents of the issues concerning SOIs and is not meant to be interpreted as legal or political advice. The author is not an employee of the City of Escondido, LAFCO, nor the County of San Diego, and does not claim to be their representative. This information is not endorsed by the City of Escondido, LAFCO, SDPG, NCMPPA, nor the County of San Diego. The reader is urged to independently verify all facts presented herein.

Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Playgroup By Mary Moore

Our playgroup has grown tremendously over the past two years! What started out in 1998 as a few parents needing to connect with other families and have outlets for their children, has since taken off! The EF/HG playgroup is now officially recognized by the "Las Madres" organization of Parent Connection from Scripps Hospital La Jolla. We are an open playgroup meaning any age can join, as well as any neighborhood or community.

Generally, we still have playgroup once a week, but with the older children now attending school and preschool, our schedule has had to be flexible. We've visited local museums, taken the Coaster train to Old Town, toured fire stations (including our own!), visited the local Palomar airport, and hosted several birthday parties and baby showers. Our playgroup has remained very active and cohesive throughout the years.

We are proud to recognize new families to Elfin Forest including Lori and Robert Wazny, with sons Reese (1) and Logan (4), David and Amanda Wright with son Jordan (10 months), Pam and John Sanford with daughter Arielle (8 months), Megan and Patrick Fleming with daughter Phoebe (2) and another daughter on the way, Dan and Natalie Chaffer with daughters Avalon (5) and Gillian (3), and Wes and Kathleen Schott (daughter of the Cronshaw's) and their children J.D. (5) and Emma (2).

If you have suggestions, comments or questions about the playgroup please feel free to contact either myself, Mary Moore (760-591-3080) or Toni Fairman (760-471-0875).

RSF School Bond and PTO Update By Lori Clark

ON THE FAILED SCHOOL BOND - In the wake of the failure of the Proposition Y School Bond, the Rancho Santa Fe Board of Trustees is considering its options for a future ballot measure. It's important for Elfin Forest residents to voice their desires NOW for what they want in this measure. The Citizens' Oversight Committee was disbanded as a result of the School Bond failure; however, Dr. Vinson has asked me to remain involved as the district moves forward. Please call or email me (760-510-2001 or clark-17@ix.netcom.com) with your ideas and PLEASE take the time to write a letter to Dr. Daniel Vinson and the Board of Trustees (Kathleen A. Stumm, Deborah Plummer, Barbara Taylor Michael Kreiss, and John Styker) to tell them what's important to you in expanding the school district. Address: RSF School District, P.O. Box 809, Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067 or FAX: 858-756-0712.

ON THE RSF PTO – Thank you to all those families in Elfin Forest who've already joined the Parent Teacher Organization. We need all RSF school families to show their support for the programs that enrich our children and make Rancho Santa Fe Roger Rowe School top-notch. The basic PTO membership level is \$75 and goes up from there. Your membership pays for 2002-2003 programs including Math Enrichment, School Sports, Music, Spanish, Art, Computers, special events (such as Oceans Week), and more. This year Lynda Clerke and I are going to try to attain 100% membership of families. We'd love to see Elfin Forest residents show support for their school by joining the Parent Teacher Organization at Rancho Santa Fe.

EIR Library Needs Your Old EIRs

Janet McGurk has established a library in the fire station for old town council records and environmental impact reports. If you have any EIRs or items that belong in the town council archives, please bring them to the town council meeting on January 8th and give them to Janet or contact her at 760-471-8937 or mcgurk@bytebloc.com.

Swiftwater Awareness

By Nona Barker

With the return of El Nino to Southern California, great danger returns to Harmony Grove, Elfin Forest and Questhaven Road area. Sudden showers can produce a large amount of rainfall in a short period of time. The result is large quantities of run-off moving through drainages and culverts and creeks; something referred to as SWIFTWATER. Each year, between 200 and 500 people in North America are killed by floods. Why? Because most people do not understand the power of moving water.

Recently, three women drowned when attempting to cross by car the rain-swollen Agua Hedionda Creek on Sunny Creek Road in Carlsbad. They, apparently, ignored a verbal warning and entered the creek in their sedan. The water's force capsized the car trapping them inside.

The Escondido Creek becomes extremely dangerous with the winter El Nino rains and is a swiftwater rescuer's nightmare. There are many bridges crossing it and each bridge is constructed differently thus having inherent dangers of its own. In 1990, the Escondido Creek claimed two lives. One died at the Country Club Drive crossing and one up stream near the Howard Bridge crossing.

Swiftwater is powerful. A river is a gravity-driven system. The steeper the grade, the faster the water moves. The amount of pressure exerted against an object is directly related to the amount of water flowing downstream, the speed of the current, and the amount of the surface area contacted by the water. A current of 3 mph will press against your legs with nearly 17 pounds of pressure. When the speed of the current doubles to 6 mph the pressure quadruples to nearly 68 pounds.

Now imagine your entire body is in the current. The swiftwater applies 134 pounds of pressure when only moving at 6 mph. If you are pressed up against a car or a rock you would have a very difficult time getting out of the water; if you got out at all. Swiftwater is relentless. Once a victim, boat or vehicle is pinned, the water pressure will not ease up until the water level finally drops.

What's the point of all this; your safety and the safety of the fire department. How can you protect yourself and keep from becoming a statistic?

RULE #1: Never enter moving water!

RULE #2: When faced with swiftwater or flooding, refer to Rule #1!

Never walk across a flowing stream or creek. Take the extra time to go around. Don't drive through flooded crossings, around barricades or through areas where water crosses the roadway. Remember, water as shallow as two feet deep can float a car and less can push a car off the road and into the creek bed.

If you see someone fall into moving water:

- DO NOT ATTEMPT TO RESCUE THEM YOURSELF! Many of the people who die each year in floods are untrained people trying to rescue others.
- Send someone to dial 9-1-1 immediately.
- Try to keep an eye on the person to help direct the rescuers once they arrive.

If you see children playing in a drainage area or creek during wet weather call 9-1-1 and advise the law enforcement agency in the area. You may save a life.

Besides the Country Club Drive crossing, the bridge in the old trailer park is especially dangerous. When the water at this crossing is high, it creates a low head dam. Low head dams circulate a victim underwater not letting them up. Please stay clear of this area.

In the 1990's the fire department responded to trouble at the "Car Wash" or the Arizona crossing on Suerte Del Este". Two SUVs loaded with kids on the way to school slid down the last hill to the creek, getting stuck in the two-foot deep mud. One pickup truck, also on the way to school, attempted to cross the raging creek, stalled, and was washed off the road. Luckily no one was injured. Just embarrassed, wet, cold, and scared to death!

And let's not forget Questhaven Road. That narrow seasonal stream meandering along the road can and has become also most as wide as the road. Several times in past years, sections of the road have been washed away. This stream has also closed Harmony Grove Road.

When you see the barricades and road-closed signs on Harmony Grove Road, don't get mad; respect them. If your driveway bridge is underwater, stay home. If it's been raining for several days, don't drive the "back" way to school.

Don't become a statistic. Stay alive.

Elfin Forest Beautification Project

By Susan Oddo

We are often asked, “What is the story behind the trails, fencing and trees that have been added along Elfin Forest Road?” Briefly, here is an overview.

Although unincorporated, Elfin Forest has a strong community identity centered on our active Town Council and volunteer Fire Department. One way to enhance that, thought 22-year resident and landscape architectural designer Frank Oddo, was to express our unity visibly. So, he initiated the Elfin Forest Beautification Project in 2000 to beautify our main thoroughfare, create a more unified community appearance, and afford a safer way for pedestrians and riders to traverse from one end of our valley to the other. The project currently spans the two-mile stretch beginning at the Elfin Forest sign on the west end and extending east to the intersection of Questhaven and Harmony Grove Roads.

Frank Oddo and co-chair Lynda Clerke dedicated hundreds of hours in 2001 and 2002 to obtain funding, donations of labor and materials, and homeowner participation to meet project goals. CARE, the source of mitigation funding from San Elijo, the Elfin Forest Community Foundation, and People for Trees, all contributed. Residents and businesses also contributed generously of time and materials. Non-profit status assures that donations are tax-deductible.

The project really began nearly two decades ago when Frank Oddo first drafted the designs for the walls and street sign concepts. The threat of the trash to energy plant sidelined the idea for the duration of that 11-year task. Retirement offered Frank a chance to revitalize his dream.

Frank’s designs called for monument walls with custom steel signs to replace the standard pole street signs. Each street sign features a local bird or animal as its “mascot”, including owls, hummingbirds, coyotes, mountain lions and others. Renowned artists and Elfin Forest residents, Jennifer and Charles Coburn, transformed his concepts into CAD drawings and then into the beautiful, hand-painted steel signs you see on the walls.

Due to the way growth in our valley evolved, some side streets do not have names. The homes on these streets have house numbers along Elfin Forest Road.

For them, boulders will feature house numbers in the same typeface as the wall signs. Now that the walls are done, this phase is in work.

Frank and Lynda also obtained rights-of-way across property bordering Elfin Forest Road for a trail system. Weaving along Elfin Forest Road, over 6,600 feet of split rail, fence-lined trails, padded with nearly 14 tons of mulch, were installed for equestrian and pedestrian use. A section on the property owned by Quail Ridge is not yet done because the developer has not signed the right-of-way but we are hopeful that this will be accomplished soon.

To maintain the rural atmosphere of our community, some 65 oak trees were planted along Elfin Forest Road. In addition, nearly 200 California Pepper trees have been planted. The planting required irrigation necessitating different solutions for each parcel of privately owned land that the trail crosses.

The homeowners over whose property the trails pass are to be highly commended for their participation and generosity in providing the necessary access and irrigation. Without them, none of it could have happened.

The Elfin forest Beautification Project embodies what so many of us seek by living in Elfin Forest – a slice of old fashioned Americana that recognizes the value of its citizens and a healthy, nurturing environment in which to live and raise families.

Elf Alerts

Elf Alerts are email notices about issues that need your immediate attention. They don’t replace the newsletter, but supplement it.

If you are not receiving your Elf Alerts, please send your email address to alemanni@allea.com and ask to be added to the list. Don’t worry, the emails are sent as blind CCs, so your address is not made public, and we don’t share the list with ANYONE.

San Elijo Hills Contact

If you need to report any problems with the grading, traffic, etc. regarding the San Elijo Hills (SEH) project, please contact Phil Stillman who is SEH liaison with the community. He can be reached at philstillman@fstlaw.com. If you feel the problem was still not resolved, call San Elijo at 760-918-8200.

Minding Your Manure

By Martha Blane

Few can dispute the beauty and grace of horses and the joy that comes from owning and caring for them and other livestock. Most people enjoy animals, yet neighbors can sometimes be concerned that they are manure-generating, water-polluting, fly and odor machines. Keeping horses or other animals on limited acreage can intensify potential problems. Horses in particular produce large amounts of manure that quickly accumulates. A 1,000-pound horse will produce about 12 tons of manure and soiled bedding annually. Because most horses are kept in suburban or rural residential settings, their owners know it is important to be good neighbors and that thoughtful management can overcome potential problems, particularly when it comes to manure disposal.

When it is improperly handled and stored, animal waste contributes to water pollution, flies and odors. To minimize runoff reaching drainages or streams, barns, corrals and other high-use areas should be located so that water does not drain into the nearest creek. Divert any surface drainage water and runoff from nearby roofs (by installing gutters) away from barns and corrals and the manure pile. Animal holding areas should be swept or shoveled at least once per day, and not hosed down where contaminated water can run into a drainage.

Do not store manure where runoff or floodwater will cause nutrients to enter nearby waterways. A covered manure storage area (on a concrete or other non-permeable pad) will have much less leachate than one exposed to rainfall. Prevent any manure pile leachate from contaminating groundwater or nearby waterways by capturing it in a detention basin.

Animal access to creeks and streams should be restricted by fencing; never place animal pens in creeks, even small dry creeks. It is extremely important to prevent discharges from entering drainages and creeks as they flow to lagoons and ultimately the ocean.

Another source of water pollution is from field-applied manure that is subject to surface runoff or is deposited near drainages, creeks or streams. Manure should not be spread over un-vegetated areas (i.e., dirt pastures, trails, etc.). Occasionally layering some manure in your compost pile shouldn't create a problem, especially if plenty of green waste is added.

Animal waste can easily be temporarily stored in sturdy, seepage-free containers (i.e., dumpsters) and periodically hauled away via a manure transport service to composting centers. This disposal method will minimize water pollution, odors and flies. Contracting with a waste disposal hauler who will remove the manure and recycle it in a commercial composting operation is an excellent solution for proper manure disposal. One company in the San Diego area who provides this service is: Organic Recycling West, Inc. (619-661-6712), other companies may provide similar services. Also, manure can be hauled to Evergreen Nursery (858-481-0622). Another option to consider is setting up a "manure co-op". Folks with just a few horses could join others for shared use of a centrally located dumpster.

Maintaining good neighbor relations through minimizing runoff, flies and odors will assure the compatibility of livestock within the neighborhood. Before you allow anything to go downhill into a drainage or creek, stop and think. Everything eventually flows into our creeks, through wetlands, lagoons and into the ocean.

More information can be obtained on the Internet and from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (760-745-2061).

Oddo Landscaping Testimonial

By Lynda & Dennis Clerke

There's some new entrepreneurial spirit here in Elfin Forest. Inspired by his role in the Elfin Forest Landscape Foundation, Frank Oddo has begun his own landscape company, **Oddo Artscaping**. His previous architectural and design background has the company off to a great start. As his first Elfin Forest client we have to say he did an outstanding job. So if you're thinking about landscaping your property we highly recommend contacting Frank at 744-6393. We know you'll be pleased with the results.

Brushing, Grading, Clearing Questions?

If you have questions about guidelines, policies and standards for brushing, grading, and clearing, or if you need to report a violation, call the County Department of Planning and Land Use 760-940-2893.

Garden Projects for January

By Evelyn Alemanni



The winter solstice has come and gone, and unlike our friends and relatives in colder climes who can spend January curled up by a cozy fire reading seed catalogs, we need to get outside and get busy.

First of all, what about that Christmas poinsettia? Today's highly hybridized poinsettias aren't like their forebears that would grow 10' to 12' high and provide armloads of cut flowers. This familiar Christmas plant does well indoors in good light, but by March you'll probably be ready to toss it into the compost. Planting it outside is an option, but bunnies love them and rain causes them to "melt down." So the compost pile is my favorite option.

With rain come snails. You know you have snails by the silvery trails they leave, holes chewed in leaves, or seeds that you think haven't sprouted. Snail bait often does the job, but there's a trick to using it. First, be sure to place it where it won't harm your pets. Spread it in the late afternoon, because sunlight decreases its effectiveness. Be sure the ground is moist then sprinkle lightly near infested areas. After sundown, snails and slugs will come out and eat it. Most snail bait includes a chemical that paralyzes the mollusks. By morning, they can't return to their shady homes and become dehydrated. Better than bait is to go out at night with a flashlight and handpick the critters off your plants. You can dispose of them in an empty gallon milk jug (be sure to put the cap back on!) You can also set boards out for them to hide under and then turn the boards over in the morning and "harvest" your snails.

One of January's more pleasurable jobs is planting the many bare root options available now: fruit trees, berries such as raspberries and blackberries, grapes, and roses. Remember to dig a huge hole and backfill it with nice, fluffy topsoil mixed with some of the native soil. You can add a slow-release fertilizer if you want. If gophers plague your garden, consider wrapping the roots of your plants in chicken wire before planting. If rabbits and/or deer are frequent guests, you will also want to wrap the top of the plant in chicken wire to prevent it from being eaten. Don't

worry about the visual effect of the silvery wire, it quickly turns brown and is almost invisible.

January is also a great time to finish planting your spring bulbs. If you refrigerated tulips and hyacinth bulbs, this is the time to plant them. The rule of thumb is to plant them in full sun, about as deep as the bulb is tall.

Another January project is rose pruning. Why prune roses at all since some of them are still blooming? Pruning gives them a much-needed rest and removes diseased leaves and branches. It also encourages the plant to make healthy new growth. Pruning is easy – just remove all the dead and diseased branches and keep trimming until you have three to six sturdy canes that are 18"–36" tall (this seems to be a matter of personal preference.) If possible, remove all growth less than 1/2" in diameter. Remove all the leaves. Spray the plant with dormant spray and don't feed until the end of February.

Also prune your deciduous fruit trees and spray them with dormant spray. Pruning requirements depend on the type of tree, so it's a good idea to consult a pruning handbook or check www.crfg.org for tips.

For garden inspiration, attend the 18th Annual Spring Home/Garden Show at the Del Mar Fairgrounds being held February 28th through March 2nd, 2003. On Friday, February 29th at 1:00 p.m. I'll be giving a workshop called "*How to Create Your Most Beautiful Garden Ever.*"

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www.buenacreekgardens.com

www.sdvdesigns.com

ALL.EA

Evelyn Alemanni 760-591-0417

News From Questhaven Retreat



Sunday worship is at 10:45 a.m. All are welcome.

20560 Questhaven Road.
760-744-1500.

www.questhaven.org.

Study groups meet on weeknights. Please call the office for times and locations.

Weekly - Meditation

Wednesday at 7:15 p.m.

Meet at El Chapelito, Led by Jean Michalewicz.

The Way Within Meditation Classes

1st & 3rd Wednesday at 12:00 Noon

Meet in the Academy, Led by Rev. Phyllis Isaac.

Exploration in Prayer Classes

2nd & 4th Wednesday at 12:00 Noon

Meet in the Academy, Led by Rev. Elizabeth Wood.

Sheriff's Department Contacts

In an emergency, please call 911. For non-emergency reporting, contact the following:

Jackie Cruz – agriculture crime prevention specialist
760-940-4350

Robert Jennings – Deputy 760-510-5223

Norma Nares – Sargeant 760-510-5217

Tim Mahoney – Deputy 760-510-5224

Betty (B.J.) Williams – Crime Prevention
Specialist/Neighborhood Watch 760-510-5254

Elfin Forest Ladies Bunco Night By Lori Clark

The next Potluck-Bunco Party is scheduled for Friday, Jan. 24th from 7pm-10pm at Lisa Stephenson's home. Whether you're new to Elfin Forest, a long-time resident or somewhere in between, you're invited to socialize with neighbors and play Bunco for fun and prizes. Please plan to bring a \$5 bill, a dish to share, and beverage to share. Ladies Bunco Night happens on the 4th Friday of each month (provided we have a volunteer to host). To volunteer to host a future Bunco event, please contact Lori Clark at: 760-510-2001 or email: clark-17@ix.netcom.com.

January Playgroup Schedule By Mary Moore

Week of January 1st, New Year's break.

Thursday, January 9th meet at around 3pm at Sun Vista Park in Encinitas. It is at the corner of Rancho Santa Fe Road and Avenida las Postas.

Saturday, January 18th at 1pm. It's a combined birthday party for Clayton Moore and Olivia Sidwell who are both turning one year old. It will be held at the Moore's. Please RSVP at 760-591-3080. 19919 Fortuna del Este. Friday January 24th around 10am at Stagecoach park in Carlsbad.

Thursday, January 30th around 3pm at Target (Leo Muellens) park in Encinitas.

Happy Birthdays to Ashley Goetz who is turning five, and Kevin Moore and Olivia Sidwell who will be turning one!

Thank you to Toni Fairman for doing the Playgroup schedule the past year!

Happy New Year!

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Elfin Forest Book Group

By Karen Gardner

Our January book selection is “The Hours” by Michael Cunningham. If you don’t have time to read the book during the holiday season you can watch the movie that will be coming out on December 27th!! Either way we would love to have you join our lively discussion on January 16th at 7:30 pm. We welcome anyone over the age of 16!!

We will be meeting at Karen Gardner’s house at 7101 Circa De Media. As always, food and drink will be provided! For further details please contact Karen Gardner at Karen@vintagematerialism.com or 760-744-9500.

EIRs Out For Review

Here’s a brief overview of Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) expected in the near future:

Quail Ridge (*out soon*) – 69 homes along Elfin Forest Road. (Patti Newton is heading the review committee.)

San Elijo Ridge (*Comments were due Dec. 12th*) – 120+ homes on 6000 square foot lots on Questhaven Road. (Max Altmann’s project formerly referred to as “Pulte”.) (Evelyn Alemanni is heading the review committee.)

All of these projects will significantly affect your quality of life. After an EIR is certified it is extremely difficult to get objectionable elements of a project modified or to seek mitigation. Get involved and help with the review. Make a difference.

chaparral by email

If you’re not already receiving a full color, PDF format copy of the *chaparral* by email send an email note to alemanni@allea.com to be added to the list. Cost for the PDF version is free to regular “hardcopy” subscribers and only \$10.00/year to receive the PDF version only.

Town Council Website

The Elfin Forest Website is up and running, and being improved every week. Check it out at: www.efhgctc.org.

You can list your business in the Links section for only \$10 per year!

Guidelines For Safe Christmas Tree Disposal

By Eric Oldar, Regional Field Specialist
Calif. Dept. of Forestry & Fire Protection

California residents are being advised by a statewide task force to take precautions when disposing of their Christmas trees this year to help control the spread of pitch canker, an incurable disease that has killed thousands of Monterey pine trees.

Pitch canker, a non-native tree disease, causes dieback and mortality in native and ornamental pine trees. It may also infect Monterey pine Christmas trees. While every attempt is made to sell only disease-free Christmas trees, some trees could harbor the disease without showing symptoms. "Our concern," explained Steve Staub, Chairman of the California Pitch Canker Task Force, "is that the disease could be transported to areas of the state that don't have pitch canker. And since there is no known cure for pitch canker, limiting its spread is the key to prevention."

The disease is present in 18 coastal and adjacent inland California counties from Mendocino to San Diego. Bark beetles, which carry the fungus, primarily infest Monterey and Bishop pines but might also feed and breed on inland forest trees such as Ponderosa pine. As yet, the disease has not been found in the Sierras. It does not infect humans, pets or other plants.

Pitch canker should not prevent citizens from purchasing a Monterey pine Christmas tree. Some simple precautions will help prevent the spread of pitch canker:

1. Purchase and dispose of Monterey pine Christmas trees locally. Don't transport them long distances.
2. Preferred methods of disposal include: a local recycling program, a local landfill that either buries or composts green waste, or chip the tree and either compost the chips or use them as a mulch around your home.
3. If you choose a live Monterey pine and decide to keep it, purchase it locally and do not transport it outside the area.

For further information, contact your local Agricultural Commissioner's office or look at http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/pitch_canker/.

On The Wing - Neater Seed Feeder By Scott Todd, Wild Bird Center

When was the last time you looked at your bird-feeding stations with an eye toward cleanliness? Those spoiled seeds, hulls and other debris that accumulate at feeders are a breeding ground for diseases that can lead to spoilage and avian illnesses. If you are like me, an endless number of other events and activities beg for more attention than a dirty backyard bird feeder.

However, when your guilt finally gets the best of you or a sudden turn of fortune frees up 30 minutes of your time, here are some shortcuts and tricks to make feeder cleanup easier.

Many of the tools for cleaning feeders are readily available at most homes. Bottlebrushes, those green scrubby sponges, paper towels and scrub brushes along with discarded toothbrushes all work well for the chore ahead.

Bottlebrushes of varying sizes along with fairly stiff bristles make cleaning tube feeders a snap. Green scrubbies attached to a hard plastic or wood square really gets the debris off of wood hopper feeders, while protecting your fingers from wood splinters from older feeders. Paper towels can be rolled and used to clean hard to reach areas around seed ports. That old toothbrush can be used to clean cracks and crevasses. Better yet, canine tooth brushes that Rover no longer uses make the best tools because of longer handles and stiffer bristles.

Your cleaning process begins with a plastic pail or tub filled with very hot (not boiling) water and white vinegar – 50/50 solution. A 10% bleach solution may also be substituted. Let your feeders soak 10 minutes (do top and bottom rotation). Clean the feeder with your assorted tools. Rinse with fresh, very hot water. Inspect for any leftover debris and then rinse well with garden hose. Let your feeders completely dry and then refill with fresh seed.

Try to follow this process every month and your feeder will glisten in the sun and send a strong message to your avian friends that you care about their health.

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For Sale: 1987 Suzuki ATV, great condition, \$2,500. Call Lynda or Dennis at 760-510-0143

For Sale: Telescope 6" Starsplitter Gem telescope and extra Barlow lenses. Cost over \$600. Explore the night sky. See Saturn's rings, Jupiter's moons, mountains on the moon, etc. In the original box. \$250. 760-736-9257.

For Sale: Split Oak firewood, 1/2 cord \$100.00. Call Phil Cancellier 760-436-7456.

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Wanted: Family looking to purchase Elfin Forest home or property located in the RSF school district. Call 760-944-3954.

Wanted: Housecleaning person for 4 hours each week. Various jobs. Please call Leslie for details. 760-752-1014.

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The Board gratefully acknowledges the efforts of Joe and Evelyn Alemanni for editing, producing and distributing this newsletter.