



Dedicated to a continuing rural atmosphere

From The Chair

By Mid Hoppenrath

Sometimes a lack of knowledge can cause a lot of damage. There is a lot going on these days in our valley. Unfortunately, misinformation is circulating about multi-story apartment buildings and affordable housing projects being planned by the County for the new village. Just as incorrectly, the city plan is said to call for 300 custom homes and no industry for the same acreage. It can be difficult to know what the truth is, and the result can be confusion about who to believe or trust. Even worse, some may act on this misinformation and cause consequences they did not foresee and do not want.

Last month I wrote about being proactive to help shape the coming changes. Along with being proactive comes a responsibility to first become informed. One excellent way to stay informed is to regularly attend the town council meetings, held the first Wednesday of every month at 7:30 pm at the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Fire Station. Escondido City planner Jay Petrek and San Diego County planner Dahvia Locke, along with the county village planner Howard Blackson, will be at the next meeting, May 7th, so you can question them directly about the county and city plans. You can also telephone or email your elected representatives.

However you choose to stay informed, please carefully consider the source of your information. Putting your confidence in reliable information will allow you to act, as in the medical profession oath, to "First, do no harm"!

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Town Council Meeting – Wednesday, May 7th @ 7:30 p.m.

At The Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Fire Station

Topic: Update on the Harmony Grove Village Plan

Guest speakers include Escondido City planner Jay Petrek and San Diego County planners Dahvia Locke and Howard Blackson

Elfin Forest Garden Festival

By Evelyn Alemanni

Saturday May 3rd, 2003 – that's the date of the first-ever Elfin Forest Garden Festival. Order tickets by sending a check payable to the EF/HG Town Council to 20223 Elfin Forest Rd. Escondido, 92029 or order online at www.elfinforestgardens.info.



Visit eight gorgeous gardens and get a gift bag and raffle ticket. Buy garden stuff from vendors at the fire station! Bid on silent auction items, get free consultations from garden experts, and enjoy a gourmet lunch prepared by the incomparable ladies of the fire auxiliary. Tickets are \$20 for the festival, \$12 for lunch. Two gardens will be open at no charge; maps available at the fire station. It's going to be a great day – plan on enjoying it in the garden.

Picnic News

By Janet McGurk

4th of July Country Fair - Sunday, June 29, 2003

Here's a short update on the upcoming picnic and a call for volunteers. The dunk tank is back! It's an inflatable plastic tank (no rusty metal or hard sides to get hurt on). Like to be one of the people in the tank? You must be 10 years of age or older please. Let us know (phone numbers below) and remember to bring a change of clothes or your swimsuit.

The Red Lane Band is playing for us this year so we'll have great music. Photo contest rules and entry form are found elsewhere in this newsletter. Send in your entry forms so we have an idea of the number of entries and can plan space for displaying the pictures. Volunteers are still needed for:

- Set up on Saturday June 28th and Sunday the 29th.
- Clean up after the picnic.
- Horseshoe Tournament.
- Coordinate and oversee ping-pong tournament.
- Coordinate and oversee kite-making activity.
- Coordinate and oversee animals at the "zoo".
- Coordinate and oversee donation of items that can be used in the raffle and silent action.
- Manning the various booths.

We'll drop any activity that doesn't get a sufficient number of volunteers. Note: the pony rides and line dancing went the way of all budget cuts. Your picnic coordinators are Janet McGurk, 760-471-0831, and Rachael Barnes, 760-471-4300.

4th of July Parade Details

Take a day off from weed wacking and come on down and be part of our 26th annual 4th of July parade and picnic. This year's event will be held on June 29th. The parade theme is "Keep'n It Country". To celebrate our great rural lifestyle we are adding a couple of new categories to our parade line up.

* **Best wheelbarrow or horse manure mucking cart:** A lot of us are quite proficient at using both! Note: Remember to wash out that horse manure before decorating!!!!

* **Best baby buggy:** We have a lot of new families in our community and we know you moms can't wait to push your decorated stroller down Elfin Forest Road.

* **Best rust bucket:** One of the great things about rural living is watching your neighbor's old cars and trucks rust away in their yards! Help your neighbors put some tires back on those old heaps, decorate them and drive, tow, push or drag them in the parade.

The rest of the categories are:

* **Boy's bicycle.**

* **Girl's bicycle.**

* **Man's best friend:** (dog, cat, cow, goat, pig, chicken, gold fish, etc...) Note: squirrels and jack-rabbits not welcome.

* **Horses:** what's a country fair without horses?

* **Parade theme float:** "Keep'n It Country"

* **Music man, woman or animal.**

* **Tractors, atv's, golf carts, etc.**

* **Vehicles without rust.**

This year's parade will kick off around 2:00 pm. Parade check in and line up will start at 1:15 pm. There will be shade for the little kids and moms. Cheap ice cold drinks will be available at the Parade check in. You may also pre-buy your picnic food tickets at the sign up area.

More information in the next *chaparral*. Any questions or suggestions please call Tom and Lisa Stephenson at 760-744-7744.

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.

Harmony Grove Update

Just the Facts

By Mid Hoppenrath

In an effort to clarify a few important issues, I have listed some typical concerns and documented facts, so you can shape your own informed opinion.

It doesn't really matter whether we stay in or leave the Escondido sphere of influence.

Fact. According to Escondido's recent SOI update study report to the City Council (2/26/03) "Residents in the Harmony Grove and Deer Springs areas petitioned LAFCO to remove their areas from the city's Sphere of Influence based on neighborhood concerns regarding the city's previous efforts to study these areas for employment-oriented land uses during the last General Plan update. The basis for opposition appeared to be the fear of potential industrialization rather than changes in the evaluation factors."

Fact. Retired police officer and recent city council candidate George Durgin said Escondido should continue to look at Harmony Grove, because "we don't have a sufficient amount of industrial opportunities" (NCT, 10/09/2002). Late last year, former Escondido Councilman Jerry Kaufman was quoted as saying "This shortage of available industrial land is why representatives from SANDAG will be meeting with the city of Escondido to discuss Harmony Grove, Quail Hills, and the possibility of rezoning other parcels on the city's master plan. It is critical that we continue to pursue the study of Harmony Grove to at least determine the feasibility of industrial development for that area" (NCT Commentary, 10/09/2002).

Most compelling, in a very recent meeting with Escondido councilman Ed Gallo (March 2003), Kathy DaSilva and I were told that Eden Valley should be annexed and that the Nordahl industrial park and the proposed Escondido Research and Technology Center should be extended into our region as far south as Kauana Loa.

Fact. Unlike development in the county, development through the City is more damaging to our property values and financial status through annexation-associated fees and infrastructure assessments (Annexation Policy D6.2, Escondido SOI Update Study, August 2002, p. 1-14). Residential parcels are generally de-valued when they are rezoned industrial: at \$2/sq.ft for raw industrial land, a typical residential lot would be

worth only \$87,000 per acre as industrial land; the home itself would have to be moved at the owner's expense or destroyed (personal communication, local industrial developer, March 2003).

I hear that the County will put in a strip mall and low-income apartments in the Village at Harmony Grove while the City will put in 300 custom homes; the city's plan sounds more rural to me.

Fact. The county village plan does not allow the density required for "low income apartments" (20 du/acre); the plan does not allow multifamily units or strip malls (personal communication, Howard Blackson, April 11, 2003; and county GP 2020 map).

Fact. The County has publicly supported our efforts to stay rural (Dahvia Locke, county planner, Escondido PC SOI meeting, 1/28/03), and uses community plan texts to identify goals and visions of each individual community (CPT at www.efhgtc.org).

Fact. The Escondido GP calls for 369,388 sq. ft. of industrial in Harmony Grove along with 500-600 homes (Deer Springs & Harmony Grove EIR, Vol. 1, City of Escondido, 2002).

Fact. City Manager Rolf Gunnarson commented at a recent Escondido Planning Commission meeting (tape transcript, 1/28/03) that homes can be a financial drain to the city. According to Escondido planning commissioner Bruce Quick, the City needs to look at low-income housing, and is facing a shortage of apartments (NC Times, 10/09/2002).

All attempts at industrialization of our valley have come from owners of large parcels, not the City of Escondido, who would never make such a radical change to the zoning of our area.

Fact. All three recent industrialization proposals for the area have been initiated by the City of Escondido (Escondido SOI Study, August 2002, p. 2-74,75). In 1990, as part of the GP revision program, Escondido proposed portions of Harmony Grove be designated "Campus Industrial". The draft plan was adopted, but no rezoning was initiated. In 1996-7, the proposal was re-introduced, and later deferred. In 1999, despite vigorous community opposition, Escondido proposed a GP amendment with either 5.2 or 2.6 million square feet of industrial/commercial development. Existing residential would be rezoned either industrial or mixed use. Country Club Drive was to be widened and extended to Del Dios
(Continued next page)

(Harmony Grove Update continued)

Highway (Escondido GP Update DEIR, April 2000, p. 2-6), opening up our area to route 78 cut-through commuter gridlock.

Fact. Escondido is still considering the Country Club Drive extension. According to remarks by Jay Petrek "the city's concern is that without SC1375 going through, traffic would extend into Escondido" [Escondido PC SOI meeting, 1/28/03]. In contrast, the county has publicly announced their intention to limit traffic so that SC1375 would not be required (Dahvia Locke, county planner, Escondido PC SOI meeting, 1/28/03).

Fire Watch

By Nona Barker

Wildfire happens, but not by choice. Managing the wildland/urban interface fire issue at home, within a community, is the key to creating a safer, more fire-ready America. The work of protecting your home and/or community from wildfire won't be completed overnight and it isn't a one-time effort. Being *firewise*, however, need not be overwhelming. If you are serious about protecting yourself and your community, start becoming firewise today.

Spring is the time for much of the United States to begin preparations for wildfire season. Dead branches and those that overhang structures should be pruned. Leaf litter, along with pine and fir needles, should be removed from the roof, the gutters and the ground adjacent to the house and any outbuildings.

A note to our Firewise web site visitors: The Firewise Home Page (www.firewise.org) had its busiest year ever in 2002. Hits totaled 3,301,274, nearly three times the number experienced in 2001. The Firewise Home Page e-mail list also grew and now contains over 5,165 names of people who have told us they want to learn more about mitigating wildfire in the wildland/urban interface.

The Firewise Home Page is your resource for wildland/urban interface fire protection information. If you have questions or comments, contact Firewise staff at FirewiseHP@aol.com.

Past Chaparral Issues On Web

Past issues of the *chaparral* are now posted at www.efhgtc.org in downloadable PDF format.

Calzada Site Design Principles

By Jim Depolo

On April 15, 2003 the Rancho Santa Fe School District released draft "Design Principles" from architect Mark Paone, AIA, for the proposed school site on Calzada del Bosque. This document, which the School Board will review in May, will ultimately provide the guiding principles that Paone and his firm will use to develop initial school designs to present to the community in June. The District announced that it is actively seeking community input on these principles, which are posted on the school website at <http://www.rsfschoolboard.org/designprinciples.htm>.

Commented Dr. Dan Vinson, District Superintendent: "These design principles are still *very much a working document* – even the Board has not yet had the opportunity to comment on them! But we wanted to provide these to the community as early as possible, consistent with our entire approach to this school site selection and design process. This should enable *everyone* to have the chance to provide input into the site design. We *actively* encourage all interested community members to provide their thoughts on these principles at our upcoming May School Board meetings, on May 7th and May 21st, both at 7pm at the school."

Added Board President Kathy Stumm, "We continue to believe this site will be a tremendous win-win for the whole community. I know I'm looking forward to providing my own thoughts on these principles, as well as hearing what the community thinks of them as well! But now is the time to get your thoughts on the table -- we have been challenged by the community to keep this process moving forward, so after hearing community input, we will not continually revisit these. At our regular June meeting, we're planning to review initial site designs, consistent with our promise to the community to provide as much information as possible as far in advance of the bond as possible, and to keep the process moving expeditiously."

Free 2003 Entertainment Book!

Order and pay for the 2004 Entertainment Book (arriving in late August) and receive a 2003 book absolutely **FREE**. The EF/HG Fire Department sponsors this "two for the price of one" deal. Call Claudia, 760-744-9052

Minutes Of Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council Meeting

By Karen Gardner

Date: April 2, 2003

Members Present: Mid Hoppenrath, Evelyn Alemanni, Patti Newton, Rachel Barnes, Arie Franken, Nancy Reed, Karen Gardner.

Call to Order: 7:32 pm

Updates:

Evelyn Alemanni called for volunteers to review the University Commons EIR.

Patti Newton reported that the Quail Ridge project was denied required Planning Commission permits due to lack of progress on the project. There has been no visible progress for the past year and Quail Ridge will have to reapply for their permits. This development will have until December to move forward.

Nancy Reed let everyone know that Suerte del Este (the “dirt road” to Rancho Santa Fe) will be closed on and off in the future for construction. It is not known when it will be closed or for how long.

Rachel Barnes provided information with regard to the Town Council finances as of 2002.

Mid Hoppenrath let the community know that Harmony Grove held their focus groups with regard to the new village concept. The recurring theme that came up during these meetings related to recreational trails. Mid also discussed the fact that there were two property owners in Harmony Grove that wanted to annex into Escondido, Steve Anderson and Ray Gray.

Olivenhain Municipal Water District representatives provided an update on the dam and reservoir projects.

Jerry Reed reported that the cap on the top of the dam is being completed and that the inlet/outlet tower is finished. The downstream control facility work is being completed and the project is continuing to demobilize. The stoplight on Harmony Grove Road will be removed by May 15th and the intersection will be restored to preexisting conditions. The dam should be completed by mid summer at which time testing will commence. Plans call for filling of the reservoir to start in early August. The reservoir will take approximately one year to fill completely.

Kathy Schuller from the OMWD pump station reported that the pump station foundation has been

completed. She reported that OMWD would be creating a horse trail/hiking trail through Box Canyon and around the dam. For those interested residents, **Alex Newton** is providing tours of the dam and reservoir.

Jim Prine who is the OMWD project manager for habitat mitigation on Escondido Creek reported that the Authority is working down stream from the park. He reported that workers are removing all non-native plants and will be reseeding the area with native plants. Work is somewhat behind schedule due to migratory bird issues. Some of the plants that will be removed include bamboo, cape ivy, arrundo, fennel and eucalyptus.

Tom Kennedy from OMWD reported that a new centrifuge was installed in the treatment plant to further purify water on-site. This results in fewer sludge trucks running to and from the plant.

Rachel Barnes reminded everyone that our 4th of July picnic would be held on June 29th and that the theme this year is “A Country Fair.”

There will be a silent auction and the traditional pot-luck meal with hamburgers and hot dogs available for purchase. If anyone is interested in helping with the fair please contact Rachel Barnes or Janet McGurk.

Jim Depolo and **Blake Isaac** came to the meeting to update our community on the Rancho Santa Fe school site selection. For those of you who don't know, this has been a harrowing issue for the past several years as the Rancho Santa Fe school community continues to grow. Jim Depolo is the newest school board member and resides in Elfin Forest. He explained that work is in progress to purchase a site off of Villa De La Valle and Calzada del Bosque known as the “Calzada Site.” This is a 28-acre site and sufficient to build a new K-8 school. Plans call for moving out of the current site in downtown Rancho Santa Fe. There are many benefits of this new site:

- Traffic flow would improve into and around the village.
- The new school could accommodate up to 1200 students.
- Facilities would be state of the art and all of our children would benefit.
- The cost of procuring this site and “starting over” would be less than ramping up the current school to suitable standards.

(Continued next page)

(Minutes EF/HG Town Council continued)

Additionally, the district continues to look at building a K-5 school in Elfin Forest or in the Northeast area of the school district. The district is currently evaluating multiple sites in Elfin Forest. The advantage of Elfin Forest is relatively large parcels but the downsides are septic and limited access.

The district has plans in place to accommodate growth at the current village school with more portables through 2006. The school is hopeful that it may be possible to open kindergarten in portables on the new site in the fall of 2005.

A representative from the **AKC** visited with a video on how to keep young children safe from dogs. These tips could save your child's life:

- Do not leave small children alone with the family pet
- Stay away from stray dogs and tell your children to do the same
- If a dog starts to follow or chase you, look away from the dog and walk away. Don't stare at the dog and don't run!
- Keep your hands in your pocket so that the dog can't smell any food that might be on your hands.
- If a dog is chasing you while you are riding your bike, stop and walk your bike.
- If a stranger comes up to you and asks for help finding a dog – never go with them.

Steve Anderson from Harmony Grove spoke at the meeting to voice his concerns with regard to the Harmony Grove village concept. He is concerned about density issues and the down zoning of his property in particular.

Meeting Adjourned: 10:00pm+

Bookmobile Dates

By Mickey Cross

Please remember the North County Bookmobile is still coming to the fire station twice a month from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm on Tuesdays. May, June, and July dates are as follows:

May 13, 27 / June 10, 24 / July 8, 22.

They can order books for you if you call 760-643-5125 (recording). They are a great resource. Bring your family. Questions: Contact Mickey Cross (mickeykc@juno.com.)

Minutes of the Fire Auxiliary

By Mary Garman

Meeting called to order at 6:45pm on April 9, 2003.

Minutes and treasurer's report read and approved.

Bobbie McFarlane prepared the Garden Tour lunch for us to taste. There was a definite approval of all of the food for the May 3rd Garden Tour.

The Auxiliary discussed the Farmer's Market/Craft Fair/Flea Market. It was decided that we'd have it once a month in July, August, and September 2003. We will announce specific dates with a flyer in the *chaparral* newsletter so everyone can participate.

The Fire Auxiliary will assist with the 4th of July Picnic and we will have our annual bake sale at this event. We will also be taking orders for the Entertainment Books as a fundraiser for our Fire Department.

Joan Hershfeld was on call in March to assist the Fire Department with an emergency. She ran important errands and provided food and drinks to our fire fighters.

The Fire Auxiliary members signed up for specific months to assist our volunteer Elfin Forest Fire Department.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45PM.

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

Gary Floyd – COPPS - 760-510-5231
gary.floyd@sdsheriff.org.

Tim Mahoney – Deputy 760-510-5224

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

Mind The Wildflowers

Wildflower seeds were scattered along both sides of Elfin Forest Road in the late fall. Please don't whack the flowers until after they have bloomed.

Pumpkin Contest

By John Olsen and Betsy Keithley

At this year's October Chili Cook-off we are going to award a prize for the largest pumpkin grown by a community resident. If you like to grow vegetables then this is an opportunity to match your skills against your neighbors' in the spirit of good fun.

It is easy to grow large pumpkins. There are several varieties of seeds that are capable of producing pumpkins ranging from 75 to several hundred pounds. You might even beat the current world record that is around 1300 pounds. I'm not sure, however, how we would weight it.

To make the pumpkin event interesting for non-gardeners we are also going to grow pumpkins of the more normal carving size for sale on the contest day. We currently have potted pumpkin plants that we will give to anyone wishing to try for a contender or to grow for selling at the event. We have several contender varieties, namely Big Max, Prizewinner, and Dill's Atlantic Giant. For the more traditional carving size we have Connecticut Field and Rock Star.

Join us for some gardening fun. Contact us at 471-8515 or jolsen@cts.com to obtain a plant.



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.

Dam News

By Jerry Reed – Project Mgr Olivenhain Dam

Environmental mitigation work along Escondido Creek has been rescheduled to begin in September. The work was postponed due to recent rains permitting issues and the approaching gnatcatcher mating season. The goal of this project is to remove non-native plants such as eucalyptus trees that displace native species on 95 acres of habitat along Escondido Creek between the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve and the intersection of Harmony Grove Road and Elfin Forest Road.

The removal of the temporary traffic signal at the construction site entrance is scheduled for May. Work to restore the intersection of Harmony Grove Road and Via Ambiente to its original condition may begin as early as April.

Your Dog's Dogs

By Leah Bookhamer

Every year I see people with their dogs at the 4th of July parade and usually by this time of year the pavement and dirt are quite hot. I don't think they understand how sensitive a dog's pads are and how easily they can burn. A rule of thumb is if you can't walk without shoes or the ground is too hot to the touch then don't make your dog stand and walk on it either.

I would like for people to become more aware. I know we all love our pets and don't want to, knowingly, cause them discomfort.

Calendar for May 2003

Date	Time	Event
Weds 5/7	7: 30 pm	EF/HG Town Council Meeting
Tues 5/6, Tues 5/20	1:30 pm to 3:30 pm	Bookmobile@Firehouse
Tues 5/6, Tues 5/20	7 pm	Fire Training@Firehouse
Every Fri	10 am – noon	Playgroup
Every Thurs	6:30 pm	Yoga
Mon 5/12	7 pm	Fire Board@Firehouse
Weds 5/14	7 pm	Fire Auxiliary@Firehouse
Sat 5/24	8 am	Fire Training@Firehouse

Free Consultations At The Elfin Forest Garden Festival

Have questions about your garden? At the Elfin Forest Garden Festival on May 3, garden experts will be on hand to offer guidance and pointers. Fran Lambert, Camille Zeleny, CA Water Authority, and volunteers from the Master Gardeners will be at the fire station to answer your questions.

Elfin Forest resident **Fran Lambert** is a certified arborist. Fran is co-owner of Mariposa Tree Service, serving North County for the past two decades. The focus of her consultation practice is “Preventative Tree Care” which seeks out the best solutions for both the tree and its owner. A life long lover of trees, Fran was a social worker for twenty years prior to becoming a qualified arborist. This experience lends itself well to tree advocacy because she takes human factors into consideration when helping her clients make mutually beneficial decisions about their trees. Fran welcomes questions about your tree care needs and concerns. Contact her at 760-752-9956.

Award-winning landscape contractor/designer **Camille Zeleny** created the MacFarlane’s beautiful drought-resistant garden. Talk to her about ideas on how to beautify your landscape.

One of the least-known treasure troves of information in San Diego County is the over one-hundred **Master Gardeners** who provide home gardening and pest control information through out the county, **FREE** to the public. Master Gardeners will be at the fire station to answer your questions. The Master Gardeners are volunteers trained and supervised by Farm Advisor Vincent Lazaneo, of the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE).

The **Water Authority** will provide information about water saving, drought tolerant landscapes, and other items of interest.

All of this is **FREE** to everyone, you don’t even need to buy a ticket for the garden festival. Just come on down to the fire station on Saturday, May 3 between 10 and 4 and meet these nice people who have so much to share with you.

Community Guide Advertising

If you are interested in advertising in the next edition of the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Community Guide (which is published only every few years), please contact Karen Gardner at 760-744-9500 or email her at karen@vintagematerialism.com.

America in Bloom Competition

By Evelyn Alemanni



Elfin Forest may have a potentially winning entry in this year’s America in Bloom competition, but winning requires everyone’s effort. Judges will be here June 17 – 19, with the actual judging on June 18.

Today is a good day to start trimming, weeding, and pruning, tidying up your own property, and then involving everyone on your street so that all of Elfin Forest will look as beautiful as possible. If you need some new plants, check at the Elfin Valley Nursery.

What is “America in Bloom”? It’s people working together to beautify their community, promote environmental awareness, and build civic pride. This program is modeled after Canada’s highly successful “Communities in Bloom,” in which citizens across the country pull together in a nationwide competition.

What can you do to assure a winning effort? Trim your trees, plant flowers, mow weeds....but **leave the wildflowers alone, PLEASE!**

Judging categories include community involvement, environmental awareness, floral displays, turf and ground cover, urban forestry, tidiness, landscaped areas, and heritage preservation. As one of the program’s organizers said, “Gardening is good for your body and soul—and your community.” You can learn more at www.americainbloom.org.

Showcase Your Writing And Photography In The New Community Guide

A brand new edition of the community guide is being prepared for publication this fall. One of the themes is helping new neighbors understand things they might not know about living in a rural community. Another objective is to include information about the history of Harmony Grove – it’s unique heritage and its settlers.

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

The School Yard

By John Stiker

Welcome back to the School Yard! May promises to be a busy month for the School Board, as we'll have a special meeting on May 7th and our regular meeting on May 21st, both with lots of issues to cover.

The Latest on The Budget - At our April 9th meeting, Dr. Vinson advised that the proposed hijacking of our local property taxes by the State is still “on the table” in Sacramento. If this is not removed from the budget proposal by our May 7th meeting, we will be faced with a tough question: should we move forward with final layoff notices to 8 teachers by May 15th, or should we “take a chance” in hopes that the cuts will eventually be taken out of the budget? To help make this decision, we asked the Administration to develop a 2003-04 budget with *very* aggressive cuts in areas like books, capital spending, maintenance, etc., while maintaining the teacher-student ratio we have come to expect in this District.

We will then compare this spending level against projected post-cut revenue levels, to see what the “gap” is – and make a judgment call as to whether we and the community can rally to “close this gap” for the upcoming school year if necessary, while we wait to see whether the budget cuts are finalized. If the cuts are enacted, we know that we will need to look at more creative long-term financing options to maintain the quality of education we currently have, and have some ideas already on ways to ensure that our property taxes remain local.

The Calzada del Bosque Site - We continue to be excited about this site – and yet we recognize that there have been some concerns raised, around traffic in particular. To get definitive answers to these questions (rather than speculation), at our April 9th meeting we authorized the start of an Environmental Impact Review (EIR) for the site and a formal traffic study on the site as well. At our May 21st meeting, we will also take the community “through the numbers,” to help explain why we decided in February to put the first K-5 and the district-wide 6-8 schools on a single site at Calzada. We will also review the other option we carefully considered at the time, which was “K-5 Rowe + 6-8 another site.” We'll talk about the pros and cons of both propositions, and we'll look for *hearty* public discussion at that point.

In the meantime (as we juggle many balls), architect Mark Paone provided his draft *Design Principles for the Calzada Site* for public and Board comment at the May 7th and May 21st meetings (see related article in this issue, or www.rsfc.k12.ca.us) that should enable us to keep on track for conceptual designs in June.

Student Density And Site Size Requirements - At our April 9th meeting, Mark Paone also presented some interesting perspective on the relationship between student density and site size. Our current site has 830 students on just under 10 acres, or 83 students/acre. Depending on the grade configuration, the state of California considers a school “critically impacted” at between 90-115 students/acre – typically seen at schools in sites like East LA, South Central LA, and Oakland – not Rancho Santa Fe!

So as we think about the Calzada site (or any site for that matter), we believe that an appropriate density for the gracious rural character of this community is closer to the 40-50 student/acre range that is consistent with local benchmarks (and with the density of Rowe back when “it didn't feel crowded”). At the May 21st meeting, we will show the estimated maturity counts for different configurations of students, and talk about why various sites do and don't fit these requirements.

The “Northeast” School Site - This is still an area that the Board is actively working, as we are committed to a bond measure that includes a site for an eventual Northeast K-5. We will hold a closed session on April 30th to discuss terms relevant to contracts for potential Northeast sites and hope to be able to share more news on this subject by our May 21st meeting.

Upcoming Meeting Topics - To summarize, we have a lot going on. We will see an aggressive 03-04 budget and make a decision on final layoff notices at our May 7th meeting. We'd VERY MUCH like to hear your input on the Design Principles for the Calzada site at our May 7th and May 21st meeting, as well as our overall site selection strategy on the 21st. We also hope to share perspective on the Northeast site plans at our May 21st meeting. And we also expect to receive the “final” demographic report from Davis Demographics at one of these two meetings, including results of our pre-school survey benchmarking to predict next year's kindergarten class size! We hope to see you there!

Hatching Asynchrony

By Scott Todd – Wild Bird Center

Among most backyard bird species, incubation does not begin until the last egg has been laid. This results in all of the eggs hatching within a few hours of each other, a process called synchronous hatching. With synchronous hatching, all the young will generally grow at the same rate and fledge at the same time.

Asynchronous hatching occurs when incubation begins immediately after the first egg has been laid. This results in the eggs hatching over a matter of days. This strategy ensures the survival of at least one of the young, since early hatchlings develop a size advantage over their siblings when competing for food from the parents. Asynchronous hatching is typical in almost all birds of prey and gulls.

Now that Spring is here and the bird population is more diverse, we have an opportunity to present different feeding styles in our backyard. Most of us already know the birdseed routine, so let's look at attracting birds with mealworms. Mealworms are not really worms; they are beetle larvae (*tenebrio molitor*). They are not slimy or smelly, they are easy to keep, and they attract a bevy of insect-eating birds. Western bluebirds, mockingbirds, wrens, common yellow-throats, orioles, California towhees and even a greedy scrub-jay all enjoy this new food.

Many of the birds we want to attract with mealworms are not used to looking at feeders as a source of food. To get these birds started, you will have to put the mealworms where you can find them. Like bachelors who don't cook, birds will remember if a desirable food is available at a certain spot at a certain time of day. Some of our customers whistle, tap a window pane or ring a bell when they put out the worms so that nearby birds can associate the food with the sound. For those of you who want to try your hand at mealworms, stop by the store for more information. P.S., for those of you who like to fish for blue gill, mealworms are a required part of the bait box, too.

EIR Library Needs Your Old EIRs

The fire station now has a library for town council records and environmental impact reports. If you have EIRs or items that belong in the town council archives bring them to the next town council meeting and give them to Janet McGurk or contact her at 760-471-8937 or mcgurk@bytebloc.com.

Book Signing On May 3

As a highlight of the Garden Festival, noted garden writer, **Karen L. Dardick** will be in Elfin Forest at the fire station on May 3, signing her latest book, "*Estate Gardens of California*." Karen is a freelance writer specializing in garden, travel and restaurant feature writing, with hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles published. She is the Garden Editor for California Homes Magazine and a frequent contributor to the Los Angeles Times and San Diego Union Tribune.

Her by-lined articles and monthly column called "Simply Roses" also appear in the Pasadena Star-News, San Gabriel Valley Tribune and Whittier Daily News. She is a member of the International Rose Trials judging panel at Rose Hills Memorial Park, Whittier, California.

Karen's own garden was featured in a Better Homes and Gardens publication, Garden Products and Planning Guide, spring 1997. She is also a public speaker and has appeared at the Southern California Garden Show, the Los Angeles Garden Club, the Monrovia Garden Club, Pasadena Historical Society, the Huntington Botanical Gardens, and various garden shows.

Rizzoli Press published "*Estate Gardens of California*", with photographs by Melba Levick, in June 2002. Dardick is also the author of "*Great Gardens for Small Spaces*" (Rizzoli Press, 2003). She is currently writing "*Simply Roses*" (Universe, 2003) which will be published in December 2003.

Stop by the fire station on May 3 between 10am and noon to meet Karen and have her autograph a copy of her book for you.



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Elfin Valley Nursery Opens

By Evelyn Alemanni



Perhaps you have been curious about the greenhouses across the street from the fire department. They've been there, all 600,000 square

feet on 9 acres, for more than 16 years.

Maybe you've drooled over the gorgeous roses that the nursery has along the road and wished that they could be in your garden. Well, now they can be, because after 16 years as a wholesale nursery, owner Ron Martin has opened Elfin Valley Nursery to the public. At the nursery, you'll find thousands of the popular Proven Winners annuals, perennials in 1, 5 and 15 gallon pots, trees, shrubs, vines, and of course, more than 480 varieties of roses.

The great thing about the plants at this nursery is that they're grown right here in Elfin Forest, so they already know and love our climate, and will continue to do well when you take them home.

What's unique about Elfin Valley Nursery is that plants are all they sell. No soil, fertilizer, tools or garden ornaments ... just plants! Ron says, "This is not a full-service nursery like our other location, Sunshine Gardens in Encinitas. At Sunshine, we have experts who can answer all your questions and tell you about the plants and how to grow them. Here, you get to ask one question and that's it!"

For more details about Sunshine Gardens and Elfin Valley Nursery, check their website, www.sunshinegardensinc.com.



Hummingbirds Rescued!

By Evelyn Alemanni



When a pine tree in our backyard succumbed to a combination of stress from the fire of 1996, drought, and pine bark beetles, the arborist who cut down the tree accidentally destroyed a hummingbird nest. He found two tiny baby hummingbirds on the ground, but no nest. It had

probably gone through the shredder with the diseased branches.

An Internet search revealed that mama hummingbirds use their long beaks to deposit gnats and mosquitoes directly into the babies' stomachs. Feeding babies a diet of the sugar syrup so common in hummingbird feeders could be fatal because babies must have protein to grow, and not just any protein, either.

I put in an emergency call to Scott Todd at the Wild Bird Center in Encinitas who referred me to Project Wildlife (619-225-9202 - a non-profit group that is run by volunteers trained in wildlife rescue). The Project Wildlife volunteer told me that trees should not be trimmed between December and August because birds are nesting those months. I could sense her distress at my ignorance. She took a deep breath and proceeded to patiently give me instructions.

Here's her advice: put the babies in a strawberry basket lined with Kleenex. Don't use cotton, because the hummers' little toes can get tangled in it. Put the new "nest" within 15' of the site of the old nest out of direct sunlight and protected from rain. Watch and wait for one hour. If mama comes back, all is well. If not, call Project Wildlife for instructions on transferring the babies to a volunteer trained in their care. Baby hummers can't live for more than 4 hours without food. Once the babies have feathers and are able to fly for a short distance, the mama continues to feed them for two to three weeks.

The good news is that mama did return and continued to care for her babies, even though they had been handled by humans and relocated to a new home.

Project Wildlife is supported by donations from the public. If you'd like more information about them, check their website, www.projectwildlife.org.

Photography Contest

Have you ever thought your photographs were good enough to be in a contest? Well, here's your chance. For this year's 4th of July Picnic we are sponsoring a Photography Contest. We want to see how beautiful rural life can be. What appeals to you most about our rural communities? Show us in pictures!

Theme: *Capture Our Rural Splendor*

Deadline: June 20, 2003. (To be stored at the EIR Library on the 2nd floor of the Firehouse) The when/how of accepting the entry photos is TBD.

Entry Fee: \$5.00 (per photo)

Limit: Three (3) entries per person.

Winners: To be announced June 29, 2003 @ 4th of July Picnic

How to Enter: Mail in entry form (found on mailer cover of this newsletter) with fee.

Here are the rules, so you can get your cameras clicking:

All photos must be 8"x10" (matting is optional and must be 11"x14" if used). All photos must be framed and hang-able for display with a wire hanger on back.

Judging will be based on points. One hundred points is perfect in every way. The points will be divided into categories as follows:

50 points for composition and technical perfection
25 points for creativity
25 points for adhering to the Rural Splendor theme.

Participants will be divided into three divisions. Each division will have a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winner, and one entry will be selected as best of show. The three divisions are: Elementary/Junior High, High School, and Open Class.

All photos must have the following identification clearly written on back: Name, Division, Phone number, Address. Digital images are acceptable. If it is apparent that an image was created digitally, that image will lose technical merit points.

Our judge will be professional photographer Paul Rose, owner of Wild Rose Photography a portrait studio and art gallery located at 231 East Grand Avenue in Escondido. If you have questions about the rules, call Paul at his studio, 760-480-8571. To check out what appeals to the judge visit his web site, www.wildrosephotography.com.

Let's Talk Horses

By Nancy Reed

Most of us will agree that Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove are very special places. It is my belief that one reason we are so special is our ability to keep horses on our property. I moved here to live my childhood dream of owning a horse. I also believe it's a lot cheaper to get your child into horses than off drugs. In the coming months I will be exploring various horse issues for both equine and equine impaired.

In this first column I'll highlight some upcoming horse events and clubs. Both clubs are dedicated to the betterment of horse and rider through education, shows, and social events. Both are non-profit and welcome anyone no matter your level of horse experience. Due to insurance issues you have to be a club member to participate in club events but both clubs have very reasonable yearly dues.

Los Vallecitos Riders (LVR) is a family oriented club that promotes horsemanship through shows, trail rides, clinics and more. LVR has a very full show schedule with classes for everyone, no matter your discipline or experience. Their youth group will be participating in the 4th of July Parade. For more info on LVR go to www.lvrcub.com or call president Lori Hall-McNary, 760-741-1179. All LVR shows are held at Walnut Grove Park in San Marcos.

The San Dieguito Riders (SDR) is dedicated to better horsemanship through social events, clinics and trail rides. This group is low key and fun. I call it the "horse sorority." SDR hosts local trail rides, clinics and a monthly educational meeting. SDR's annual events include a Spring Breakfast Ride, participation in the Encinitas Holiday Parade, Holiday Party and caroling. This group is also active in trail issues. For more info call Pam Snyder, 760-436-8318.

It is the beginning of the show and clinic season, which takes a bit of a breather in the summer then heats up again in the fall. The following is a list of some local events:

May (tbd) - SDR trail clinic with Sunny Butler
May 3 – Grand Prix Jumping, DMNHS
May 4 – LVR Gymkhana
May 11 - LVR Dressage Show
May 18 – LVR Fun Day w/FFA
May 25 – LVR Rail Show
May 31- -tentative SDR Breakfast Ride

Garden Greetings

By Nancy Reed

Many of us Elves moved here because of the open space and sage covered hills. Although beautiful and teeming with life, these same hills pose significant dangers and challenges. The Urban-Wildland interface (yep, that's us) is known as a high fire hazard environment. We live in a land of naturally occurring fire; fire is a necessary part of the chaparral. I guess it goes with the rattlesnakes.

Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove doesn't have to look too far back to recall the 1996 firestorm that lasted three days, destroyed nearly 100 homes, took a life, and caused an estimated \$52 million in damages. In the winter of 2001 the Alpine fire burned more than 10,000 acres and destroyed 16 homes and the Gavilan fire in Fallbrook burned almost 6,000 acres and destroyed 45 homes. The California Department of Forestry (CDF) and several County Supervisors took note of this. Therefore CDF has started to enforce a 100-foot safety clearance around all structures. See Appendix 11A, Consolidated Fire Code, Ordinance 9397.

CDF has adopted fuel modification zones. Zone 1 is 30 feet from the structure; it must be cleared of bush and planted with fire resistive plants. Zone 2 is the area between 30 and 100 feet from the structure and, if bush exists, it must be thinned by 50% and all dead and dying vegetation must be removed.

This ordinance does not call for moonscape in the fuel modification zones. Landscaping can be done, but appropriate use of planting material is a must. Make your plant choices wisely and build an irrigation system to keep it alive. The big offenders are eucalyptus and you! Continual maintenance is of the utmost importance! Keeping your landscape plants properly watered, pruned, free of debris and out of contact with utility lines is crucial to keeping your home safe from fire.

The University of California Forest Products Lab website (www.ucfpl.ucop.edu/HOGarden.htm) has an extensive list of both good and bad plants for a fire safe garden. Study the list and take an inventory of your property. What are you doing right and what can be done better? Most of the "good" plants are readily available and known to even the most casual gardener. They include lavender, fleabane, daylily and thyme to name a few.

The garden located behind the Fire Station on Elfin Forest Road is an excellent example of how fire safe gardening looks. Not only is it fire safe, it is extremely low maintenance. Come and take a look and put the practices to work at your house. Your life and the lives of your family and neighbors depend on you being fire safe. It's not a matter of if; it's a matter of when the next fire will occur. Now go and gas up that weedo and add your part to the Elfin Forest spring song.

For more information on fire safe gardens contact Nona Barker at the EF/HG Fire Department.

Block Telemarketers

By Alan Lasnover

The California Department of Justice has a website that enables you to add your name to the "Block Telemarketers" list, which will become effective in October. Telemarketers who call you after you have opted out will be subject to an \$11,000 fine.

To register, link to: <http://nocall.doj.state.ca.us/>

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.

Who ya gonna call?

To report **illegal dumping**: 858-495-5143

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May Playgroup Schedule

By Mary Moore

Sunday, May 4th at 1pm. Celebrate Paetyn's 5th birthday at SeaWorld. Please RSVP to Zanac at 760-752-9599 or email zparman@ucsd.edu.

Thursday, May 8th, 3:30pm at Sun Vista park in Encinitas. Bring extra clothes and towels.

Thursday, May 15th, 3:30pm at Leo Muellen's (Target) park in Encinitas.

Thursday, May 22nd, 4:00pm at "Creativity Matters", an arts studio for children, 1054 2nd St. in downtown Encinitas. This is an hour session in which your child will be able to paint on large murals of their choice from a variety of paints. Please dress in old throw-away clothing. The cost is \$35 (divided by the number of participants) for this session plus \$5 per child for materials. I'll need a commitment and deposit from you by May 10th. The class is recommended for children 18 months and older. RSVP me at 760-591-3080 no later than May 10th.

Friday, May 30th, 4:00pm, at the home of Lori Wazny, 20763 Fortuna del Norte 760-761-1152.

Happy Birthday to Jordan Wright who turned one year on March 20th, to Paetyn Parman who turns five on May 1st, to Emma Schott who turns two on May 5th, to Anna Sidwell who turns three on May 10th, to Kaitlin Goetz who turns six on May 17th, and to Zack Sidwell who turns five on May 22nd.

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

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Elfin Forest Ladies Bunco Night

By Lori Clark

The next Potluck-Bunco Party is scheduled for Friday, May 23th from 7pm-10pm at Lynda Clerke's home, 20570 Fortuna del Sur. RSVP 760-510-0143. 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 by e-mail at clark-17@ix.netcom.com.



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Town Council Website

The town council's website is continually updated. Check it out at: efhgtc.org.

Note: the town council is not affiliated with elfinforest.net and elfinforest.com.



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Trailer Wanted: Movable house trailer in liveable condition. Large enough for two people. Call 510-9998 or fax info to 510-9994.

Home Wanted: Family wants to buy Elfin Forest home. Call John Paul Starting 858-720-0585.

Home Wanted: Family looking to buy or rent home in Elfin Forest in the RSF school district. Would also be interested in property. Call 760-944-3954 or e-mail at tltvitale@aol.com.

Wanted Full/Part Time Baby Day Care: Prefer at our home in Harmony Grove near Elfin Forest Reserve. Open to other locations locally. Please call Bill at 760-746-4692.

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