



Dedicated to a continuing rural atmosphere

From The Chair

By Mid Hoppenrath

Our elections are over and new board members Joe Benson, Cheri Smith, and Bill Wilgenburg join the EFHG Town Council. There's much good news to report! The Escondido School Board voted to remove the Harmony Grove and Del Dios sites from consideration for the new high school (see related article). Also, according to Escondido City Planner Jay Petrek, the developer of the proposed 61-home Jet Ridge project in Eden Valley may not attempt to annex to Escondido and instead build just a few homes in the county. Let's hope this signals a new respect among public agencies for the intrinsic value of rural communities.

There's good news about trail development as well. Thanks to the efforts of Maryanne Vancio, Trails Program Coordinator at the County Department of Parks and Recreation and the folks at SDG&E, an initial agreement was reached to allow use of electric utility access road easements for trails on selected sites. This is an historic contract and has the potential to allow entry to many miles of beautiful backcountry trails as well as nearer, suburban trails, such as the one leading to the new Escondido Research and Technology Center's neighborhood trail.

Two upcoming events to remember are the Garden Festival, April 23rd, and the America in Bloom contest. The judges will be visiting in early May, so keep up the good work to beautify Elfin Forest.

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Town Council Meeting – Wednesday, March 2nd @7:30PM
At The Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Fire Station

Topic: Greg Rubin –Firestation's new native landscaping

School Board Eliminates Area Sites for New High School

By Mid Hoppenrath

You have probably heard the great news for our entire rural area: The Escondido Union High School Board eliminated all rural area sites from consideration for the new comprehensive high school. The Avenida del Diablo site, along with the Mesa Rock site, was removed unanimously early in the evening, and the other two sites were removed at the end, very close to midnight. Trustee Marler made a motion to remove the Dorn and Mountain Meadows sites and it was approved 3-2 (Trustees Snowden and Grosso voted no). Their direction to school board staff was to try to find willing sellers elsewhere in the community and to look for smaller parcels of about 45 acres, to consider renovation or restoration of existing sites in downtown Escondido, and to re-examine possibilities for a smaller academy at the Citracado site they now own. We need to stay on our guard, however, as rumor has it that Palomar Hospital might be interested in the Avenida del Diablo site for their new hospital and it may be possible to invoke eminent domain for a hospital site.

New Bookmobile Day & Hours

By Mickey Cross

The San Diego County Bookmobile's day and time to visit Elfin Forest at the EFHG Firestation have changed. The new day and hours are as follows:

Thursdays from 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM. The bookmobile will be at the firestation on the following days: March 3rd and 17th, April 7th and 21st, May 5th and 19th, and June 9th and 23rd.

Besides books, the bookmobile carries books on tape, books on CD, music CDs, Videos (VHS) and DVDs (the rental price on VHS/DVDs is dirt cheap: \$1.00 per title! You can keep them for 2 weeks). If you would like to order a book or any other item, you can either go to the county web site at www.sdcl.org and order it for pick up at the bookmobile, or, if it is too confusing, call Cheryl at 760-643-5125 and leave a message. If you don't have a card and want one Cheryl can get you one too!

CPR Class Offered At Fire Station

By Nona Barker

In the event of a disaster, emergency medical response may be delayed because of the remoteness of your home or by adverse conditions, such as roads blocked by floodwater, auto accident or fire. While precious minutes slip by, your emergency training could mean the difference between life and death. Properly administered first aid or CPR can help stabilize an injured or ailing family member until help arrives. Make sure at least one family member is trained in first aid and CPR. It could save a life.

This class is free to our communities. The instructor, a paramedic, is being provided by San Diego Medical Services. They charge \$5.00 for the CPR card.

When: March 12

Time: 9 AM to 11 AM

Where: Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Fire Station
20223 Elfin Forest Road – Elfin Forest

Who: All Elfin Forest or Harmony Grove
Residents 16 yrs and older

RSVP: 744-2186

Cost: \$5.00

Class is limited to 20 - Please RSVP

Garden Club Notes

By Teri Brand

The next Elfin Forest Garden Club meeting will be on April 2nd at 10 AM. We'll meet at the Firewise garden at the fire station and help prepare it for the garden festival. Everyone is welcome. Bring gloves, trowels, clippers, weeding implements, rakes, and sunscreen and drinking water. Dates, times, and topics for future meetings on the town council website: www.efhgctc.org/garden_club.htm.

Calendar For March

Date	Time	Event
Weds 3/2	7:30 PM	EF/HG Town Council Mtg
Tues 3/1 3/15	7 PM	Fire Training@Firehouse
Weds 3/9	7 PM	Fire Auxiliary@Firehouse
Sat 3/12	9 AM	CPR Class@Firehouse
Mon 3/14	7 PM	Fire Board@Firehouse
Sat 3/26	8 AM	Fire Training@Firehouse
Every Thurs	6:30 PM	Yoga@Firehouse

Elfin Forest Garden Festival 2005

By Evelyn Alemanni

Remember, April 23rd is the big day. Gardens on the tour this year have been in magazines such as Sunset, Better Homes and Gardens, San Diego Home/Garden Lifestyles, and more. Order your tickets on the website now! Tickets are limited, so get yours today. \$20 in advance or \$30 at the door. Lunch is \$12. Preview the gardens and order tickets at www.elfinforestgardens.info. If you'd like to volunteer to help with the event in any way or to be a garden marketplace vendor or sponsor, please contact Sue Tolman at 591-0190 (stolman1@yahoo.com).

2005 State Of North County Address

Save the date of Thursday, March 3rd, 2005 from 10:30 to 11:30 AM for the County Supervisor Bill Horn's 2005 State of North County Address at the Valley Center Branch Library 29200 Cole Grade Road (Just north of Fruitvale Rd.) (Thomas Bros. 1090-F-1 & 1070-F-3)

Order Your Elfin Forest Shirt Now



New Elfin Forest t-shirts are now available for \$15 (S, M, L). Profits support the America in Bloom effort. Use the order form on the outside of the newsletter or buy yours at the Elfin Forest Garden Festival on April 23rd.

Why Get Involved In Issues Outside Of Elfin Forest And Harmony Grove?

By Mid Hoppenrath

Sometimes I'm asked: Why get involved in initiatives of areas outside of Elfin Forest or Harmony Grove? For example, while it's obvious why we'd oppose the Avenida del Diablo site in Harmony Grove for the proposed large Escondido High School, why oppose the Dorn site in Del Dios?

Our area contains four similar rural communities: Eden Valley, Harmony Grove, Del Dios, and Elfin Forest. We draw strength in numbers from joining forces with these near neighbors and taking positions on issues that affect any of these communities. There is an important distinction to be made, however. We, as members of the EFHG Town Council Board of Directors, cannot claim to represent any communities other than Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove.

Consider the impact of a large high school on the other area sites: The Eden Valley site, though not in Harmony Grove, is just off Country Club Drive and closer to my house than the Avenida del Diablo site. Traffic issues would negatively impact many resident driveways in Harmony Grove and the multi-use trail along Country Club Drive. Increased traffic on Del Dios from the Dorn site could trigger the construction of SC1375 (the extension of Country Club Drive to Del Dios) which would create a thruway from gridlocked Del Dios Highway via Country Club Drive to Route 78 or to Harmony Grove Road and probably destroy our rural environment. The adverse impact to the environment of either site would be felt throughout Harmony Grove and Elfin Forest.

Remember, folks in these areas help us in our fights, too. You may have seen the latest Eden Valley Bugle (much of the recent Elf Alert was taken from that text), along with school board meeting information, it included a line saying "Our rural neighbors in the Del Dios area and Avenida del Diablo area need our support! School board members are expected to be voting on the actual site at this meeting!"

This is the spirit that we need to foster to recruit enough concerned people to make a difference in the minds of the public representatives in these all-too-often fights. This is why we must keep abreast of land use plans in all our neighboring areas to effectively preserve our rural lifestyle.

What's Happening At The Fire Department – February 2005

By Captain Dawn Pettijohn

February training continues our annual structural firefighting review. January's skill stations for laddering buildings and self contained breathing apparatus were followed by instruction in fire stream applications and structure search techniques. A Code 3 Driving class was presented by CHP Officer Tom Kerns, and Tom Headrick from LA County Fire Department presented a class on compressed air foam systems (CAFS) and pump operations.

Thanks to Tim Costanzo for arranging three grant writing classes presented by the San Diego Foundation. Sue Racanelli and Rebecca Bennion presented these highly informative classes in grant research and proposal writing.

The SD County EMS and Fire Protection Trust Fund opened up a second round of grants with an additional \$160,000 available. Two more grants have been submitted. Our first priority is five sets of structural turnouts for our new firefighters. The second grant is another try for our enclosed cab window fire curtains for Engine 2811.

Once a month you may notice a myriad of different agency vehicles in the parking lot as the Department hosts the monthly San Diego County Swiftwater Rescue Committee meetings. We are working diligently with the Committee to iron out some of the issues with countywide dispatch of swiftwater rescue teams. The EF/HG Fire Department has been active in the Committee since 1999 and is currently one of only seven swiftwater rescue teams in the County.

We must remember that a cell phone call to 911 does not follow the normal route to Sheriff's Department and appropriate dispatch center. It goes to CHP. The route to your local dispatch center and your Volunteers is not always optimum. Cell phone 911 calls do not provide for the *Enhanced 911 System*...or for caller information, such as address and phone number, to be provided electronically. Cell phone 911 callers must be very clear about the location of the emergency and stay on the phone to ensure they are completely understood. Additionally, cellular 911 systems can become easily clogged during high incident activity or inclement weather conditions due to excessive CHP activity. Be patient, plan ahead, and understand the limitations.

March 2005

Bus Stop for the Village?

By Mid Hoppenrath

The Village committee and New Urban West are considering whether to put a bus stop in the Town Center of the proposed Harmony Grove Village. The EFHG Town Council will be surveying the community response to the idea of one bus stop in the Village along with many other topics in a survey to be distributed later this year. I would like to encourage discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of this idea so that we can make an informed choice.

A bus stop is already planned by Escondido for the nearby Escondido Research and Technology Center (ERTC). The ERTC route will likely stop at the Escondido Transit Center, which will link to the new Sprinter train, which will connect with the Coaster train in Oceanside. A bus stop would mean that the residents of the Village who may work in the ERTC, the City of Escondido, any coastal city, or even in downtown San Diego could link into the public transportation system to commute. This should greatly reduce auto traffic on our local roads.

The bus route is not expected to extend south past the Village onto Harmony Grove Road or Elfin Forest Road, so there should be no bus traffic on these roads. I would presume the route would be along the new Village Drive to Harmony Grove (north end) to Citracado Parkway and into the ERTC. A possible disadvantage would be that the route could one day be extended along Harmony Grove or Elfin Forest Roads. However, this would still reduce auto traffic on the roads and such a route might be convenient for Elfin Forest residents as well. We should note that such a route could be possible even without a bus stop being built in the Village.

If the Village is never part of a bus route, the bus stop structure itself could still be used as a safe and shady place to wait for work or school car pool rides, or as a meeting point for joggers. If we decide not to build the bus stop and New Urban West finishes the Village and leaves, we would have to find other funding to construct the bus stop building if we ever needed it. Some of you may have noticed the new bus stop buildings in Rancho Santa Fe. Rumor has it that they cost over \$75,000 each, so we really should give this opportunity serious consideration.

Minutes Of Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council Meeting

By Patti Newton

Call to Order: 7:35 PM

Members Present: Jan Denny, Patti Newton, Arie Franken, Evelyn Alemanni, Bob McGurk, Mid Hoppenrath.

Open Forum: Del Dios residents have planned a pancake breakfast fund raiser to raise funds to fight siting the proposed Escondido High School on the Dorn parcel. Avenida del Diablo resident **Ann Shepard** attended the Escondido Union School Board workshop and updated residents on the status of some of the proposed sites; the Del Dios site is not really popular with the board. The local opposition is a significant factor as are environmental concerns. Attendees at the high school siting meeting suggested Hanson Aggregates could grade the Mesa Rock site at no charge in return for ownership of the removed soil materials. This may not be feasible because more fill than cut may be required and the slope above the proposed school would be too steep; a cause for concern about the possibility of subsequent slope failure. The Mountain Meadows site has a lot of opposition from locals, especially seniors. The Lori Lane site is still of interest. The Avenida Del Diablo site has multiple obstacles, including a planned expansion of the HARRF. There may also be legal challenges associated with this site. At this point, she had no feel for what the board may ultimately do. The next meeting will be on February 15th at 7 PM at the school district building

Treasurer's Report: Bob McGurk gave the financial report. Town council income for January was approximately \$1,057; expenses were approximately \$561. The net is approximately \$496. Detailed maps of the proposed Escondido High School sites are available from Bob.

Board Member Updates: Arie Franken mentioned that a yoga video is available at the firehouse. Time is set aside for residents to use certain evenings and is free of charge. Video length is one hour, 15 minutes.

Jan Denny met with Canyon de Oro residents regarding the installation of two gates. Also attending the meeting was the head of Rancho Santa Fe Association who talked about issues relating to the installation of the Zumaque gate in RSF. Plans are

still very preliminary at this point and there are many possible scenarios to consider. The Country Roads HOA at Fortuna Ranch Road wants a gate between the county and public portions of that road. Jan also spoke separately with Dhavia Locke, county DPLU, to discuss traffic problems associated with Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove Roads. The current general plan predicts a level of service for Elfin Forest Road at "F", after it has been expanded to the zoning maximum of four lanes. GP2020 reduces that level to "D" on portions of Harmony Grove Road, better than "D" on other portions of Harmony Grove Road, but still at four lanes. Jan asked Dahvia whether she considered it problematic to have a four-lane road running through an area where the DPLU was attempting to maintain rural character. Dahvia said she might attempt to obtain DPLU support for downgrading of these roads, but that ultimately the decision would have to be made in conjunction with traffic analysis from the DPLU. In April, the DPLU will begin community road planning sessions, where it will collect community input on road improvements. The Road Committee and Village Committee are meeting with NUW tomorrow to further address NUW's progress on downgrading Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove Roads.

Open Forum: Town council members request input from residents regarding the performance of its board and its responsiveness to issues of concern. **Frank Twohy** suggested that a clearly crafted survey would be a good way to elicit this information. **Peggy Petitmermet** suggested we ask what would motivate residents to attend meetings. What does it take to involve people in their community? Maybe we can talk to them at the Fourth of July picnic. We discussed community notification ideas, e.g., sign boxes, elf alerts, calendars with TC meeting dates marked, face to face, interesting agenda items, etc.

Election results: All candidates on ballot were elected. All bylaw changes were approved with 17 votes in favor; nine votes in favor of partial changes.

Open Forum: Nona Barker, chair of the fire board, and 20 year resident informed residents that rattlesnakes are out now, and reminded us to be vigilant. Most local snakes are not endangered but many are threatened so don't kill them – call the FD who will deal with it (catch and release). Call 911. This is a public service they voluntarily provide.

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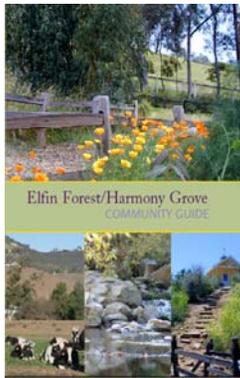
(Minutes EF/HG Town Council continued)

The fire department's annual meeting is this coming Monday and they want the community to attend and provide input. This is your forum to voice your concerns. **Frank Twohy:** discussed the consolidation and regionalization issues that will affect all county residents to some degree. County meetings – no one yet knows yet what the extent of the consolidation or infusion of money will be. Lots of fire departments are working diligently to make this constructive and far sighted. They want to hold the county responsible for making this work, which means the county must come up with the money to do so. An additional \$110 million (over and above the \$50 million existing budget) which the county must ensure will be made available and continue to be made available. Supervisors must provide the money or this consolidation cannot happen. If they don't partner then the FDs will go on as they have, independently. It is contentious at this point between the county and the CSAs. There are many unanswered questions and endless details to be addressed. This is only the beginning in a long, contentious process. The EF/HG FD will offer CPR and advanced first aid classes in March. Contact them for more information.

Adjourned: 8:20 PM.

Community Guides Are Here – Special Offer

By Evelyn Alemanni



Our brand new community guide is here and will be available at all town council meetings. This is a beautiful, keepsake edition with nearly 200 color photos showing our community's past and present. They make wonderful gifts and an indispensable marketing tool for realtors. It provides resources for rural living, a history of our

community, and much, much more. The price is \$25 or five for \$100. *If you ordered your community guide already, pick it up at any town council meeting.*

When you renew your newsletter subscription for two years, you can purchase the community guide for \$20. Renew for five years and the guide is yours for only \$15.

Landscape Foundation News

By Frank and Susan Oddo

The equestrian and pedestrian trail repair work is almost complete along Elfin Forest Road. The erosion has been repaired, several new water drainage pipes have been added, twenty yards of decomposed granite have been put down, and we are in the process of bringing in new mulch to lay down over the trail surface. This will help curtail runoff and the creation of ruts should we get more rain. Until the mulch is down and can soak up the remaining excess water, the trail bed is still too soft to bear the weight of horses without sinking in.

March will soon be upon us and is usually our heaviest rain month. If you would like to volunteer to help in repairing and maintaining the trail, please leave a message with your name, phone number and availability on Frank Oddo's phone – 760-744-6393.

The trail is now open to pedestrians. It is bordered by wildflowers and well worth a leisurely stroll to take in the beauty of an unprecedented spring bounty. The county has been out with their grass cutting machines and has done a commendable job of mowing down everything within six feet of the road's edge. The area beyond that is out of their reach, however, and really beautiful.

Pepper tree trimming is complete. The oaks will not be trimmed. Please note that the nice, balanced trimming was done by the Elfin Forest Landscape Foundation. The remaining work on the valley's trees is courtesy of the county as part of their fire prevention program.

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.

Past chaparral Issues On Web

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

Weedwhacker Weekends

By Eric Anderson



Help keep our valleys safe and beautiful – get out your mower or weedwhacker and cut down those weeds that have grown so bountifully with this winter’s generous rain. The weeds are a great place for ticks and snakes to

hide, and once they dry, will become a fire hazard. Watch for the Weedwhacker Weekend posters to remind you. We’ll also be sending elf alerts, and you may receive a call from your block captain. These dates are set for a community-wide weedwhacking effort: March 26, April 16, and possibly the beginning of May. But please remember to leave the wildflowers and watsonias alone. Photos of wildflower seedlings were included in the last issue of the *Chaparral* for your reference. Watsonias are shown in various growth stages below. Let them grow and we’ll all enjoy the colorful flowers in just a few weeks.



Watsonia sprouts, leaves, and flower.



Just Moved Here?

If you just moved here, contact Karen Gardner 760-744-9500 to get your free six month subscription to the newsletter and discounts on town council merchandise.

March 2005

Fire Station to get Native Garden

By Evelyn Alemanni

A grant from FEMA is making possible an all new native landscape around the fire station. (The firewise demonstration garden will not be changed.) In March, existing landscaping, particularly non-native species will be bulldozed and work will start on a beautiful new plan designed by Greg Rubin. It incorporates many of our favorite natives including three kinds of ceanothus.

There will also be interpretive signage, a dry creek, and walking trails through the plantings. Greg will share details about the new landscaping at the March 2 town council meeting. Thank goodness the beautiful agaves that we have enjoyed at the fire station will not become compost. On February 19, volunteers from the community, under the guidance of the Teri Brand and Peggy Petitmermet, transplanted the agaves to enhance our beautiful road monuments.



Karen Gardner, Frank Twohy, Nona Barker, Peggy Petitmermet, and Greg Rubin review plans for new native landscaping at the fire station.

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. The PDF version is free to regular “hardcopy” subscribers and only \$10.00/year to receive the PDF version only.

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.

Don't Get Ticked- A Cautionary Tale

By Patti Newton

A week ago I was ticked! In fact, I was so ticked I had to resort to medication to manage it. What could possibly get me so ticked that I'd have to medicate you ask? Well, I'll tell you; it all started when I took my dogs for a hike on a gorgeous Saturday morning a couple of weeks ago.

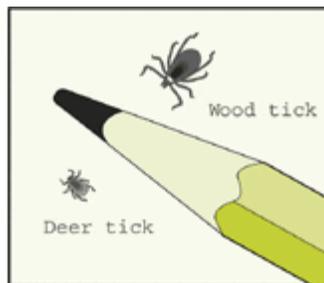
We went up hills, down hills, over streams, past ponds and through oak groves. We made it home in time for lunch and then caught up with the morning paper. That's when I got really ticked. No, it wasn't politics this time; it was that innocuous little itch I absentmindedly reached for while I continued to read.

Oh yuck, a tick! And he ain't giving up easily either! I dropped my paper and the fight was on! As I tugged, that little sucker held on for dear life. Just before I won this battle and plucked his menacing, barbed little jaws from my scalp, the stinging pain was so intense I was taken aback by it. Hurting and indignant, I unceremoniously flushed the little monster thinking that would be the last of it. Wrong!

The next day my lymph glands (at the base of my skull and down my neck) did their best imitation of golf balls! Well, maybe not *that* big, but the pain of the swellings was excruciating. I'll spare you the goriest details, but two doctor visits and blood tests later I was diagnosed with a severe bacterial infection requiring a ten-day course of three different antibiotics, an anti-inflammatory drug, and a narcotic painkiller. I'd been KO'd by a wood tick! For Heaven's sake, I outweigh it by one-hundred-and...well, by a lot, and still it put me out of commission for nearly a week!

Now when I go hiking I'm often mistaken for Nanook of the North; and that cloud billowing around me isn't breath vapor from cold, it's a veil of bug repellent. And upon returning from a hike, we do that monkey grooming imitation! You know, examining each other, picking through each other's hair, that kind of thing. Oh, and our dogs get the same treatment. It's a bit more primal now but hey, it's become a treasured part of our family "quality time"!

So if you're going to get ticked, it's way better to get ticked off, not on!



The wood tick is the size of an apple seed with a white mark near its head. The deer tick is the size of a poppy seed with an orange-brown spot near the head.



The one that bit me looks like the one in the lower right corner. (I think it's a Pacific Coast Tick).

America in Bloom - Landscape

By Evelyn Alemanni

This is the seventh in a series of articles on Elfin Forest's 2005 entry in the America in Bloom contest (www.americainbloom.org).

It's all about "Planting Pride" in our community, and sharing that pride with people from all over the country. In May, 2005, we will be judged on eight criteria: community involvement, tidiness, heritage, environmental awareness, turf and groundcover, floral displays, landscape, and urban forestry.

In 2003, we received ratings of good/very good in the commercial and municipal categories and ratings of "excellent" for personal properties. The judges suggested that a landscape competition would be beneficial, so that's what we're going to do this year. See the related article.

To keep up to date on who's on the AIB committee and what we're doing, check the town council website, www.efhgctc.org/aib.htm. If you would like to help in any way, please contact Eric Anderson at eric@seedcoseeds.com or 760-471-5850. Judging will be in early May 2005, so let's get busy now!



March Garden Projects

By Evelyn Alemanni

In warmer areas, you can start summer planting by midmonth, but on the coast, wait until the end of the month to plant things like peppers, corn, and tomatoes. The good news is that this month you can continue planting bare root roses, trees, berries, etc. Start planning your summer vegetable garden and prepare the soil.

If standing water has been a problem, this is a good time to install french drains or other means of moving water through your garden. Your plants don't need too much of a good thing.

Maintenance

- Check your irrigation system for leaks and clogs. Repair as needed.
- Apply snail bait, or hand pick snails and slugs.
- Deadhead faded flowers.
- Pull emerging weeds or spray with herbicide now to avoid lots of work later.
- Finish pruning roses and camellias.
- If gophers are a problem, try traps, poisons, or an owl box! One owl eats 1000 rodents each year.

Plant Now

- Plant trees, shrubs, vines, citrus, avocados, fruit trees.
- Plant drought-resistant plants. Keep them watered for the first year until they're established.
- Plant perennials.
- Plant bare root roses, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries.
- Plant gladiolas, tuberous begonias, cannas, dahlias, tuberose.
- You can still plant winter vegetables for one last crop. This is a great time to start lettuce.
- Sow seeds or plant seedlings of winter and spring vegetables.
- Plant spring color - pansies, Iceland poppies, stock, larkspur.

- Water newly planted items.
- Buy seeds for summer flowers and vegetables to start indoors now.

Fertilize

- Fertilize groundcovers and roses.
- Fertilize citrus, fuchsias, avocados, berries and grapes.



Teri Brand, Peggy Petitmermet, Bob McGurk, Patricia Griffith, and Evelyn Alemanni (not shown) helped rescue agaves from the fire station and planted them around the road monuments.

YOU Could Be A WINNER....

By Lisa Stephenson

As we did in 2003, we're going to have a landscape competition open to everyone in Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove. We'll be judging the following: best street, best garden, best gate, best barn, best grove, best greenhouse, best native plantings, and best garden art.

Judging criteria are the same as the America in Bloom judges use – you can find those at www.americainbloom.org. Judging will take place the last week of April. The judges (local residents) plan on driving or walking by and will not enter any properties without the owner's express permission. Awards will be given at the potluck dinner to be held when the America in Bloom judges are here (date tbd).

If you have any questions or would like to nominate someone (or yourself) for an award, please contact Lisa Stephenson at 760-744-7744 or send an email to surfhorseranch@aol.com. Lots of local gardens have appeared on television and in regional and national magazines, so this might be your ticket to fame!

Birds Need Your Help!

By Scott Todd

While I was at last month's big Birdwatch America exposition in Atlanta, I found a short guide on how we all can help out our local birds. The guide is a simple, yet effective planner that allows us a chance to make our part of San Diego County a better place for birds. Here are highlights of the six most important steps to create a backyard oasis.

Help our birds overcome habitat loss by making your neighborhood more attractive to birds by landscaping with native plants that provide natural food sources, nesting sites and shelter from predators. Nesting boxes and feeders along with birdbaths are the best methods to help out our feathered friends in a short period of time if new landscaping is not practical.

Prepare year round nutritious foods for birds that are safe to eat and fresh. Birds that eat seeds prefer fresh mixes that are rich in natural oils. Live mealworms for insectivores bring more unique birds and help with the raising of nestlings. Fresh nectar in specialized feeders mean healthier hummingbirds and orioles. If you are unsure of which food source is best for your birds please stop by the store for assistance.

Keep your feeding areas clean. Rake up seed hulls under feeders. Keep the stored seed dry and mold-free at all times. Any seed that has a musty smell needs to be tossed into the garbage. Scrub your birdbaths and keep the water clean. I try to rinse our two baths out every day, especially during warm days when they are used more often. 10% bleach solutions or 50/50 solution of hot water and white vinegar make effective cleaning agents when it is time to give them a monthly "clean-sweep". Make sure the baths are covered every time you are treating your "birds' pool".

Avoid pesticides, herbicides and fungicides. These are all toxic to birds, especially our bug-loving avian friends.

Keep your cats away from the birds. Latest estimates indicate cats kill hundreds of million birds each year in the U.S. A lot of bird-lovers also have cats. The best way to help the birds is practice keeping your cats indoors. Cats will live longer, healthier lives and veterinarian bills will be less when they are kept inside your house.

Reduce window collisions by attaching static cling decals to problem areas (large, reflective, near to ground windows). Many different decals can be found at our store and we will be glad to help you plan for a safer environment when you visit with us. Here are some wonderful resources to visit on-line for more details: www.americanbirding.org, www.abcbirds.org, www.nwf.org, www.birdwatchersdigest.com, and www.birds.cornell.edu.

Happy Birding!



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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 7:30 p.m. Lenten Series at the church.

The Way Within Meditation Classes

1st & 3rd Wednesday at 12:00 Noon Phyllis Isaac

Mar 6—The Way of the Christ is Love
—*Rev. Elizabeth Wood*

Mar 13—Hold Steadfast to Your Course with Deepening Faith—*Rev. Phyllis Isaac*

Mar 20—A Call from the Summit—*Rev. Susan Cary*

Mar 25-27—**Easter Retreat:** Behold the Light that Never Sets-Climbing to Easter's Summit. Good Friday Communion Service, Sunday morning Sunrise Service at Inspiration Pt., regular service at 10:45 am.
—*Rev. Jonathan Wiltshire*

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1" x 3 1/2" (approx. 4 lines): no charge to residents - must be resubmitted every 3 months. Non-residents cost is \$10/month.

Playgroup Schedule

By Pam Sanford

Wednesday, March 2nd: Meet at Stagecoach park at 10am. Bring a snack to share.

Wednesday, March 9th: Meet at San Elijo park at 10am. Bring a snack to share.

Friday, March 18th: Baby shower for Rose Goetz. Mom's meet at Buca di Beppo, a new Italian restaurant at the Forum in Carlsbad at 6 PM for dinner. RSVP to Pam by 3/13: 760-591-7909. Rose is having a boy!

Saturday, March 19th: Birthday party for Henry Sidwell (1) and Jordan Wright (3) at Amanda and David Wright's home at 11 AM. RSVP Amanda by 3/19.

Saturday, March 26th: Easter egg hunt: TBD. Volunteers wanted!

Sheriff's Department Contacts

In an emergency, please call 911. For non-emergency reporting, contact the following: Gen -760-510-5200
Jackie Cruz – Agriculture crime prevention specialist
760-940-4350

Sgt. Dan Wilson – COPPS – 760-510-5231

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

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New Urban West, the builder of Harmony Grove Village,

is proud to announce that the old white DeRaadt farmhouse, known in the historical records as the Johnston Ward farmhouse, will be saved by New Urban West. NUWI plans to renovate and move the 1931 house to the Village Center at Harmony Grove Village. Until the Village is built, the house will be used by NUWI, with plans to possibly open the house in a few months for community meetings.

Keep a look out for the community open house this spring.



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The *chaparral* is published monthly by the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council Board (a 501c3 non-profit corporation) and is distributed to residents of the Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove communities and elsewhere for a \$20.00 annual subscription. Check the mailing label for your subscription expiration date. If it has expired please send a check, payable to the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council, 20652 Elfin Forest Road, Elfin Forest, CA 92029. For new subscriptions or address label corrections, contact Evelyn Alemanni at alemanni@allea.com or 471-7224. To protect you from unwanted junk mail and solicitations, the *chaparral* mailing list is not shared with anyone. This newsletter is copyrighted. Unauthorized reproduction in any form is strictly prohibited.

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