



The Ruralist

Check us out at www.cherryvalleyca.org

Dedicated to Keeping Cherry Valley Rural – May 2009 issue

From Your President

Another year has rolled around ... it's hard for me to realize it's 2009! As an organization, I feel we have accomplished some very important things.

For one thing, we 'convinced' Riverside County to withdraw its plans for redevelopment in Cherry Valley. A reversal like this is almost unheard of, and I am very pleased the Supervisors listened to the voice of the people on this. It proves we *can* make a difference.

Our Number One Issue: Water

We must NEVER let down our vigilance when it comes to the issues that concern our community. And the most important issue we face is WATER (or the lack of).

There are a number of regular meetings regarding this subject: bi-monthly, monthly, and quarterly... each one important. If we fail to attend one, we miss the connection with the others. And believe me, they are so inter-twined it's difficult to determine who is wearing what 'hat' at any given time.

Water: A Messy Issue

San Timoteo Watershed Management Authority (STWMA) usually meets quarterly. STWMA is comprised of four bodies: the Beaumont Cherry Valley Water District (BCVWD), Yucaipa, South Mesa, and the City of Beaumont.

These bodies joined with the City of Banning and successfully had the Beaumont Basin 'adjudicated.' (Adjudication is a legal process whereby a judge reviews evidence and arguments, and then makes decisions regarding rights and obligations between the parties involved.)

Then these folks established a Watermaster (a man named Andy Schlange), Chief of Watermaster Services, who, *incidentally*, is also the manager of STWMA. This 'pack of five' now has voting rights on the distribution of water from the Beaumont Basin.

On top of that, STWMA has offered to let the County of Riverside 'buy in' (for \$5,000), so they can *also* have voting rights! In my opinion, this is wrong!

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) authorizing membership in STWMA was passed out at the WATERMASTER meeting on January 1, 2009 (NOT a STWMA meeting!) This MOU made Riverside County an official member of STWMA.

Also, after Measure B failed, the County of Riverside imposed a moratorium on the building of new septic systems in Cherry Valley (premature, in my opinion).

A Way for Our Voices To be Heard

The County has now established a Groundwater Quality Evaluation Committee for the Beaumont/Cherry Valley Area. This committee consists

of members from the community and various water experts. The community members will be the 'voting' body that will make recommendations to the Supervisors.

This is a very important monthly meeting and EVERYONE who can possibly attend, should.

If we don't show our support for this committee – our concerns WILL NOT be heard!

Is The Watermaster Helping Anything?

The Watermaster has been in existence since 2004, and we are in no better shape – water wise – than we were then.

Private wells have not been metered, the basin is in continued overdraft, and thousands of dollars are being spent with virtually NOTHING to show for it. The Watermaster Manager uses BCVWD facilities, labor, and materials at the expense of the rate-payers (you and me), even though they have their own budget. The same goes for STWMA.

Should we be concerned? You bet we should!

New Water Board

The elections are over and we have a new and improved BCVWD water board. However, we cannot sit back and think everything will be OK. They have a lot of work to do, and they need our continued support.

To do this, we must continue to attend the monthly meetings (even though they may not be as exciting as in the past). I have only touched on the importance of these water meetings. They are vital.

Also, please make every effort to attend our monthly Cherry Valley Acres and Neighbors (CVAN) meetings to be part of the ongoing discussions.

Keeping the Wolves from the Door is a Full-Time Job

Not that I'm complaining, but here is a rundown of the meetings a select few try to attend on CVAN's behalf regularly:

- San Geronio Pass Water Agency (4 per month)
- BCVWD – (at least 2 per month)
- Groundwater Quality - (1 per month)
- STWMA – Quarterly
- Watermaster – Quarterly
- Municipal Adv. (MAC) – bi-monthly
- Beaumont City Council – (when it pertains to us)
- Calimesa City Council – Pat Doherty attends this for me.
- CVAN – monthly
- CVEPG – bi-annually

To fully understand what's going on at these meetings, we need to read all agenda packets, Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs), budget reports, etc., and be ready to testify when necessary.

This is *very* time consuming, and I want to express my GREAT APPRECIATION for the regulars who are always there: Luwana, Patrick, Fran, Minnie, the Browns, Beckmans, Riddells and others.

I could NOT continue to be President of CVAN without the

support of these tireless and 'faithful' folks. Again, thank you all.

Patsy Reeley, President

Cherry Valley Grange

I am pleased to report that Stella Parks, Betty Beckman and I have been working with Recreation & Park District Manager, Mr. Valdevia, on improving the Grange. If you've been there lately, you'll notice there is a new floor in the entry -- the Oak Room floor has been refinished.

Supervisor Marion Ashley has contributed \$50,000 in County funds, and the Department of Recreation and Parks will kick in another \$10,000.

Also, I am very proud to announce that CVAN and Cherry Valley Environmental Planning Group has agreed to contribute \$1,000 each for the remodeling of the kitchen and the two oldest restrooms. This project will go out to bid.

We are inviting everyone who lives in Beaumont/Cherry Valley, whether you use the Grange or not, to PLEASE take part in this effort. Every dollar donated will help us reach the goal of restoring the Grange. There are plans to construct a 'thermometer' illustrating the contributions and goals.

The Grange is an important part of our history, and with the improvement of the kitchen (and later the Community and Oak Rooms), we may be able to serve meals, play bingo, hold craft classes, exercise classes, and who knows what else. The Women's Club is finished and is beautiful.

Lets get together and support this effort. We will keep you posted, and there will be a press release – look for it.

Senate Bill 885

This bill has been around for years, and it has just resurfaced. Basically, this bill is supposed to address the 'adverse effects' septic systems have on ground water – where the problems exist and how to remedy it.

There are many opponents to this – one being the California Association of Realtors, who have responded in writing.

If you'd like to know more, you may go to the following web site: www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/septic_tanks

I believe you'll find Cherry Valley is **not** identified as a problem area.

If you'd like to write, please use the following email address: websupport@waterboards.ca.gov

Patsy

My 'Take' on Cherry Valley Water

We are in BIG Water Trouble.

Five years ago, the court created an organization known as "Watermaster" to protect our water. The judgment authorized the Watermaster to pump more than the "safe Yield" for 10 years. (*The definition of "safe yield" is: The annual amount of water that can be taken from a source of supply over a period of years without depleting that source beyond its ability to be replenished naturally in "wet years."*)

The Watermaster proposed to use ten years to find new sources of water: recycled water, imported water, conservation savings, and increased storm water capture, which, along with the safe yield of Beaumont Basin, will provide our future total water supply.

I overheard the phrase ‘perfect storm’ describing our situation five years into the Watermaster’s 10-year plan.

There are problems in the Delta, the source of our imported water, and California is in severe drought. Water allocation amounts from the Delta are down as much as 85% and are not reliable, and State financing to implement our recycled water plan is in question.

We continue to water lawns and golf courses with our drinking water, and cities continue to invite development. I don’t think the public knows just how serious this is. We are pumping several times the “safe yield” for our current needs.

In five years, we will be limited to pumping only the “safe yield” amount from the basin. At a recent water meeting, shortfall estimates were from 30,000 to 70,000 Acre/Feet (*An acre/foot is the amount of water, one foot deep, which covers one acre*). We will have to augment the “safe yield” from the Beaumont Basin with other sources of water, or possibly face mandatory conservation measures soon.

You can learn about local water issues. If you make a request, they will email information-packed agendas to you before each meeting... and it’s free! Please visit them at:
<http://www.beaumontwatermaster.org>
<Http://www.stwma.com>
www.sgpwa.com

Fran Flanders

A Personal Note

I would like to thank Patsy Reeley and Luwana Ryan for all the hours they spend going to different meetings. These two ladies know everything that goes on in this area. The information they have gathered has kept Cherry Valley rural.

We do not have to worry about Redevelopment coming here, thanks to the overwhelming community support. The Black Bench will not have to worry about hundred of homes on the hillside thanks to CVAN. Legacy High-lands in Beaumont is put to rest, thanks again to CVAN.

If you would like to get involved with a group of people who are here for the good of our beautiful area, join the membership of CVAN, or just come to the Grange for our monthly meetings.

Minnie Birchard, V.P.

SunnyCal Egg Ranch Development

There isn’t anything new to report. The representatives of the Egg ranch have had our court date postponed three to four times. The current Court Date is July 31,2009. If it changes, I will notify those for whom I have email.

We were successful in our litigation with Legacy Highlands (South Beaumont). Action has been filed against EBX II (East Branch Extension-Phase II). There are no court dates at this time.

Membership

Notices have been sent out to members for renewal, and we invite everyone to please join and become an active member. An application is included in this issue.

New Feature

We are enclosing a calendar with all the important meetings held in our area. Please post it where you can refer to it, and attend as many of these meetings as you can. I hope it will be helpful to you.

Please let me know. Patsy

A Bit of History – Highland Springs Resort

Highland Springs Resort is a great supporter of Cherry Valley ideals – here is a bit of history.

The historic Highland Springs Resort, which is a site of local historic importance dating back to the mid 1800s, and located in Cherry Valley, will be opening their new restaurant in May .

Most local residents are aware of the resort, but many may not know the changes that have been made in the last couple of years. The property has been purchased by new owners who intend to return the resort to its former significance, and to the popularity it maintained from the 1930s through the early 1970s.

The resort is one of Riverside County’s oldest landmarks, and at one time was a stagecoach stop, built for changing horses when the stage came past traveling to San Bernardino.

A man named Isaac Smith moved to the area from Maine in 1853, and bought the land (then home to bears and antelope) from a rancher. He settled there with family members, becoming one of the first white settlers in the area.

The land changed hands several times, until Fred and William Hirsch bought it in 1927 and created the Highland Springs Resort. It was their intention to make the area into a health-oriented spa, and a destination for families. The resort was quite successful, and a popular vacation spot for southern California residents, providing horseback riding, swimming, hiking and tennis.

Efforts are now being made to return the environmentally friendly resort to those glory days, starting with the new, very classy restaurant and lounge bar, which would impress any chef on the food network channel.

The main dining room has high ceilings, is spacious and has large picture windows on two sides where diners can view some of the resort's ten acres of lavender fields and grounds.

There have been some delays in opening, mainly due to the high tech installation of some very modern kitchen equipment. The head chef wants the kitchen built to very exact specifications.

The restaurant will be considered a "steak house," but will serve poultry, lamb and seasonal fish dishes. The fish will be fresh and never frozen. All steaks are 100% certified black Angus, corn fed, with no hormones or antibiotics.

Everything in the kitchen is hand made and prepared to order. They have installed the latest in oven technology, including an infrared gas broiler which heats ceramic disks, making the steaks cook faster.

There are several food bays for cooks to work on specific items in specific areas. You'll find a convection oven, walk-in freezers, and places where chefs will cook appetizers and sauces -- all home made.

Coffee beans are roasted to order, and ground fresh. A French press and an espresso machine are being installed. There will be a wide variety of desserts, and this reporter was rewarded with a champagne sorbet as an example.

The resort is striving to be organic as much as possible. They currently grow their own tomatoes and peppers for the menu, and plan to expand to other varieties of vegetables as time passes. Only locally grown vegetables will be purchased to compliment those the resort grows.

There will be an extensive list of foreign and domestic wines, and a

world-wide variety of special beers available. The lounge room and bar is impressive and comfortable. All 'well' drinks will be high quality alcohol, unlike most bars. Prices of drinks vary from the reasonable to very high end, with the finest alcohols available if preferred.

Head chef, Clyde Tanner, who came to the resort from the Pechanga Indian Casino, says the resort spared no expense when it came to the restaurant. Looking around the kitchen, it is easy to see the one million dollar price tag.

When the restaurant is operating at full capacity, Chef Tanner expects to have twelve chefs working, with 50 to 80 restaurant personnel in all. If all this doesn't make your mouth water, you must not be hungry.

Weddings and banquets are already being held at the resort. This is one of the aims of the resort, as the 900-acre resort grounds are perfect for holding outdoor weddings and other events.

Most local residents are aware of the resort's Lavender Festival. This year the dates are June 13-14 and June 20-21. Last year's festival brought over 6,000 visitors to enjoy the grounds, the food, lavender treats, and weekends filled with varieties of music.

The original bungalows and rooms are being redone, with some rooms already available for those who want to spend the night, and get a feel for some of the history the place offers.

Housekeepers are replacing harsh chemical-laden cleaning products with environmentally friendly ones. "We want to make it a place where people think about their health and the environment," said Tina Kummerle, the resort president.

The historic bath house and swimming pool, which uses saline

instead of chlorine, is worth viewing, as are the rest of the grounds.

In all, local residents can be proud of what the resort has accomplished, and of what it brings to our local area. And there is still much to come as it continues to preserve its history.

This restaurant can easily become a favorite eating establishment for all Riverside County residents, equal to any of the finest restaurants anywhere, and certainly deserves our patronage.

Anyone interested in information regarding the resort or the restaurant can call Tina at 951-640-7794.

Patrick Doherty

Homeowners Beware

With the recent rise in foreclosures, foreclosure-related scams have exploded onto the real estate scene. These so-called "foreclosure rescue companies" claim they can help save your home, but in reality are out to make a profit -- at your expense.

Red Flags

If you are at risk of, or in, foreclosure, you should be on the lookout for foreclosure scams. Here are some of the red flags to watch out for:

- Asking for money up front before providing any service
- Instructing you not to contact your lender, lawyer, housing counselor, family, friends or others
- Asks for mortgage payments to be made directly to his or her company or a bank account set up by that person, rather than your lender.
- Requires payment only in the form of cash, cashier's check, or wire transfer

- Promises to stop the foreclosure process, no matter the circumstances
- Advises you to transfer your property deed or title to his or her company
- Offers to fill out paperwork for you
- Asks for something to be done immediately and without delay. This includes pressuring you into signing paperwork that you have not had the chance to read thoroughly or do not fully understand
- Encourages you to lease your house and buy it back over time
- Offers to buy your house for a fixed price that is not set by the housing market at the time of sale
- Asks you to give a power of attorney
- Asks for signatures on a grant deed or deed of trust
- Asks for signatures on a document that has lines left blank
- Fails to provide copies of signed documents
- Refuses or fails to put an oral promise in writing

Report Fraud

If you have been a victim of a foreclosure-related scam or approached by a scam artist, you may report the incident to the following organizations and government enforcement agencies:

California Attorney General
<http://ag.ca.gov>

California Department of Real Estate
www.dre.ca.gov

Department of HUD
www.hud.gov

Federal Trade Commission
www.ftc.gov

Your Local Better Business Bureau
www.bbb.org

Legitimate Resources

If you are at risk of foreclosure, or have already received a foreclosure notice, you should contact your lender immediately. Homeowners also may seek the advice of a reputable housing, financial or credit counselor, attorney, or other qualified professional.

Homeowners may visit the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Website at <http://www.hud.gov/> to view its “Guide to Avoiding Foreclosure,” and its list of California HUD-approved housing counseling agencies.

In addition, the non-profit Homeownership Preservation Foundation has a 24/7 toll-free Homeowner’s HOPE Hot line at (999) 995-HOPE.

Written by California Association of Realtors.

Submitted by Pam Lingren –