

SPECIAL ELECTION ISSUE

NOVEMBER 2005



OLD ENCINITAS | NEW ENCINITAS | **ENCINITAS** | OLIVENHAIN | CARDIFF | LEUCADIA

Informed neighbors help City government make better choices for everyone



Do you want more?

- TRAFFIC
- PARKS & OPEN SPACE
- VOICE IN PLANNING ISSUES
- OFFICE SPACE/COMMERCIAL IN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS
- TRUST IN OUR CITY REPRESENTATIVES

RE: EDUCATION CAMP

A few weeks ago I attended one of the breakfast tours the Ekes have been holding. The purpose of these tours is to educate the citizens of Encinitas about the Ecke flower business. I think it is fair to say that their goal is to generate voter sympathy and support in the upcoming election. For me, it was both educational and enjoyable. They seem to have a lot of very smart and creative people in their employ. They have an incredible site for a ranch. They have all it takes to be truly innovative.

The tour did leave me feeling sorry for them. From what we were told it seems that they were surprised by sudden advances by their competition and their customers desires for different products. Now, to stay in business, they (choose to) see no alternative than to develop more agricultural land into more expensive homes.

I feel sorry for them because, as a business, they have everything it takes to sustain their agricultural business in Encinitas, except a vision for a sustainable future. They have it all, yet they want to throw it away, for all of us, in the name of saving it.

As a business owner I understand the value of working capital. I also understand that generating capital by developing agricultural land into houses is like shooting fish in a barrel. In the 21st century the truly creative and innovative business person doesn't look at open space or established agricultural land in Coastal Southern California and think: more housing tracts.

Any business owner would look at the issues facing the Eckes and understand that it is all about choices in business. And looking at it that way is good. So what have the Eckes done to keep their Encinitas flower business vital these past ten years? Up until a year ago, the big change they made was to move flower production out of the country. Ten years ago they made the choice to not be on the cutting edge of creativity and innovation. At that time they set in motion the actions which would allow them to generate yet another round of capital funding at the expense of the citizens of Encinitas: let the land lay fallow and develop it when the time was right.

With the resources they have, the early 21st century Eckes could be as instrumental in building and improving a sustainable community as were the early 20th century Eckes. Our region is filled with high tech companies, many of whom are looking for high-profile partners to develop and showcase viable sustainable technologies in agriculture and energy.

Kyocera Solar, Inc., ReWater Systems, Inc., World, Water & Power Corporation, and PowerLight Corporation are all good candidates. There are also plenty of architects, designers and engineers who are experienced and willing to join in.

In-turn, partnerships such as these are sure to set up some good deals with SDG&E. The State also offers some reasonable kickbacks for solar operations. Soft money for educational outreach can be found through grants for sustainable projects. The Kresge Foundation offers a generous planning opportunity. Nationally, the Ford Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation, the Toyota Foundation, and, locally, the San Diego Foundation all offer grants specifically geared towards sustainable projects.

Organic farming is one of the fastest growing market segments in the US today. Encinitas demographics are exactly that segment's customers. Community gardens, 4H, educational workshops, and school tours could fit right in. As any Chamber of Commerce member knows, community involvement fosters business.

Even the hottest trend in California for "Maximum Density Zoning" could be achieved without the Eckes selling out. Low cost housing could be included in this sustainable agricultural living model. True low-income, affordable, low-resource-impact, dense housing could be provided by the Eckes to their agricultural workers and families. This housing could be controlled by the Eckes to ease any concerns the Ecke Ranch homeowners would have with low-income housing as their neighbor. Several working examples of attractive, efficient, low-impact housing currently exist in California. Just not in Encinitas.

If the Eckes want to keep flowers in Encinitas, isn't there a better way to do it than by spending close to one hundred thousand dollars on a re-education campaign? Couldn't they put those big brains and dollars to work on something that would actually continue a legacy rather than end one?

Once they develop and sell what little remains of their agricultural land, that resource is gone, in perpetuity. If they were to keep it and develop a sustainable agricultural community, their land would be generating capital for yet another generation of Eckes. And be a lasting benefit for all the citizens of Encinitas.

We'll be voting NO on Proposition A.

the Editors

PROJECT UPDATES

Prop A is Not Alone

In order to be notified about upcoming General Plan Amendments and their progress one must get on the mailing lists.

1. 825 Orpheus (R3-R11) and 516 La Costa (from "visitor serving" to 20-22 town homes) contact Jay Dichoso at: jdichoso@ci.encinitas.ca.us

2. Lake & Santa Fe (R4-R11) and Encinitas Blvd & Rancho Santa Fe (specific plan for commercial and high density) contact Bill Weedman at: bweedman@ci.encinitas.ca.us

3. Chevron expansion & request for alcohol beverage sale at La Costa and freeway contact Gene Ybarra at: gybarra@ci.encinitas.ca.us 760-633-2698

4. Hall Property: Council unanimously voted to not sell any of the land. Mayor Dalager paraphrased Will Rogers and offered that they are not making any more land.

5. Urania Project: The developer has agreed to do a complete Environmental Report and the Planning Department is considering submitting a proposal to the city council that would modify the way bonus density is calculated. This would reduce the units from 27 to 22 if approved.

6. Cal Trans' proposed closing of Piraeus: On Oct. 27 well over 100 people attended a meeting with the designers of the new Leucadia Blvd intersection and Cal Trans representatives. They are now looking at alternative options and Cal Trans is fully aware of the clear need for both north and south bound access to Leucadia Blvd from Piraeus.

7. Sheridan & Andrew: From the Barratt American Homes project we are learning that even when the resident's concerns are valid (proper soils testing & raised pad elevations for sewer fall being 2 to 5 feet higher than necessary) it is the community's responsibility to notify the city of infractions early in the process, or as the Leucadia Cares Group says "Barrett got away with it because we didn't oversee the project early enough."

Currently the western parcel has been approved and the massive homes are now being reviewed for building permits. The eastern parcel is being managed by Kerry Kusiack at: kkusiack@ci.encinitas.ca.us 760-633-2719.

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

I went to my first Planning Commission meeting. I saw the power of individuals speaking out and affecting change. One battle apparently won—the Barelmann application for a General Plan Change on Orpheus Ave—WITHDRAWN.

Then I heard about the City Planners considering other changes to the General Plan, can I do something?

I think—I don't have time, and I wouldn't know what to say at a hearing, but I want to do something. If I can do just one thing: Put a sign in my front yard, speak to my neighbor—just one or two things. Go to a hearing and listen, just to show City Hall that someone is paying attention.

We can all do just one thing to have our opinion heard. It will add to the sound of democracy in practice. Please don't wait for the next time, do something NOW. It feels good and the next time it will be easier.

Donna Manning

TRUST

In 1994, the the City of Encinitas entered into a development deal with the Eckes which resulted in the Encinitas Ranch development. The Eckes said they needed the money to modernize their greenhouses and wanted 68 acres of their land to be agricultural in perpetuity. The City got parks, trails, improvements, improved tax base, etc. The Eckes made millions.

Recently, the City of Encinitas agreed to a land swap with the Eckes. City owned land which is zoned for home construction was exchanged for agricultural zoned land owned by the Eckes. The City wants to build a new maintenance yard which could have gone on either property, but the City favored the Saxony location. We got a two acre park and the Eckes will make millions.

If Prop A passes, the Eckes will be able to build more than one hundred new homes, contribute to traffic calming in some-yet-to-be-detailed manner, and possibly build a connector road between Saxony and and Quail Gardens Road. We get an eight acre park (next to two acre park in the land swap detailed above), the additional traffic from the homes, and increased costs to the City which will exceed the new houses' additions to the tax base.

The Eckes will make millions.

Just as they did in 1994, the Eckes are arguing they need the money to modernize. Paul Ecke 3 has now been in charge of the Ecke Ranch for ten years. Other members of his family ran the Ranch previously. Apparently, no one thought about saving some money for modernization of the greenhouses, many of which were built decades ago.

I recently toured the flower operations at the Ranch. We were shown a new computer system and two modern pieces of farm equipment, all bought within the last year. We were told these two new machines paid for themselves in nine months with increased productivity.

If the modernization of the ranch was so obvious in 1994, and again in the last couple of years, why have the attempts at modernization been done just

in the last year? What happened to the Encinitas Ranch development profits that were supposed to pay for modernization of their flower business?

Let's take a look at the 68 acres the Eckes, in 1994, wanted to stay agricultural in perpetuity.

If Prop A passes:

38 acres will become homes

10 acres will be a park

8 acres will be a City maintenance yard

12 acres is the remaining balance.

And what are their plans for these 12 acres?

First there is the possible road between Saxony and Quail Gardens. Then there is the Ecke Farm and it's little discussed bio/agricultural research facility which was previously approved by the City. This project is detailed on the Caritas Company's (Ecke's development company) web site <www.cartas.com>. The facility is proposed to be three buildings within sight of Saxony. Did I mention this research facility will need parking and will add to the traffic?

No wonder the Eckes are willing to let the City have any remaining agricultural land if they cease operations—there won't be much left!

So why did I call this article "trust"? The facts show that we can trust the Eckes and the City to interpret "in perpetuity" as "change when convenient".

The facts show we can't trust the Eckes to do what they say they will do.

This writer will Vote NO on A!

Herb Patterson <lindpat@cox.net>

COMMUNITY ACTION

Members of several local community groups (The Leucadia Town Council, Leucadia Cares, and No ReZone just to name a few) have been considering forming a new community action group. This umbrella group would address the concerns for the problems everyone is seeing and experiencing in the neighborhoods throughout our community.

The thoughts were that we needed to create a PAC umbrella group which could fundraise and develop political clout. With enough money and clout, the goal was to confront the large, well-organized opponents who continue to hoodwink the citizens and pressure City Hall to dangerously ignore our city's traffic and infrastructure troubles. Our communities are loosing their character in the name of protecting the property rights of those few greedy developers. It is this short-sighted ignorance, enabled by City Hall, which is causing serious concern in the neighborhoods throughout Encinitas.

A PAC group is free to take a stand on the propositions and endorse a candidate. The PAC we envisioned could make sure that the best interests of the citizens are the interests which are being served. The mission of our neighborhood groups is to be the voice for each communities individual character, to preserve the quality of life, and to protect the neighborhoods from being over-developed. The mission of the umbrella group would be to lend the smaller groups either a louder voice or a bigger stick, depending on the need.

At a recent joint neighborhood meeting, it was suggested that such an organization already exists.



Why should we go through the trouble of trying to establish a PAC when one already exists? The group has been active in keeping an eye on City Hall for close to 20 years. One of the nuggets of information offered was that each house in a new development adds about \$900 a year in valued revenue to the City but that it costs the city taxpayers about \$1,700 in already over-extended services.

The group is the Encinitas Taxpayer's Association.

If you are looking to get involved and make a difference on the city-wide level, please give them a shout. People are needed to contribute however they can from all areas being affected: Leucadia, Encinitas, Olivenhain, New Encinitas, and Cardiff-by-the-Sea.

We are tired of seeing the quality of life in our city being sold out to bad business deals. It's time, we the citizen, take back our city and see that it's future is the one we want.

Julie Sanderson

ONE VOTE AT A TIME

The November 8 special ballot election will soon be upon us. This event requires your attention. Please take the time to read the Prop A ballot measure and understand the impact it will have on Encinitas if it passes. Don't stop with just understanding it—take the next step and VOTE.

Studies show that for any one issue, most people don't care one way or the other. A small percent express strong support and another small percent express strong opposition. The vast majority is neutral or indifferent. This group of citizens has been referred to as the silent majority.

Please don't be indifferent on this issue. If Prop A passes it will have an impact on the outcome of any future requests for rezoning on any of the remaining land zoned for agriculture. Protect what little land we have left designated open space and agriculture. Educate your self on Prop A—but most of all—get out and VOTE.

Don't be silent on this issue

Gail Lane

stoprezoning@yahoo.com

ENCINITAS MAYOR & COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Dan Dalager 760/633.2624
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Deputy Mayor Christy Guerin 760/633.2620
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