

# The Jacob Journal

A Newsletter from Supervisor Dianne Jacob

September 2002

Serving the Cities of:  
El Cajon  
La Mesa  
Lemon Grove  
Poway  
Santee

Serving the communities of:  
Agua Caliente  
Allied Gardens  
Alpine  
Barrett  
Blossom Valley  
Bostonia  
Boulevard  
Campo  
Canebrake  
Casa de Oro  
Crest  
Cuyamaca  
Dehesa  
Del Cerro  
Descanso  
Dulzura  
Eucalyptus Hills  
Fernbrook  
Flinn Springs  
Granite Hills  
Grantville  
Guatay  
Harbison Canyon  
Jacumba  
Jamul  
Julian  
Lake Morena  
Lakeside  
Mount Helix  
Pine Hills  
Pine Valley  
Potrero  
Ramona  
Rancho San Diego  
Rolando  
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San Pasqual  
Santa Ysabel  
Shelter Valley  
Spring Valley  
Tecate  
Tierra del Sol  
Vallecitos

Serving the Indian Reservations of:  
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Campo  
Cosmit  
Cuyapaipe  
Inaja  
Jamul  
La Posta  
Manzanita  
Mesa Grande  
Santa Ysabel  
Sycuan  
Viejas

## Safety First when Preserving Open Space

Anyone who's had the pleasure of toting a backpack to East County's secret Cedar Creek, west of Cuyamaca State Park, knows the feeling. The hush-hush Back Country spot is a favorite with outdoor enthusiasts because of its stunning scenery.

The area's sun-drenched cliffs, chaparral-covered canyons and soothing waterfalls give visitors the feeling they're all alone on earth. Cedar Creek, like much of East County's Back Country, is an inspiring retreat from the excitement of urban living.

Federal legislation making its way through committee would give special protection to 40,000 of these breathtaking Back Country acres including the famed Eagle Peak Complex—home to Cedar Creek— areas of desert in the Sawtooth Mountains south of Borrego Springs, Hauser Creek and rugged Hauser Mountain north of Tecate, Mexico and the panoramic vistas of Carrizo Gorge on the border of Southern Imperial County.

Few can disagree with the spirit of the Wild Heritage Wilderness Act, which seeks to protect the delicate ecosystems of these cherished San Diego County lands. We all

believe our children's children deserve the opportunity to experience the wonders of such majestic landscape. Yet, as we seek to protect land, we must recognize that preserved lands are not immune to catastrophic acts of mother nature or the unintended consequences of human activity.

As embers from this month's devastating

Pines Fire and smaller Eagle Peak Fire still smolder near glorious Cedar Creek, federal legislators must be mindful of the safety risks to people and property in wildland areas. Ask Julian residents who nervously watched the flames of the Pines Fire bear down on their historic town. Firefighters and other law enforcement agencies need unfettered access to wild

land areas, particularly during an emergency when a single second can mean the difference between life and death.

Had it not been for valiant state and local firefighters who had the ability to drive brush rigs and bulldozers along Volcan Mountain before and during the Pines Fire, hundreds of additional homes may have been destroyed. An environmentally-conscious fuel break along several mountainous ridges helped slow the spread of fire toward Whispering Pines. The break protected not just property but the sensitive habitats of threatened plants and animals in the fire's path.

The ability to set additional back fires was crucial as firefighters struggled to keep

*"Preserved lands are not immune to catastrophic acts of mother nature or the unintended consequences of human activity."*

*-Supervisor Dianne Jacob*



Safe Open Space.....Page 1  
Safe Open Space.....Page 2  
Julian Open for Business.....Page 3  
Get the Journal at home.....Page 4  
How to reach me or my staff.....Page 4

continued on page 2

### Safe Open Space

Continued from Page 1

flames from jumping trails in finicky summer winds. Homes cleared of dry brush and surrounded by defensible space had a far greater chance of surviving the fire than unprotected homes.

Those of us committed to the overall goals of the Wild Heritage Wilderness Act have a model from which to craft a safety-first approach to land preservation. That model is a landmark piece of open space legislation authored in 1999 by then-San Diego Congressman Brian Bilbray. The Otay Mountain Wilderness Act provides long-term protection for 18,500 acres on Otay Mountain while respecting the needs of public safety agencies.

Before passage of the Otay Mountain Wilderness Act, Otay Mountain's once-pristine landscape had been trashed, trampled and burned by ruthless border smugglers who coaxed masses of immigrants through miles of treacherous terrain. Because firefighters, Border Patrol agents and wildlife agencies had very limited access to the area, people died from exposure, fires burned unchecked and the habitat was ravaged.

All that changed when public safety agencies were allowed to construct several low-impact, dirt access roads into remote canyons and high mountain peaks. Agents had a means to reach people in distress and it was much easier to extinguish fires. Smuggler trails, once carved into hillsides, began to regenerate. In short, Otay Mountain healed.

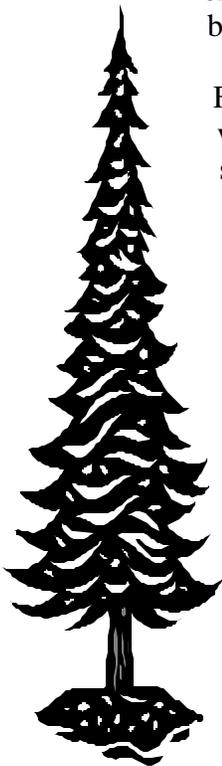
The Secretary of the Interior at the time, Bruce Babbitt lauded the effort and said he was surprised at how quickly the land had been restored to its natural condition.

What the parties who worked toward the preservation of Otay Mountain learned most from the experience was that each and every agency involved supported the protection of some of the most beautiful and ecologically valuable land in the world.

Many people are still surprised to learn that the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) does more than just fight wildfires. CDF officials in San Diego work with biologists, geologists, archeologists and water quality specialists from sister resource departments to monitor brush conditions. These specialists understand the biological cycles of Back Country vegetation and help teach local governments how to improve growing conditions for native plants and wildlife species.

A majority of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors recognizes the importance of putting land into open space for generations to come and wants to make certain adequate fire protection takes top priority. Luckily, we have an open dialogue with our federal legislators to make certain that the Wild Heritage Wilderness Act incorporates a safety-first approach to the preservation of land.

When all is said and done, we will have preserved 40,000 acres of extraordinary open space – and greater piece of mind when it comes to public safety.



East County's majestic landscape includes the soothing waterfalls of Cedar Creek.

***For more information about protecting your property from fire please contact the Fire Safe Council of San Diego County at 619 562-0096.***

## Apple Days are Sweeter after Pines Fire Spares Julian

Julian's famous apple orchards, like Janet Johnson's Apple Lane Orchard pictured below, escaped the destructive flames of last month's Pines fire and are just waiting to welcome visitors to the town's annual Apple Days celebration.

Long-time East County residents know that Julian is one of the best place in all of San Diego County for a weekend getaway, especially in fall when the apples are ripe for picking. The town's hotels and inns are as charming as their owners who often like to tell guests amusing stories about the history of California's goldrush. Visitors love exploring Julian's Main Street and many say they feel as though they've traveled back in time to a place where friendliness and courtesy make for a more peaceful way of life.

With cozy corner cafes, hardware and craft stores, unique jewelry galleries and delicious restaurants, Julian merchants offer products and service you just can't find anywhere outside a small town. Here are a few events happening in Julian this month:

### September 7

Grape Stomp Fest, 11 a.m. at the Menghini Winery

### September 14-15

Julian Historic Days Celebration along Main Street

### September 21-22

31st Annual Bluegrass Festival, 9 a.m. at Frank Lane Park

### September 28-29

Menghini Arts and Music Festival, 10 a.m. at the Menghini Winery



Supervisor Jacob picks the first apple to kick off Apple Days in Julian

After the Pines fire, the people of Julian are working hard to let visitors know that their special town is open for business. I plan to show my support and visit Julian for an orchard walk, some cider tasting and if course, that famous apple pie. I hope you and your family will consider a visit to Julian too!

**Join me for Coffee and Conversation...**

**Friday, September 27, 2002 8:30 a.m.  
Incredible Cheesecake Company  
11555 Via Rancho San Diego Road, El Cajon**

# Get The Jacob Journal!

The Jacob Journal will be mailed to you on a regular basis by request only. So, if you like what you've read, fill out the form below and mail it back to us at 1600 Pacific Highway, San Diego, CA 92101 or fax it to us at (619) 696-7253. We'll put you on our mailing list to get The Jacob Journal regularly!

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We hope to hear from you soon!

Sep-02

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