



# The Jacob Journal

A Newsletter from Supervisor Dianne Jacob

June 2006

## Encouraging News for Alvarado Hospital's Future

### *Alvarado owner intends to sell hospital, preserve critical emergency room*

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  
San Carlos  
San Pasqual  
Santa Ysabel  
Shelter Valley  
Spring Valley  
Tecate  
Tierra del Sol  
Vallecitos  
Wynola

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

Hospitals are like umbrellas: taken for granted until the moment they're needed. In times of pain, illness, emergency and fear, hospitals reveal themselves as essential facilities of care and comfort, crucial to the communities they serve.

This is especially true of Alvarado Hospital, one of only two hospitals in all of East County.

Under terms of a legal settlement reached with federal prosecutors,

Alvarado's owner, Tenet Healthcare Corp., is obligated to sell or close the facility by February 2007. That agreement has hospital staff, patients and regional medical experts on edge. With 900,000 people depending on Alvarado's care, the prospect of closure is unnerving.

At the moment, only Tenet Healthcare has the power to keep Alvarado open in its current form— as an acute care facility with an emergency room. Other types of healthcare facilities, such as skilled nursing or transitional care facilities, are not equipped to provide emergency treatment and surgical care to seriously ill and injured patients. These specialized services make

Alvarado an essential part of the region's overall healthcare network.

I made this point last month in a letter to Dr. Stephen L. Newman, CEO of Tenet California and urged him to ensure that Alvarado stays open and continues to provide acute care. Two weeks and numerous phone calls later, Dr. Newman wrote back with encouraging words.

"I can assure you that we will make our very best effort to obtain a viable offer from a suitable, experienced hospital provider that would keep Alvarado open as an acute care hospital in the future," Dr. Newman wrote on June 9, 2006.

Although Dr. Newman also advised that Tenet could not guarantee this ideal outcome, his tone was cooperative and gives the community a reason to breathe easier as Tenet seeks a buyer.

Just how much is at stake during that process? Plenty:

- Elimination of 24-hour emergency department for stroke patients;
- Loss of one of the most comprehensive rehabilitation programs in the region;
- Loss of 20 ventilator beds— half of all available beds in East County in the event of a pandemic flu outbreak;
- Closure of a nationally acclaimed cardiac program that has received Center of Excellence designation by United Health Care;



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**Alvarado**

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- Loss of an acclaimed bariatric surgery center;
- Loss of one of the only skull based surgical centers in the nation;
- Reduced access to care for indigent patients in an area where there is no public hospital;
  - The elimination of approximately 1,000 jobs with a salary contribution of more than \$70 million to the local economy, and the loss of more than \$5.7 million in tax revenue.

The loss of Alvarado and its 500 affiliated physicians would deeply compromise public health and safety in East County and the region. The good news is that Tenet officials are aware of this and have pledged, in writing, to work diligently toward an

appropriate sale.

“Tenet has a good track record of transferring hospitals it has sold to entities that have continued to operate them as acute care facilities,” Newman wrote in his letter. “Since 2004, we have sold 17 California hospitals to new owners and in every case they are still operating as full-service hospitals serving their communities.”

As Alvarado Hospital changes ownership, I promise to monitor the sale every step of the way, holding Tenet accountable to the people.

Joining me in this effort is Supervisor Ron Roberts and Dr. Ted Mazer, president of the San Diego County Medical Society and physician at Alvarado.



**Guardians of Health:** At a news conference Supervisors Jacob and Ron Roberts call on Tenet to keep Alvarado open as an acute care facility.

The three of us believe that while Tenet may not have a legal obligation to keep Alvarado open, the company has a moral obligation to ensure that emergency care continues at Alvarado, uninterrupted and uncompromised. In the vocation of better health, which Tenet says is its company’s calling, there can be no other option.

## Powering Down An Eyesore in Lakeside

**I**t was a bulky energy substation blocking up the scenery at the intersection of Julian and Maine avenues in Lakeside. That’s changed now thanks to community concern, ratepayer funding and some engineering from the local utility company.

The \$3.1 million beautification project put underground more than 1,000 feet of overhead electric distribution wires and removed 23 wooden distribution poles along Los Coches road.



**Before and After:** An old energy substation gives way to clearer view for residents of Lakeside.

## Cracking down on welfare fraud

**I**t happens more than you think and more than it should: welfare cheats scamming the child welfare system for their own personal gain.

Some make up fake employers and exaggerate work hours to qualify for taxpayer-subsidized child care. Some split the subsidy with friends and relatives who claim to be caring for children when, in fact, no childcare center exists. All are stealing money that should be going to care for kids. A recent district attorney's review found fraud in more than half the cases investigated in a one-year period. The price tag of the fraud: \$450,000!

Supervisor Jacob is asking state lawmakers to draft legislation that would halt payments to those involved in fraud. Currently, payments can't be stopped. She also wants the state to fund fraud investigations into childcare subsidy scams.

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### COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

Supervisor Jacob invites you to an informal coffee to share your thoughts and ideas.

**Friday, June 23 at 8:30 AM**

**Casa de Oro Travel**

**10630 Willie Baker Way**

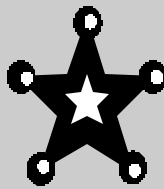
**Spring Valley**



## Indian gaming grants assist firefighting, law enforcement agencies

**S**upervisor Jacob and other representatives from the Indian Gaming Local Community Benefit Committee awarded \$3.5 million in grants from tribal money paid into the State Indian Gaming Special Distribution Fund. State law requires the grants be used to offset the impacts of gaming. The following projects were selected to receive grants:

Adult Protective Services Educational Campaign	\$200,000
Juvenile Internet Gaming and Safety Video	\$25,000
Dispatch Fees for Rural Fire Agencies	\$208,000
San Miguel - High Rise Training Facility	\$700,000
Crime Scene Investigation Instrumentation	\$149,183
Juvenile Diversion	\$100,000
Interface Fire Engine for Pine Valley	\$300,000
Interface Fire Engine for Boulevard Fire	\$300,000
Rescue Interface Engine for Mt. Laguna	\$225,000
Ramona Fire Department Fire Apparatus	\$216,000
Fire Station Roof Repairs	\$29,000
Water Tender	\$100,000
Command, Control & Communications Project	\$170,000
Fuel Reduction and Behavioral Education	\$67,443
Preliminary Alcohol Screening Devices	\$5,200
Fire Hydrant Installation	\$529,480



## THE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT WANTS YOU!

**T**he Sheriff's Department needs to fill 150 to 200 deputy and jail positions as local law enforcement agencies struggle over a shrinking pool of law enforcement applicants. Filling those vacancies is a top priority for the County!

The Department needs the best and brightest of individuals who have the aptitude and the sense of commitment to keep the peace. Do you want to help your community and make a difference. Want more information? Call the Sheriff's Recruiting 24 Hour Job Line at (858) 974-2000 or email [Recruit@sdsheriff.org](mailto:Recruit@sdsheriff.org)

# Get The Jacob Journal!

The Jacob Journal will be mailed to you on a regular basis by request only. 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. You can also sign up to receive the Jacob Journal on our website at [www.diannejacob.com](http://www.diannejacob.com).

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Phone/e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

We hope to hear from you soon!

June 06

(619)531-5522

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