



The Jacob Journal

A Newsletter from Supervisor Dianne Jacob

September 2006

Horse Fire Showcases Improved Fire Response

Additional resources, better communications since 2003 Firestorms

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

Up-to-the-second information filtered into the County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during the tense moments of the 17,000 acre Horse Fire that swept through southeastern San Diego County recently.

A new Reverse 9-1-1 telephone system assisted the Sheriff's Department with evacuations in a

threatened community by rapidly dialing hundreds of homes in harm's way.

Two County-owned and operated firefighting helicopters stood at-the-ready to douse flames, eventually dropping thousands of gallons of water on the fire. Meanwhile, several unincorporated area fire departments were available to help with new equipment and fire engines recently provided by more than \$8 million in grants from the County and several Indian tribes.

Thanks to a landmark agreement brokered after the deadly 2003 Cedar and Paradise fires, a Navy helicopter crew joined the fight and launched a special search and rescue aircraft. It marked the first time that a locally based military unit has actively supported the California Department of Forestry (CDF) in fighting

a fire not on federal property.

The successful snuffing out of the Horse Fire— firefighters sustained only minor injuries and no homes were lost— revealed positive changes made since the devastating firestorms. The public should be encouraged by these changes because they offer proof positive of the County's commitment to improved fire protection.

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During the first few critical hours of the Horse Fire, I got a first hand look at the County's new and improved EOC and witnessed a facility far superior to what was in place three years ago.

Considered the “nerve center” for coordination during emergencies, the EOC must accommodate a legion of officials from many agencies,

including the California Highway Patrol, the Sheriff's Department, public utilities officials, the American Red Cross and more. Because the technology inside the EOC serves as the center's lifeline to the scene of disasters, the equipment has to be first rate.

Improved computer and wireless technology has transformed the EOC from mediocre to state-of-the-art. During the Horse Fire, video conferencing, electronic status boards and a new Joint Information Center made for more streamlined communications among the local, state, and federal agencies on the front lines. The permanent presence of CDF inside the EOC was a welcome change

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REVAMPED EOC:

The region's nerve center during large disasters has been upgraded.



since the Firestorms.

An hour east of the EOC, I watched as State and local firefighters worked to establish a line around the fire. In sweltering temperatures, I saw improved cooperation and communications among firefighters and was pleased with the partial upgrades to the Regional Communications System, the internal radio network emergency officials use to talk with one another during disasters. The eastern loop of the same system had been plagued



with busy signals during the Cedar Fire.

Officials weren't the only ones with new ways to keep tabs on the Horse Fire. Many people logged onto the County's emergency website, sdcountyemergency.com, and viewed fire information in "real time."

Field reports, incident maps, health information, power outages, evacuation orders and other critical information gets posted as it happens.

The site features general information to help your family prepare for future emergencies.

While no emergency response system is ever perfect—in our region, communications improvements and the continued effort to consolidate underfunded Backcountry fire districts still need to happen—ours has made great strides since disasters past.

For up-to-the-minute information during emergencies visit the County's Emergency Homepage at www.sdcountyemergency.com



A Fan: Supervisor Jacob saluted the Valhalla High School Norsemen Varsity Baseball Team.

Young Athletes Honored

Congratulations to the Valhalla High School Norsemen Varsity Baseball team who finished the 2006 season as CIF Division 3 Champions and claimed Valhalla's first CIF Varsity Baseball championship in the school's 32 year history! The Norsemen's hard work came together in one elated season finale with a 4-1 victory over Cathedral High School.

The Norsemen were guided to victory under the leadership of Head Coach Steve Perdue and Assistant Coaches Troy Perdue, Roy Krohn, Thom Lubic, and Frank Brown.



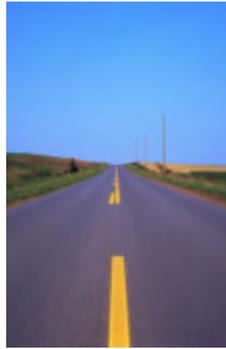
Building Safer Sidewalks

Pedestrians in the Valle De Oro area can soon breathe easier on the sidewalk. The County is making improvements to the south side of Ramona Drive between Casa De Oro Boulevard and Agua Dulce Boulevard.

Concrete curbs, gutters, retaining walls will shore up new sidewalks. Drainage will be improved and mailboxes will be clustered along the south side of the road.

Crews will be working from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m. on weekdays. Lane closures will be minimized to off peak hours. During some stages of construction, traffic will be detoured from Ramona Drive onto Madrid Way.

The project is scheduled to wrap in March of 2007.



THE HUNT FOR HOTSPOTS

New Technology Helps County Find and Fix Accident Spots

Some spots of roadway are more prone to vehicle crashes than others. The County is gearing up to identify and address these so-called hotspots.

With help from the California Office of Traffic Safety in partnership with the National Highway Safety Administration, the County is using laptop computers and analytical software to zero in on precise spots where crashes take place.

With help from the County's existing Geographic Information System (GIS), a computer system that can generate detailed geographic information including helpful maps, the County soon will know a lot more about the nature of crash sites.

Once the County better understands our "hotspots" engineers can get to work on corrective actions. It's all part of the County's ongoing efforts to make your drive a safer, happier one.

Check out New Library Hours

Good news for East County readers. The La Mesa and Santee branches of the County Library

are open Sundays from 1 to 5 p.m. This brings to 10 the number of branch libraries open on Sundays. For a complete schedule of open hours for all 23 branches, visit www.sdcl.org.

Supporting Julian's Rich History

Julian Pioneer Park is a great place to learn about the tiny town's Gold Rush history. Supervisor Jacob is thrilled to help add a Transportation Museum to the park's existing exhibits. The County is leasing a

new 1000-square foot building in the park to the Julian Historical Society. The space will host a restored antique cars and other vehicles from days gone by.

Preserving Key Grasslands

The beautiful grasslands on the west side of Ramona are home to critical plants and animals and have been slated for preservation for years. The County recently has acquired more than 400 of these biologically rich acres which will be used for an eventual park preserve.

COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

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

Friday, October 27 at 8:30 a.m.

Barrett Junction Café
Highway 94
Dulzura



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We hope to hear from you soon!

Sept. 06

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