



The Jacob Journal

A Newsletter from Supervisor Dianne Jacob

September 2007

Tackling Meth Madness from All Sides

Lessons from more than a decade of battling deadly methamphetamine

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

Serving the communities of:
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Allied Gardens
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Barrett
Blossom Valley
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Boulevard
Campo
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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
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Wynola

Serving the Indian Reservations of:
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To those of us in public health and safety arenas, methamphetamine is an old familiar enemy. The powerful stimulant lies at the root of an inordinate amount of regional crime, violence and chaos.

From paranoid users on sleepless binges, to stovetop labs in homes where children sleep, to toxic byproducts dumped in public parks, no single illicit drug has drained public resources quite like meth.

Out of a rash of bizarre meth-related incidents in the mid 1990s—including the separate thefts of an Army tank and a county transit bus by known meth users—the Methamphetamine Strike Force was born. By pairing the region’s top criminal justice minds with leading public health experts, the Strike Force has managed to hold the line against this deadly drug.

After more than a decade, San Diego County has fared much better than many counties currently awash in the social and economic ravages of meth. Our meth-related deaths and arrests are relatively stable. More users than ever are seeking treatment and the number of labs discovered in our county

has dropped dramatically. Interestingly, our small successes are not the result of working harder. They’re the result of working smarter.

As a narcotics officer once observed after years of arresting the same meth user too many times for crimes that increased in severity, “We are not going to arrest this problem out of our region.”

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Enter our multidisciplinary approach. By expanding the traditional criminal justice circle to include the public health community, the Strike Force gets its ammo against meth from all sides.

When you have treatment specialists, judges, deputies, prosecutors, defense attorneys, trauma surgeons, educators, detectives, policy makers, prevention specialists and media strategists meeting regularly at one table and tasked with attacking a common enemy, good ideas result.

Over the years, Strike Force initiatives have reflected our balanced roster of participants and, more importantly, made significant headway against the drug.

The Drug Endangered Children program rescues children from the horrors of meth homes and studies the physical and psychological effects of the drug on small, growing bodies. Law enforcement and social services are working hand-in-hand so that kids are no longer an afterthought at crime scenes.

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Meth Madness

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The successful Drug Court program lets non-violent lawbreakers earn back their dignity by teaching sobriety and self-sufficiency. The courts and treatment providers have joined forces to keep lawbreakers clean by using consequences for relapse and praise for recovery. Equal parts carrot and stick, success rates are impressive.

We support the Screening and Brief Intervention program which takes place in a non-threatening healthcare setting. When a medical professional broaches the subject of substance abuse with a patient, it is an opportunity for that patient to recognize the signs of addiction and seek treatment.

We've prevented clandestine cookers from brewing their

deadly product by limiting sales of the over-the-counter ingredients used to manufacture meth. We did it with remarkable cooperation from retailers.

Most recently, the Strike Force nimbly responded to a spike in meth-related identity theft by launching a still-active public education campaign. We continue to promote California's credit card truncation law which requires merchants to block out all but the last few digits of credit card numbers on receipts because we want to stop thieves from trading personal information in order to feed their meth habits.

The Strike Force knows the battle against meth is fought on many fronts. Law enforcement fights it on the streets. Parents fight it in the home. Teachers fight it in classrooms. People in recovery face a highly personal



TOXIC:
Dangerous chemicals removed from a meth lab in the Cleveland National Forest near Ramona.

battle against the drug.

The interdisciplinary Strike Force model has shown us that eradication strategies are most effective when stakeholders work in conjunction with each other. Fragmented and isolated strategies can only go so far. That's why we will continue to surround meth from all sides.

Tips? Trouble? Treatment?
1-877-No2Meth



Powerlink Shenanigans?

The Backcountry is buzzing about Alternative Route D, a possible route for a stretch of San Diego Gas and Electric's controversial Sunrise

Powerlink proposal. The route, which traverses communities in the southern part of East County is being billed as a path that avoids running the hulking 500 kilovolt line through the heart of the Anza Borrego Desert State Park.

Supervisor Jacob says don't be fooled by Alternative Route D the utility's, "...divide and conquer strategy which attempts to pit communities against communities" she warned recently.

She continues to believe that there are cheaper ways to keep local lights on. Conservation and local generation should take top priority. A new study by the Utilities Consumer Action Network (UCAN) details dozens of alternatives that won't put the region at risk for catastrophic wildfire or ruin property values and pristine view sheds. **See the report at www.ucan.org**

More Older Adults Using Deadly Meth?

The face of meth has evolved in the last few years. The addictive stimulant is being used by an increasing number of people age 50 and older. In the past five years, 1,000 meth-related deaths occurred in San Diego County. The percentage of meth-related deaths has declined or remained steady for younger age groups. However, the number of meth-related deaths of people over 50 nearly doubled, going up from 22 in 2002 to 41 in 2006.

MUCH ADO ABOUT LIBRARIES

Descanso Library Turns the Page



The Descanso Library was once one of the smallest branches in the County, with only 192

square feet. That changed in May of 2000 when Supervisor Jacob and the community created a library ten times that size. By 2004, following improvements to the children's area and community room, the library was, at last, worthy of the dynamic rural community. Today, Descanso's dedication to reading runs so strong that the Friends of the Descanso Library have raised \$100,000 to add an additional 500 square feet for more improvements. Supervisor Jacob is pitching in too and is working to secure \$150,000 for the project.

The Tiny Card with Big Benefits

No more fumbling for your County library card. New library cards now come with a second handy key chain mini card—the tiny card gives you big access to a wide world of books, magazines, DVDs, CDs and more. Customers who already have a card with the San Diego County Library system can have their lost, stolen or older library cards replaced

Coffee and Conversation

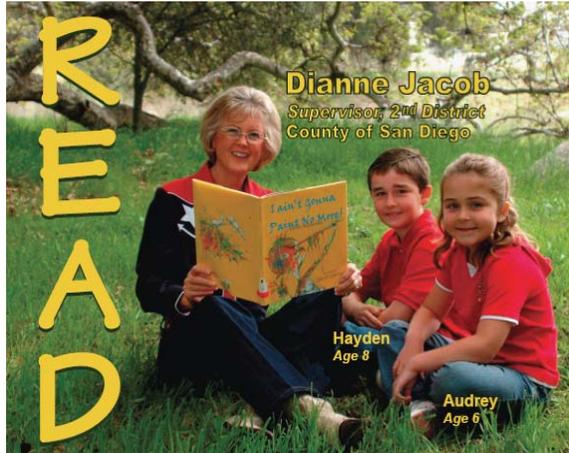
Got an idea to improve County government? Share your thoughts with Supervisor Jacob at her next informal community coffee.

Friday, October 26 at 8:30 a.m.

**Casa de Oro Café
9809 Campo Rd.
Spring Valley**



and updated without charge throughout the month of September. Visit www.sdcl.org for more information.



Library Fans Pose for the Cause

The creative minds at the County Library are at it again. They'll do anything to showcase the benefits of community libraries.

They've developed a handful of fun posters with some familiar faces with their noses in books. You'll see Supervisor Jacob reading to young family friends (see photo on left).

County Library Director José Aponte, a nationally-ranked duathlete, is pictured reading about Lance Armstrong.

Library facilities manager and former ice hockey coach Phill Adamski is pictured on ice showing the book "Over The Boards," his own autographed copy of hockey great Ron Ellis' story.



Goodan Ranch Center About to Debut

Exactly four years after the 2003 Cedar Fire destroyed Goodan Ranch and Sycamore Canyon, the County is celebrating the grand opening of the Gooden Ranch Center. The energy-efficient facility features extensive green building techniques including recycled materials, natural lighting and shaded rest areas. The 3,200 foot structure includes a ranger office, community room, comfort station and exhibits.

**Join the celebration on Friday, October 26
1:00 p.m. at 16281 Sycamore Canyon Rd.
Poway**

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We hope to hear from you soon!

Sep. 07

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