



THE JACOB JOURNAL

A Newsletter from Vice Chairwoman Dianne Jacob

February 2008

COUNTY OF ACTION

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

Serving the communities of:
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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

Looking Ahead, Plenty at Stake in 2008

State Budget Mess and Sunrise Powerlink spell challenging months ahead

Surviving State Budget Crisis
As Yogi Berra famously said: it's like déjà vu all over again. Four years after California narrowly averted a budget meltdown, the State is once again in dire financial straights and facing an estimated \$14 billion budget shortfall.

Unable to tame the wild spending habits of the legislature, the Governor is proposing across-the-board cuts for all departments, a desperate maneuver that is sure to make waves here in San Diego County.

We don't yet know the extent of the cuts or what programs might be impacted. We do, however, know that the Board of Supervisors has been here before and prepared to handle what will likely be a very big hit.

Residents need to know that the cuts may be painful. Layoffs are possible and services could be scaled back. Taxpayers need to know that the County won't jeopardize our long-term fiscal health by dipping into funds set aside for emergencies. Those funds keep costs down by keeping our credit rating high.

Compare the County's budget structure to the chaotic budget practices of the State and it's easy to see how the County is stable and the State is on the ropes, continuing to spend more than it takes in. The County uses stable, ongoing revenue streams to pay for core services like public safety, parks and libraries. Just like a family planning its finances, we wouldn't count on our savings as a funding source for our monthly mortgage.

In addition to engaging in deficit spending, State lawmakers pay bills in reckless ways, frequently stealing from our County to fund education or dangerously robbing from the State's fire and public safety budget to make up for shortfalls elsewhere.

It's a doomed budget structure that can only be solved with a wholesale overhaul. Until then, expect the State's monster deficit to balloon, particularly when the national economy slumps and property taxes dip.

The State could use a budget lesson from San Diego County. Four years ago, I handed the governor a copy of the County's budget playbook— our award-winning General Management System— in hopes he'd study up. Now, as history repeats itself, maybe it's time to send another copy.

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County Of Action

Powerlink Proposal Stokes Fire Fears in Backcountry

San Diego Gas and Electric likes to say that its proposed Sunrise Powerlink will bring greater energy reliability to the region. In studies justifying the project, the utility argues that the region only has one existing 500 kilovolt transmission line—the so-called Southwest Powerlink in the southeastern part of the County—and needs a second line in case of an emergency.

Yet, an emergency is exactly what happened during the recent October 2007 firestorms when the deadly Harris Fire forced the Southwest Powerlink out of service. Transmission experts warn that had Sunrise been operable, the line would have been threatened by the Witch Fire. That blaze charred areas in Sunrise's proposed path including parts of Santa Ysabel and Ramona. So much for the reliability argument!

Many Backcountry residents, including me, have questioned the wisdom of stringing hulking wires and massive poles through miles of fire-prone Backcountry. Compounding this fear is the fact that at least two of the October 2007 fires were caused by the lethal combination of power lines and fierce Santa Ana

winds. Power lines don't just spark fires. Because fire crews cannot work around active lines, projects like Sunrise inhibit the ability of firefighters to slow the spread of flames.

It is simply unconscionable that a local company, who witnessed firsthand the misery caused by its own power lines last October, continues to promote Sunrise as the best way to keep our lights on. The project's environmental documents identify nearly a dozen cheaper, less intensive ways to meet future energy demand while transitioning from dirty fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy.

This month, the public will have its best chance to weigh in on the Sunrise Proposal at numerous hearings throughout the region held by the California Public Utilities Commission.

I'll be there to further explain my opposition to Sunrise and I strongly encourage others to do the same.

***View the 7,500 page analysis
of SDG&E's
Sunrise Powerlink proposal
and find locations of the
public hearing nearest you
at the California Public
Utilities Commission website
www.cpuc.ca.gov***

***Supervisor Jacob plans to
attend the CPUC's public
hearing in Ramona on
February 26 at the
Charles Nunn Performing
Arts Center at 7:00 p.m.***

Lessening the Controversial Transportation Impact Fee

Back in 2005, virtually no one was happy when State law forced the County to adopt a so-called Transportation Impact Fee (TIF) for all new development in the unincorporated area. At the time, more than 300 projects were jammed in the approval pipeline because the law said every new project, no matter the size, had to identify and remedy impacts to roadways.

After the passage of the TIF, many communities, especially Ramona, complained of obscenely expensive studies and seemingly arbitrary fees. Responding to those complaints, Supervisor Jacob initiated a major review of the fee. The results—just as many traffic engineers had warned—suggested that the fee had placed heavy and undo strain on worthy commercial and industrial projects.

Last month, Supervisors voted to ease the TIF with a new fee structure that calls for an average reduction of 40 percent for commercial and industrial builders and up to a 28 percent reduction for residential development. Supervisor Jacob believes the new rules, which won't go into effect until the end of April, aren't perfect but certainly a needed improvement.

Back to Campus for Brian Giles

The gym was jam packed and rivaled Petco Park for cheers as Padres right fielder and Major League Baseball All-star Brian Giles returned to his high school alma mater

Granite Hills High School last month. Giles, who played football, baseball and wrestled for the Eagles, was inducted into the school's hall of fame.

Supervisor Jacob was proud to proclaim the day as "Brian Giles Day" throughout the region and praised his long list of accomplishments. As a 1989 graduate, Brian was named the Senior Athlete of the Year. He continues to hold numerous school records especially in football: 234 career rushing touchdowns, career scoring with 220 points, single season scoring with 142 points and single game scoring with 26 points.

Congratulations to a home town sports hero!



Decked Out!

The new pool deck at Monte Vista High School made a splash with members of the school's swimming and water polo teams. A big fan of East County prep sports, Supervisor Jacob was thrilled to secure \$100,000 for the project and glad to help school officials cut its ceremonial ribbon. Supervisor Jacob

believes that young people who participate in healthy activities are more likely to lead productive adult lives. She continues to invest County dollars in top notch places for young people to exercise.



Coffee and Conversation

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

Friday, February 29 at 8:30 a.m.

Mario's Italian Restaurant

12440 Woodside Ave.

Lakeside

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We hope to hear from you soon!

Jan 08

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