



Dedicated to a continuing rural atmosphere

**From The Frozen Field**

By Eric Anderson

What a cold spell over the weekend prior to Martin Luther King’s birthday! It hasn’t been this cold on our farm here in Elfin for 20 years! Luckily, not much damage to our main crops.

The University Heights presentation at the EF/HG Town Council meeting was quite concerning. The North County Times reporter did a good job of summarizing the presentation. This is a significant part of the community. If we lose this 500 acre area, with a proposed 1,100 - 1,250 homes, to San Marcos there is not much of a community left.

We continue to face significant development pressure with several proposals moving through the planning process. We can use all the volunteer help available! The University Heights proposal is just one of several within our community. If you value your quality of life only you can help preserve it. Together, I believe we can Keep It Rural!

Be sure and vote for your EF/HG Town council representatives. Ballots are counted at the February meeting. If you can’t attend please send your ballot in. If you are interested in participating, we have lots of opportunities. This community is made up of lots of individuals that have special talents and interests. We welcome any help. We especially are looking for someone to edit and publish the newsletter!

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**Town Council Meeting – Wednesday, February 7 @ 7:30PM**

**At The Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Fire Station**

**Topics: Town Council and Elfin Forest Community Foundation Elections, Project Updates and Open Forum.**

**(Note: Election Ballot Is On The Back Of Mailer Cover Sheet)**

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## Town Council Board Elections

By Evelyn Alemanni

This month, you can elect four new people to serve on the town council board. Bill Wilgenburg and Cheri Smith are not running for re-election, but Eric Anderson, Mid Hoppenrath and Gordon Fines are. In addition, we have two new candidates, Melanie Fallon and John Philips. Your town council ballot is located on the back of the cover sheet of this month's *chaparral*. Make additional copies as required and mail or drop them off at the fire station in an envelope that contains a visible return address.

**All ballots must received by February 7.** Ballots will be available and can be submitted at the February 7 town council meeting. See statements from most of the candidates on the following pages.

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## EF Community Foundation Elections In February

By Betsy Keithley, EFCF Secretary

The Elfin Forest Community Foundation was established in 1995 with the mission to enhance the quality of rural life in the community of Elfin Forest. The Board of Directors decides Foundation policy and what projects will be funded. They are also financially responsible for the funds in the Foundation. The bylaws require annual elections.

The election will occur on February 7, 2007 at the time of the Town Council elections. The term is three years with a minimum of two face-to-face meetings per year to review grant applications that are due in April and October. The Board has three open seats and incumbents Ginny McManus, Mike Vallee, and Frank Twohy are running for re-election to those seats. Please mark the ballot found on the inside of the cover sheet of this issue of the *chaparral* and make sure it is at the fire station on Wednesday, February 7, 2007 where the ballots will be collected and counted.

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## Elf Alerts

Elf alerts are periodic email messages regarding important local events and supplement the newsletter. To subscribe, contact Karen Gardner at [karen@vintagematerialism.com](mailto:karen@vintagematerialism.com). Your email info may be shared with the fire department but no one else. Changed your email address? Tell Karen.

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## TC Candidate Statements

**Gordon M. Fines** was for many years in the investment industry managing mutual funds and pension accounts for institutional investors. The last five years he's owned the Harmony Grove Equestrian Center located at 1805 Country Club Drive. His thinking about our valley is that growth and change are normal events but not when the lives of citizens who already live here are dramatically altered by them. Obviously, Harmony Grove is an area in transition and he hopes to have a positive influence on the developments in our community.

**Mid Hoppenrath**, a 7-year resident of Harmony Grove, is dedicated to retaining the rural character of the area. Mid has been serving on the EF/HG Town Council for over 5 years as a board director and past chairperson. Mid took up the fight to prevent the annexation and industrialization of Harmony Grove, and was part of the successful campaign to remove Harmony Grove from the Escondido Sphere of Influence.

Along with her neighbors, Mid worked to bring all of Harmony Grove into the Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council. Mid has been working with the County of San Diego during the GP2020 process to ensure that Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove can preserve their rural lifestyle, restrict future growth, control traffic, and establish a network of linking multiuse trails in the community. She is currently working with county agencies, residents, and New Urban West on a safer, slower design for Country Club Drive. Mid is chair of the Village Subcommittee and the Trails Committee.

**John Phillips** has been a resident of Elfin Forest for over five years. He is the managing partner of the San Diego office of Fish & Richardson, P.C., and has practiced intellectual property law for 15 years. Prior to going to law school, John worked as an electrical engineer, first as a research and development engineer at Scripps Institution of Oceanography and later at Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory. John formerly served on the National Board of Directors for StandUp For Kids. John enjoys walking his dog on the beach, listening to opera and spending time with his wife, Karen Gardner, and his son Jacob. He would be proud to serve on the Elfin Forest Town Council willing to assist wherever a need exists.

## TC Self Nomination Forms

**Nominee name:** Melanie Fallon

**Resident of EF/HG since:** July 2004

**Occupation:** Retired City Administrator/ Planner

**Public agencies:** In my 30 years of government sector employment I was an urban planner for the Cities of Santa Monica, Manhattan Beach, Inglewood and Chief Deputy Planning Director for Los Angeles, Assistant City Manager for Huntington Beach and Community Development Director for Long Beach.

**Highest education:** Master's Degree in Urban Affairs and a Master's Degree in City Planning, Boston University.

**List board(s) on which you are serving or have served and indicate positions held:**

EF/HG 2007 Garden Festival Committee

EF/HG 2006 Calendar Committee

Executive Director of the Long Beach

Redevelopment Agency

Member and Past President of the Statewide

California Planners Roundtable

Member of the California Planning Foundation

**What is your primary interest in serving of the Board:** Because of my extensive municipal

government background, I believe that I can be of assistance to our community in helping to forge a compact with the County to maintain our rural character. I understand the issues facing government agencies and communities pertaining to development, land acquisition, eminent domain, natural resource protection as well as political realities. I am a good listener, take the time to listen to all perspectives, and understand that often strategic thinking and compromise can gain us a great deal. Although I have only been a resident of our amazing Elfin Forest neighborhood for 2 ½ years, my husband and I intend to live here for many years to come. I am a firm believer that the best communities are those where the citizens collaboratively volunteer their time, energies and expertise for the greater good of the community. I would like the opportunity to do just that.

**Is there an area or position that is of particular interest to you?:** Given my government background, I can probably give the greatest assistance by participating in the area of General Plan 2020, and land use development, but would be willing to assist wherever a need exists.

**February 2007**

**Nominee name:** Eric Anderson

**Resident of EF/HG since:** 1999, farmed here since 1985.

**Occupation:** Agriculture

**Practice/Type of business:** Ornamental plant and seed nursery, Anderson's Seed Co.

**Highest education:** BS in Ornamental Horticulture.

**List board(s) on which you are serving or have served and indicate positions held:**

Regional Water Quality Control Board

Chair Sunset San Diego County Commission

Farm Bureau Past President

**What is your primary interest in serving of the Board:** Keep it - Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove - Rural and Harmonious.

**Is there an area or position that is of particular interest to you?:** Land use and the environment.

## Order Garden Festival Tickets

**By Evelyn Alemanni**

Garden festival tickets go fast – don't miss this year's event - "Hidden Treasures in the Valley of the Elves". April 21 will be your chance to visit some of Elfin Forest's most inspirational gardens. Most of the gardens on the tour will be open to the public for the first time ever, and most of them are more than two acres in size. But you'll enjoy more than gardens. There'll be experts giving free garden advice, a book signing featuring Steve Brigham and his "Ornamental Trees for Mediterranean Climates", a garden marketplace, lunch and much more.

Advance tickets are \$20. Lunch is \$10. Tickets on April 21 are \$30. Save money and order your tickets now. Bring your friends and family. Order tickets online at [www.elfinforestgardens.info](http://www.elfinforestgardens.info).

## Calendar For February

Date	Time	Event
Wed 2/7	7:30 PM	Town Council Meeting@Firehouse
Tue 2/6, 2/20	7 PM	Fire Training@Firehouse
Wed 2/14	7 PM	Fire Auxiliary
Mon 2/12	7 PM	Fire Board@Firehouse
Sat 2/24	8 AM	Fire Training@Firehouse
Sat 2/3, 2/17	10 AM	Bookmobile@Firehouse

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## The Bridges Expansion: A Continuing Saga

By Jacqueline Arsivaud-Benjamin

On Friday January 26 the proposed Bridges Unit 6 and 7 expansion into Elfin Forest was scheduled to finally come up for a vote of the San Diego Planning Commission. After a number of continuances, the county staff – which is now recommending *denial* of the project - had vowed that there would be no further delays and that the project would be voted upon. However, on Saturday January 20 we found out another continuance had been granted.

The grounds for continuance were stated as follows: “the Planning Commission hearing on Jan 26 will *not* occur. Rather, it will be continued to another day to be determined. The reason is that Dr. Foster (ornithologist) and Tom Oberbauer (Multiple Species Conservation Program) are unable to attend. Also, Lennar has submitted a lot of additional information that has to be reviewed. We will receive a copy of the material next week.”

We *will*, though, be interviewed as part of the *These Days* program on KPBS public radio (at 89.5 on your FM dial) on Thursday the 25<sup>th</sup> (unless that is also postponed, watch your Elf Alert – and if you are not receiving Elf Alert (emails messages on issues of interest to the community) subscribe by contacting [karengardner@vintagematerialism.com](mailto:karengardner@vintagematerialism.com) ). Our segment is currently slated to be in the 9:30 to 10 AM slot. The format is a call-in show, typically with a representative from both sides of the issues being discussed on hand to respond to callers.

As discussed in several past articles, there are a number of reasons the Town Council is on record opposing the project:

1. Unit 7 would bring sewer across the Escondido creek into Elfin Forest, paving the way for further sewer expansion in the future. The growth inducing effects of sewer are well documented in land use planning literature.
2. Unit 7 does not conform to the Elfin Forest community standards on file with the county, in terms of lot size (2 acre minimum), septic, dark skies, and large animal keeping. This project is still suburbia – albeit very luxurious suburbia – instead of rural living.
3. The secondary emergency access road for Unit 7 proposes to leave evacuating traffic on the

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OMWD pipeline easement road, leading them on to Suerte del Este (the dirt road to Rancho Santa Fe) and from there, the closest access to paved roads would be through the private roads of Elfin Forest. In an emergency this could create a real hazardous situation both for Bridges residents evacuating through our community on roads not designed to handle the traffic, and for our community members trying to get out with horse trailers and the like.

Other developers are watching. The presentation made to the Town Council just last month on University Heights, a project that proposes to annex over 500 acres from Elfin Forest into San Marcos to built over 1,200 homes, underscores the need to stay vigilant, and to fight any proposed encroachments that do not conform to our community standards. See related article elsewhere in this issue.

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## Whispering Hills

By Betsy Keithley and Doug Dill

The Whispering Hills Project Tentative Map (San Diego County Tentative Map 5277) was reviewed at the January 4, 2007 meeting of the San Dieguito Planning Group (SDPG). The SDPG, with Elfin Forest resident Doug Dill representing this area, reviews and responds to all issues related to development. This proposed subdivision has been in the works for several years. It was initiated by former Elfin Forest resident, Michael Garrison. The 39.09 acre parcel straddles Elfin Forest Road, located east of Elfin Forest Lane to the south and west of Colina Encantada Way to the north.

The current "Replacement Map 5 (RPL5)" is an improvement from the previous subdivision map. This map has three buildable lots, ranging from 2.13 to 3.21 acres, on the north side of Elfin Road with one 16.12 acre open space lot that covers the steepest slopes and western border of the subdivision. The three lots are accessed from a short "Meadow Spring Drive" cul-de-sac onto Elfin Forest Road. The southern portion of the map has six buildable lots, ranging from 2.11 to 3.36 acres. These lots are accessed from "Whispering Hills Drive" onto Elfin Forest Lane.

During the April 17, 2003 SDPG meeting, as item 4D, the Whispering Hills proposed subdivision was approved. At that time it was "Replacement Map 3

(*Continued next page*)



*(Whispering Hills continued)*

(RPL3)". RPL3 had four build able lots on the north side of the parcel map with two separate private driveways intersecting with Elfin Forest Road. On the southern side, the far eastern lot had a separate driveway accessing the existing private road, Colina Encantada.

All lots now appear to 'perc' to support county approved septic systems. With RPL3, Lots 9, 10, 11 on the north side of Elfin Forest Road, were proposed using "alternative sewage (septic) system". The county does not have an 'approved' alternative sewage system.

The subdivision conforms to two-acre minimum lot size. Positioning of lot pads (ranging from 9000 to 11,000 sq. ft.) seems to be a best effort to minimize grading and drainage impacts. Required open space (16.12 acre lot 10) is collocated on the project site. Also, the pad location pattern appears to be consistent with existing residential structure locations surrounding the subdivision.

The project as described also conforms to the other Elfin Forest community standards (which can be found at [http://www.efhgtc.org/community\\_standards.htm](http://www.efhgtc.org/community_standards.htm)). The development will allow large animal keeping, and is not a gated community. The community trail that currently exists will also be preserved as part of the proposed plan.

The SDPG members expressed concerns about having two entrance and exits for the project on the north side of Elfin Forest Road. The County has approved the egress as having adequate visibility for drivers exiting, but there will now be only one exit instead of the two originally planned. The homes on the south side will exit onto Elfin Forest Lane. Another concern was maintenance of the private roads within the development, but there is a road maintenance agreement in place.

For any questions on this project please contact Town Council Board Member Jeff Swenerton at 760-471-4312 or [jeffswenerton@aol.com](mailto:jeffswenerton@aol.com).

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## Past *chaparral* Issues On Web

Past issues of the *chaparral* are now posted at [www.efhgtc.org](http://www.efhgtc.org) in downloadable PDF format.

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## OMWD Public Hearing On Rates By Sue Varty

On January 24, 2007 the Board of Directors of the Olivenhain Municipal Water District (OMWD) will consider raising water rates effective March 1, 2007. If the staff recommendation is approved a majority of District customers will see an increase of 4% or \$1.73 a month.

The increase is needed to keep pace with inflationary costs associated with wholesale water costs (from San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) and Metropolitan Water District (MWD)), pipe replacement and energy costs. These costs are offset by various enterprises that bring in revenue for OMWD (rent from Carters Hay & Grain, sale of treated water to SDCWA and Vallecitos Water District, etc). OMWD rents cellular sites to cell phone companies, sells energy to SDG&E, and has a very aggressive program for obtaining grants from federal and state agencies. Every effort is made to keep rates as low as possible.

The tiered structure of rates is changing, slowly over time. This is an important issue to Elfin Forest residents. In the past, rate increases affected higher users proportionately more than small users. "A" rate users actually received water at below cost. "C" rate users subsidized small users. The rationale for this was "big users need to be punished for their high usage". While conservation pricing is important, no water should ever be sold at below cost. "C" rate water is discretionary water. It could disappear in a drought or economic downturn. And if "C" rate water disappears, OMWD would operate at a loss. Not a prudent way to run a water district, I am sure you will agree.

With the approval of this increase, more revenue will be classified as "reliable revenue" (A and B tiers) thus water costs will be more fairly distributed over all water tiers. As a result, in the future we will be able to lobby the rating agencies for better credit ratings (and lower debt costs).

Among the 23 agencies in SD County, OMWD is in the lower tier of agencies for water rates. As other agencies increase their rates, OMWD will look even better. But we are not content with being in the lower tier, we are working hard to bring you the best quality water at the lowest cost. Please do not hesitate to call me (760-471-7786) if you have questions.

## Development For 154 Homes In Elfin Forest Requests Extension

By Jacqueline Arsivaud-Benjamin

Back in 2003 the community fought – and lost - a battle to prevent a violation of our community standards on a large piece of property (154 homes on .5 acre lots in a gated community and on sewer, instead of the 2 acre minimum, septic only standards). The proposed project is called Cielo Del Norte, and is located south of the intersection of Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove roads. The project applicant is now asking for a five year extension of the expiration date of an approved tentative map which implements the Cielo del Norte Specific Plan. An addendum to the original Environmental Impact Report, dated January 16, 2007, is on file with the County, but the Town Council has not had a chance to review it as of this writing. The Town Council is opposed to both the project (which was approved), and the extension.

Here is the letter from the Town Council to the Department of Planning and Land Use regarding the request for extension:

*The Elfin Forest Harmony Grove Town Council thanks you for the opportunity to comment on the request for extension submitted for the Cielo Del Norte project, Tentative Map: 5182RPL, Cielo Del Norte, LLC. The community is concerned about the length of the extension allowing the project to develop many years after a new general plan is adopted. We do not support the request for an extension.*

*If the extension is permitted, the continuing project will comply with both the updated fire codes / regulations and the requirements for mitigation of habitat loss, including removal of coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and habitat. In the current approved plan there are several open space areas that will remain natural vegetation. If the updated fire codes require that this vegetation be removed to protect homes and other structures to be built adjacent to it, the extension needs to include the requirement that the loss of this habitat be mitigated.*

*The applicant has not yet made good on promises made to the Board of Supervisor's when the project was approved regarding trails. Specifically trails number 48, Creekside and 50, Equine Incline. At numerous public meeting the applicant stated no*

*trails would be lost. However at the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors meeting the absence of these trails was brought to the applicant's attention. At both meetings the applicant promised to work with Nancy Reed of the San Dieguito Planning Group to add these trails to the map. This has not been done. The EFHG TC requests that the addition of these two trails be a requirement for extending the Tentative Map.*

The request for a five year extension of the expiration date will be heard on Friday, January 26, 2006 at 9:00 am at DPLU - 5201 Ruffin Rd., Suite B. You can make your voice heard by emailing the commissioners (citing the reference above) through the secretary of the Planning Commission, Cheryl Jones ( [Cheryl.jones@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Cheryl.jones@sdcounty.ca.gov) ). You can also come in person and fill out a speaker form and address the commissioners directly. If you have any questions on the project you can contact William Stocks at DPLU - 858-694-3913.

## OMWD Board Members Sworn In

By Mandy Rodriguez, OMWD Staff Analyst

At their January 12th, 2007 Board Meeting, the Board of Directors of Olivenhain Municipal Water District (District) swore in three directors that were re-elected to office during last November's elections and then voted on the new officer positions for the Board for the next two years. The Board unanimously elected Susan J. Varty as the President, Robert F. Topolovac as Vice President, Mark A. Muir as Treasurer, Jacob J. Krauss as Secretary and Harold L. Gano as Director.

Director Susan J. Varty, Board President, has been a director for the District since 1994. She previously served as the District's representative at the San Diego County Water Authority from 1998 to 2003 and currently represents the District on the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) Region 10 Board. Ms. Varty is the representative of Division 4 on the Olivenhain Board of Directors.



# Can We Tolerate Another 1250 Homes?

By Evelyn Alemanni

Wes Peltzer started off our 2007 with a shocker at the January 3 town council meeting. He stunned the audience with details of the 1250 home University Heights (UH) project currently being planned in the unincorporated area at the San Marcos southern border near Frank's Peak. Construction of this project could very well mean the end to Elfin Forest as we know it.

One of the key points, made over and over by Peltzer, is that the project will not be visible from anywhere in Elfin Forest. Just because you can't see it doesn't mean there will be no impacts.

You may remember Mr. Peltzer as a proponent of the incinerator at the landfill many years back. Well, this project may have worse impacts than a trash incinerator. Here's a summary of just some of the problems with it.

The developer, Ray Gray, plans to annex the 500+ acre parcel to San Marcos. The effect would be to extend the San Marcos city line, making even MORE land in our unincorporated area potentially available for annexation to the city.

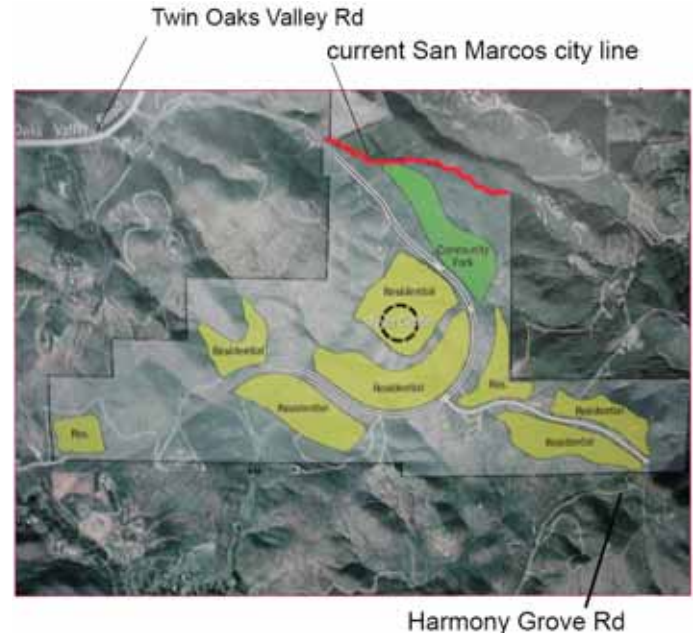
The developers of the Venzano project on Questhaven Road had stated they would size their sewer to preclude further expansion or connections. But Mr. Peltzer says that the project would get its sewer connection via Venzano. The town council needs to review the Venzano EIR and mitigation measures and, if necessary, consider suing for compliance.

Although access to UH is planned to be via Twin Oaks Valley Road, an "emergency" exit would connect to Harmony Grove Road. How long before traffic from the 1250 homes starts to use Harmony Grove Road.?

In addition to 1250 homes, the project includes three blocks of commercial. San Elijo has always told us that commercial was economically infeasible until they had 3000 homes. If that's true, how can this project support THREE BLOCKS of commercial? When questioned about it at the town council meeting, Mr. Peltzer claimed to not know what development density was planned for adjacent parcels. What planner would add a significant commercial sector without performing at least a cursory economic feasibility analysis? There's more behind the curtain and we need to know what it is.

Can Elfin Forest afford to lose 500+ acres? Can we tolerate another 1250 homes and commercial that will generate more than 12,000 daily vehicle trips? The town council board will be putting together a subcommittee to study this proposed project and make recommendations. Please contact any board member if you are interested in serving on the committee. It's our valley and together we can *keep it rural*.

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University Heights Project Location



Rendering of proposed project

(Photos by Geoffrey Smith)



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# Minutes Of Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council Meeting

By Steve Barker

**Date:** January 3, 2007

**Call to Order:** 7:30 PM.

**Members present:** Eric Anderson, Steve Barker, Jacqueline Arsivaud-Benjamin, Mid Hoppenrath, Betsy Keithley, Cheri Smith, Jeff Swenerton and Bill Wilgenburg.

**7:30:** Meeting called to order and introductions.

**7:35: Eric Anderson** reported on the Town Council's appearance before the Planning Commission related to the New Urban West (NUW) project. See the Board's response to the NUW Draft Environmental Impact Report in January's *chaparral*.

**7:45: Chief Frank Twohy** spoke about the Fire Department's position concerning NUW plans to form a County Facilities District (CFD) to fund fire service. The Chief expressed his concern that the plan as proposed would create a \$50,000 annual shortfall in funding that would unfairly burden CSA 107 taxpayers.

**7:50: Mid Hoppenrath** discussed community concerns related to plans to upgrade Country Club Drive to accommodate NUW traffic and that the road, as proposed by DPW, would not be in keeping with the community's desire for rural roads and traffic calmed neighborhoods.

**7:55: Betsy Keithley** gave the Treasurer's report. The Town Council's checking account balance as of December 31, 2006 was \$23,000.

**8:00:** Betsy reported on a tentative map being reviewed at the Planning Commission. Whispering Hills, on Elfin Forest Road, is proposing 12 lots on 40 acres. Betsy also reported on Rancho Cielo's plan to exchange some of its proposed density with Cielo Norte.

Action Item: **Jeff Swenerton** will follow up on both projects and report back to the Board.

**8:05: B.J. Williams**, from the Sheriff's Department discussed the increase in vandalism and burglary in the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove area. She also stated that a significant portion (85%) of the reported increase of police calls in San Elijo were in fact, false alarm calls due to the number of security

systems being installed in new homes that are not yet operating properly.

**8:10: Jacqueline Arsivaud-Benjamin** reported on the Bridge's Development expansion north into Elfin Forest. She reported that the Planning Commission hearing has been postponed until January 26 at 9:00 AM.

**8:15: Wes Peltzer**, attorney for the proposed University Heights Development and, coincidentally, OMWD's counsel, presented an overview of the planned project. The overview consisted mainly of photos showing the proposed project, as seen from viewpoints around Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove.

The project consists of 502 acres, 1250 units, of which 625 would be single-family dwellings with lot sizes of 5,000 sq. ft. Approximately 10,000 cubic yards of dirt would be moved for the project. The project will primarily be accessed from the planned Twin Oaks extension with secondary access from both Questhaven and Harmony Grove Roads. The project in planning would include a village center with some commercial and a 20-acre active recreation (ball fields) area lighted for night use.

The developer, **Ray Gray** was formerly owner of Sun Cal, the proposed development in Harmony Grove now known as Harmony Grove Meadows. For his University Heights project he plans to request annexation into the City of San Marcos for the entire 502 acres.

Mr. Peltzer fielded several questions of concern from the community members present. No maps or materials were left for the Board or community to review.

**9:00:** All community members present, deciding they had heard enough for one night, adjourned.

**Adjourned:** 9:00 PM.

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## *chaparral* By Email

If you're not already receiving a full color, PDF format copy of the *chaparral* by email send an email to [alemanni@allea.com](mailto:alemanni@allea.com) to be added to the list. The PDF version is free to regular "hardcopy" subscribers and only \$10.00/year for the PDF version only.



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## We Need A Slower, Not Faster, Country Club Drive!

By Mid Hoppenrath

The San Diego County Department of Public Works (DPW) has determined that the current configuration of curves on the short section of Country Club Drive between Mt. Whitney Road and the Village project is unsafe and that the differential between the curve speed (20 mph) and the straightaway speed (40 mph) is too great. Their design recommendations to date (seen in the New Urban West Village EIR) have widened the road and increased the curve speeds up to 40 mph, allowing vehicle speeds on the straightaway portions to increase even further.

Recent research on street design from the Local Government Commission has indicated that wider streets and fewer curves are associated with more accidents: "As streets got wider the number of accidents per mile per year increased. We can conclude that as streets get wider drivers speed up and are more prone to crash."

(<http://www.lgc.org/transportation/street.html>).

It would appear from this study and others (see reference list) that the modifications proposed by the DPW may be placing pedestrians and motorists at increased risk. This is especially important given the residential nature of this road (the driveways of 21 homes enter onto this short segment, and an additional five driveways enter via the unpaved El Rocko Road) and the surrounding rural neighborhood where vehicles share the road with farm equipment and livestock.

Instead of trying to increase speed on the curves, the DPW could decrease speed on the straightaway and design safer, but not faster, curves. A large survey on neighborhood traffic management sent to Institute of Transportation Engineers members and reported by the Sierra Club found that 120 agencies encounter well over 1,500 lawsuits a year regarding various transportation-related issues, but only six lawsuits were associated with traffic calming devices, and the 15 agencies using narrow street standards reported there were no lawsuits at all associated with their narrower street standards. It may be prudent for the county to explore other solutions that would make the road safer for both motorists and pedestrians.

We are meeting with the DPW concerning this topic. I hope the DPW will not treat historic Harmony

Grove as if it needed a typical suburban road system but instead will work with our community to find a context-sensitive solution for our unique environment. You can visit the town council web site ([www.efhgtc.org](http://www.efhgtc.org)) or contact me or Jacqueline Arsivaud-Benjamin, the chair of the traffic committee, to check on the progress of our discussions.

The Board of Supervisors will consider the fate of Country Club Drive along with the Harmony Grove Village project on **February 7**. Please contact your supervisors to tell them how you feel before this date.

### References

Residential Street Typology and Injury Accident Frequency. Peter Swift, P. E., Dan Painter, AICP, Matthew Goldstein. Originally presented at the Congress for the New Urbanism, Denver, Co., June, 1997. Additional data added in the summer and fall of 2002.

Improving the Residential Street Environment-Final Report, Federal Highway Administration, Washington D. C., 1981. D. T. Smith, Donald Appleyard.

Sierra Club Web site. Stop sprawl: Streets and Traffic. [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org).

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## Fixing The Frozen Garden

By Evelyn Alemanni

Elves have been asking for advice on what to do about damage to all kinds of vegetation from January's cold snap. It's sad to see the agaves along Elfin Forest Road melt down, not to mention the countless plants in personal gardens. As gardeners, our first instinct is to restore order and beauty by pulling out anything that's dead and trimming back whatever's been browned by frost. However, what we need in this case is not action, but patience.

Why? The "dead" branches can shield the rest of the plant from further frost, so it's best to leave them alone. Second, pruning causes plants to release a growth hormone, resulting in tender new shoots which are super-susceptible to frost. Don't fertilize now for the same reason. Another frost and the new shoots will be killed requiring the plant to be cut back even further.

Annuals killed by frost can also be left in place to insulate the ground for a few more weeks. With luck, they may even re-sprout. Remember, our average last frost date for this area is February 28,

*(Continued next page)*

## *(Fixing The Frozen Garden continued)*

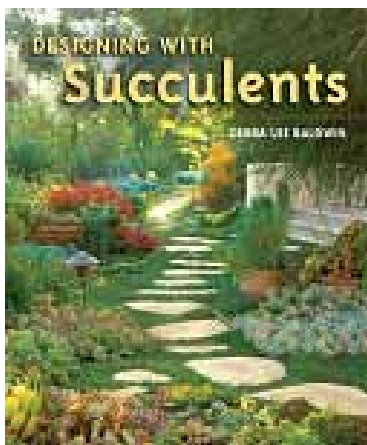
so wait until then, or even mid-March, before doing any dramatic pruning. (However, go ahead and prune your roses and fruit trees if you haven't already.) After all, you can't trust the weather report. Is there another profession where you can be wrong most of the time and still keep your job?

Until our balmy weather returns, you can protect your plants with a 4 to 6 inch layer of mulch. Potted plants can be brought indoors overnight. If you're really conscientious, you can cover delicate plants at night with old sheets or towels. Don't use plastic, as it can freeze and do more harm than good. However, don't lay the sheets directly on the plants – support them with stakes or poles.

It's ok to keep watering, but reduce the amount of water while it's cold. Contrary to summer, irrigate during the heat of the day so that water can evaporate before the cold returns. Otherwise, the droplets will freeze on leaves, causing burn spots.

During cold weather it's fine to plant bare root plants such as roses, fruit trees, and berries. Just add a layer of mulch. And remember, cold weather is actually important and helpful for some trees, including apple, cherry, peach, apricot, pear and plum.

Don't stress too much about the frost damage ... in about eight weeks, things *should* be looking green and growing rapidly.



**Breaking Garden News:** The Petitmermet's garden is featured in a newly published book, "Designing with Succulents" by Hidden Meadows garden writer Debra Lee Baldwin. It is available from Amazon.com.

## Town Council Website

The town council's website is continually updated. Check it out at: [efhgtc.org](http://efhgtc.org). Note: the town council is not affiliated with [elfinforest.net](http://elfinforest.net) or [elfinforest.com](http://elfinforest.com).

## What Other Towns Do

By Evelyn Alemanni

In December, I attended the National League of Cities conference on behalf of America in Bloom and came away with some interesting ideas from other towns:

- Youth council for students in junior high and high school. The youth council parallels the town council and works with the town council to implement projects to benefit youth in the community. This helps to train future leaders and gives youth an opportunity to learn how government works.
- Enhanced photo enforcement. Some towns have implemented a talking photo enforcement scheme in areas where they have problems with illegal dumping. A photo enforcement unit similar to those used for traffic is installed at problem areas. It is equipped with a motion sensor that activates a voice that says "We are watching you and taking your picture" or some other phrase. It's claimed that dumping is substantially reduced, and the photos help police issue fines to the offenders.
- Graffiti prevention and removal products. Coatings are available which make it hard for graffiti to stick to it, and easily removed. With the increase in graffiti, this might be a worthwhile investment.
- Leadership training for newly elected council members. This is offered through the National League of Cities.
- Monthly lunches with mayors and city managers. This is a program that is ongoing in San Diego County. Our town council board members would benefit from attending, as a way to form working relationships with their counterparts.
- Free recycling for rechargeable batteries and cell phones.
- Reverse 911 – an interactive community notification system that calls people in emergencies. Like automated block captains.

I have provided the town council board with further information on all these items and more. Contact any board member if you are interested in details.

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## What's Happening At The Fire Department – February 2007

By Battalion Chief Dawn Pettijohn



If you have driven by the fire station lately you may have seen a beautiful new engine. Engine 2821 has arrived and will be here temporarily awaiting installation of a compressed air foam system. A

sister engine to our primary structure Engine 2811, this new engine will replace our 22 year old Rescue 2890 which has absolutely seen its better days. The new Engine 2821 will also be set up for second out on structure fires, but with bigger cabinets to carry all the additional rescue equipment needed for vehicle accidents and over-the-side, back country, swiftwater and confined space rescues. If you ever wondered, it's not possible to carry everything we will need in any situation on all of our engines. They are specially designed and equipped for specific uses. Not only just the equipment they carry, but also the size of the pumps, water tanks, ground clearance and off road capability. One very important item on this new engine is an ISO rated pump, now providing us with a second ISO rated pump in the department required by ISO (Insurance Services Organization).

The Department recently completed a Confined Space Operations class. Four days of intense training provided us the knowledge to identify atmospheric and engulfment hazards and safely operate at a confined space rescue. We have many dangers in the district from the pump house vaults at the reservoir, manholes and vent pipes for the aqueduct, and electrical vaults on the San Elijo border. This important training will help us to ensure our firefighters have the technical knowledge to stay safe and prevent firefighter injuries or fatalities. Many thanks to Scott Henry, Jim Colston and George Solano of *California Shores* for this great class.

On the personnel side...Congratulations are in order for Probationary Firefighters Brian Smith and Robert Berkey. Both recently completed the Palomar College Fire Academy. That's some 576 hours of training in three months, and Brian Smith was second in his class. Also, welcome aboard to new Probationary Firefighter Jeff Mulvey. Jeff is an EMT and will also attend a fire academy. Good job, guys.

These young firefighters are an inspiration to us all and we like to say they are what keeps us young.

An important reminder to all residents. If you have a locked access gate to your property, please ensure that you install some type of approved emergency key operated switch or activated strobe light sensor to allow emergency vehicle access. These features are required by the County Fire Code for all new construction, but residents with homes built prior to these requirements may not understand the importance. It is absolutely critical that we be able to access your property in an emergency, be it a fire or even a medical emergency where you may not be able to let us in. We can't help you if we can't get to you. It will be money well spent if it prevents property loss or, heaven forbid, loss of life. It only takes once...one time that we can't get there...one time that could drastically change your life.

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## Neighborhood Watch News

By BJ Williams, SD Sheriff's Department

The San Marcos Sheriffs Station welcomes a new Captain! Captain Don Crist has been selected to lead the department's efforts to reduce crime and increase the safety of residents living in the neighborhoods of the San Marcos command. Captain Crist has been with the department over 25 years and has worked a variety of assignments including Detentions, Patrol, Traffic, Communications, Recruiting, Academy Training Officer, Internal Affairs, Internal Criminal Investigation Unit, Media Relations, Criminal Intelligence, Personnel, and Homicide. We are pleased to welcome Captain Crist and the qualifications and experience he brings with him.

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## Get Your Community Guide

By Evelyn Alemanni



Our community guide is available at all town council meetings. This beautiful, keepsake edition has nearly 200 color photos showing our community's past and present. They make wonderful gifts and an indispensable marketing tool for realtors. It provides resources for rural living, a history of our community, and much, much more. The price is \$20.



# Why Everyone In Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove Should Be A Member of TECC

By Jeff Swenerton

About three times a week we head out our back gate and walk down Elfin Glen Road towards Escondido Creek. We walk down a trail etched into an abandoned road by many hikers, horses and mountain bike riders. We pass under a canopy of hundred-year-old oaks and emerge on the other side into a meadow. This week the new meadow grass is beginning to turn green below the stubble left from last year. Our dog spotted a covey of quail and began a pursuit as she has done a thousand times knowing the chase will be futile.

Some have said that this meadow is environmentally significant. For us it is a place to walk and observe the many changes as the meadow celebrates the seasons. This is why we all love Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove.

From some developer's viewpoint, our meadow would make a superb location for several homes. Fortunately this land is now designated for open space as part of the Cielo Del Norte Project. However, the whims of people who want to develop our area can change. Who will protect this meadow and be its advocate if the plans change?

At last month's Town Council meeting, plans for the University Heights development, encompassing 1,250 homes on over 500 acres, were presented. This project potentially poses a tremendous threat to our rural community. With its proposed incorporation into the San Marcos City limits, it will bring sewer connections across much of our northern County Service Area boundary from San Elijo to Harmony Grove Road just east of the Recreational Reserve. Landowners along its boundary will have the opportunity to incorporate into San Marcos, connect to the sewer, bring more high density, and destroy our rural community. Who is going to address our concerns?

One of the answers is The Escondido Creek Conservancy (TECC). Since 1991, TECC has preserved over a 1000 acres for open space in the Escondido Creek watershed. TECC cannot succeed without your help. Most recently we are leading the way in collaboration with the Town Council, the Nature Conservancy and other conservation groups

to oppose development of the Bridges across the Escondido Creek into Elfin Forest.

This month TECC is launching a major membership drive. We would like all residents of Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove to be members. Local residents and TECC Board of Trustee members Steve Barker, Kevin Barnard, Tim Costanzo, Jack Olmstead, Jeff Swenerton, and Leonard Wittwer urge you to support TECC by becoming a member. A basic membership is just \$50. At the \$100 level you receive a TECC baseball hat. At \$300 you receive a quality Eagle Creek day pack. A \$500 donation entitles you to a fabulous Spring Membership Celebration in the Recreational Reserve. Go now to [www.escondidocreek.org](http://www.escondidocreek.org) and join today.

Come join us on February 10 at 9 AM to 12:30 PM for the Second Annual Tree Planting in the EF Recreational Reserve sponsored by TECC and the Olivenhain Municipal Water District. Get the whole family involved in planting a tree. Drinks and snacks provided by A16. RSVP to Jeff Swenerton at 760-471-4312 or [jeffswenerton@aol.com](mailto:jeffswenerton@aol.com).



Leonard Wittwer and Jack Pomeroy atop Bottle Peak



Group on the EF Recreational Reserve Way Up Trail

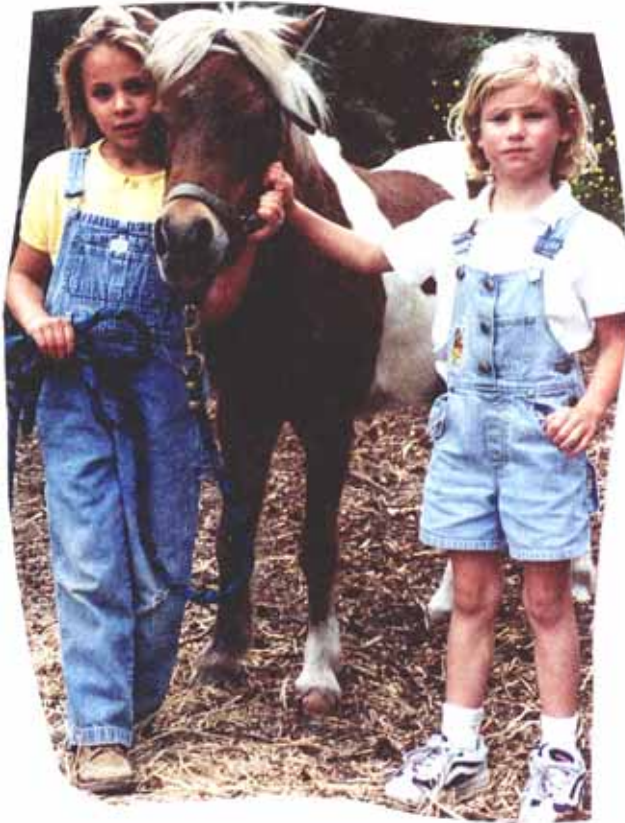
(photo credits: Geoffrey Smith)

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## In Memoriam: Peaches

By The Zieglers

We sadly say goodbye to Peaches. We were blessed with the joy of having her in our family for over 10 years. We will miss her “snorty” greetings and Gordon, her stable mate, will miss her companionship. Peaches, thank you for the many wonderful memories you made for so many. Ellen would especially like to remember Peaches as her best friend with hooves.



*Peaches with her owner Ellen Ziegler and friend Savannah Ames.*

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## Remembering Peaches

By Mary Garman

Peaches is part of the community history. She trotted in our first 4th of July Parade and didn't miss many since. She was around 38 years old and lived with three families in Elfin Forest, the last 10 years with the Zieglers. Ellen Zeigler bathed, brushed and dressed Peaches for the parade and always won a prize. She will be missed by her family and her roommate, best friend and protector, Gordon, the horse. They were inseparable. She will be remembered as the pony who proudly trotted down Elfin Forest Road in our 4th of July Parade.

February 2007

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## From Questhaven Retreat



Sunday worship is at 10:45 AM.  
All are welcome.  
20560 Questhaven Road.  
760-744-1500  
[www.questhaven.org](http://www.questhaven.org).

**Study groups** meet on weeknights. Please call the office for times and locations.

**Weekly Meditation** - Wednesday at 7:30 PM.

Check the Questhaven web site for the schedule and topic of Sunday services.

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## HG Spiritualist Church Services

The Harmony Grove Spiritualist Church services are:

Saturday: Healing 1 PM – 2 PM  
Church Service 2 PM – 3 PM

Sunday: Healing 10 AM – 11 AM  
Church Service 11 AM – Noon

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## Sheriff's Department Contacts

In an emergency, please call 911. For non-emergency reporting, contact the following:

General - 760-510-5200

Jackie Cruz – Agriculture crime prevention specialist 760-940-4350

Betty (B.J.) Williams – Crime Prevention Specialist/Neighborhood Watch

San Marcos Patrol Station

182 Santar Place

San Marcos, CA 92069

760-510-5254 (Direct line with voicemail)

[betty.williams@sdsheriff.org](mailto:betty.williams@sdsheriff.org)

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## Classified

### Local Baby, Animal and House Sitters

Ryan Anderson - Baby Sitting/Pet Care. High school sophomore, responsible, with own transportation. 760-471-5850.

Elissa Benjamin - Babysitter and tutor for grades K-4, all subjects. Local references. Can not tutor on Wednesdays or Thursdays. Please call early to reserve babysitting. 760-891-9061.

Amanda Clerke – Experienced Babysitter/Pet Care. Elfin Forest resident, RSF School. YMCA babysitter certification. 12 years old. Please call 760-510-0143.

Jessica MacKinnon - Babysitting/Feed Animals, EF Resident, 15 years old, SFC High School - 10th grade, took babysitting course through Red Cross. Contact at 760-744-8955.

**For Sale:** White iron day bed with trundle. Excellent condition, perfect for a little girl's room. \$150. 760-471-7933.

**For Sale:** 2001 Subaru Forester. All time 4-wheel drive, 6 CD changer, heated seats, etc. Excellent condition. 107k miles, \$8,000. 760-471-7933

**For Sale:** Redwood playset, w/fort, 2 regular swings, tire swing, glider and rings. Great condition. \$4000 new, asking \$500. 760-761-0967

**Wanted:** Chain harrow/arena drag in good condition. Call 760-761-0967

**Wanted:** Anyone having a time share at Warner Hot Springs Ranch who might be interested in sharing some weekends. Call 760-761-0967.

**Home Wanted:** Two gorgeous friendly goats need loving home. Blackjack and Tessie. House sold. Call to visit them. 760-510-9998.

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To renew your advertising, send a JPG format file and a check (see rates below) payable to the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council, 20652 Elfin Forest Road, Elfin Forest, CA. 92029.

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