



Dedicated to a continuing rural atmosphere

## From The Chair

By Mid Hoppenrath

Happy Holidays! Be sure to attend our holiday party this December 1st at the Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Fire Station. It is a dessert potluck, so bring something sweet to share. We will have representatives from our community volunteer organizations there to tell you all about their activities, so this is a great time to find out about these great groups and maybe join one or more yourself. We have some fun activities and surprises planned for the evening, so you won't want to miss the festivities an opportunity to visit with old (and new) friends.

Efforts are underway to beautify Elfin Forest for next year's America in Bloom competition. We have a great chance to win with the enthusiasm of our residents and Evelyn Alemanni's experience as a judge in this year's contest tipping the scales in our favor. Watch the newsletter for more information about how you can help.

January is the scheduled time to present our community service awards, so please be thinking of any deserving individuals to nominate for this honor. And be sure to reserve some time for the January Town Council meeting. We will have County Supervisor Bill Horn as our special guest.

Happy Holidays to all of you from your town council board.

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**Town Council Meeting – Wednesday, December 1<sup>st</sup> @ 7:30PM**  
At The Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Fire Station

**Topic: Holiday Dessert Potluck – Meet Our Volunteers**

## Community Service Awards

By Evelyn Alemanni

So many people in our valley do so much and, at the January 5<sup>th</sup> town council meeting, we want to thank them and acknowledge their efforts. Here's your chance to nominate your friends and neighbors for their contributions to a maintaining a continuing rural environment. There's no limit to how many people you can nominate, but town council board members are not eligible.

Natalie Chaffer has graciously volunteered to coordinate the awards again, so please send nominations to her at [natalie@chaffer.us](mailto:natalie@chaffer.us) or call her at 760-744-7233. Please be sure to tell her the name of the person, why they are being nominated, and their phone number.

## Elfin Forest Garden Festival 2005

By Evelyn Alemanni

Plans for our garden festival (Saturday April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2005) continue to take on momentum. Gardens on the tour this year have been in magazines such as Sunset, Better Homes and Gardens, San Diego Home/Garden Lifestyles, and more. Order your tickets on the website now! Tickets are limited, so get yours today.

You can see details of the garden festival at [www.elfinforestgardens.info](http://www.elfinforestgardens.info). If you'd like to volunteer to help with the event in any way or to be a garden marketplace vendor or sponsor, please contact me at 760-471-7224 or [alemanni@allea.com](mailto:alemanni@allea.com).

## Just Moved Here?

If you just moved here, contact Karen Gardner 760-744-9500 to get your free six month subscription to the newsletter and discounts on town council merchandise.

## Calendar For December

Date	Time	Event
Weds 12/1	7:30 PM	EF/HG Town Council Mtg
Tues 12/2 12/16	7 PM	Fire Training@Firehouse
Every Thurs	6:30 PM	Yoga@Firehouse
Mon 12/8	7 PM	Fire Board@Firehouse
Weds 12/10	7 PM	Fire <a href="mailto:Auxiliary@Firehouse">Auxiliary@Firehouse</a>
Sat 12/27	8 AM	Fire Training@Firehouse

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## Fire Advisory Board Elections

By Nona Barker

Nominations for Directors of the Elfin Forest / Harmony Grove Fire Department Inc. Fire Advisory Board of Directors are now open for three available positions. Nominations will remain open for a period of 60 days.

Here are excerpts from the Fire Advisory Board By-Laws describing the qualifications and requirements of a directorship:

- The Advisory Board shall have seven Directors and one fire department Chief. The chief of the fire department shall not have the right to vote as a Director but shall be advisory in capacity.
- Directors shall be residents of the Elfin Forest area. The Board's membership shall contain not less than one active firefighter and not more than three active firefighters.
- Each Director shall hold the office for 2 years.
- Any person qualified to be a Director may be nominated by the method of nomination authorized by the Board or by any other method authorized by the law. A nomination for the Board may not be made after the date set for close of nomination.
- The Directors shall be elected at each annual meeting or by written ballot. The candidates receiving the highest number of votes up to the number of Directors to be elected are elected. Directors shall be eligible for reelection without limitation on the number of terms they may serve, provided they continue to meet the qualifications required by the By-Laws.
- The Directors shall serve without compensation except that they may be allowed and paid their actual and necessary expenses incurred in attending the meetings of the Board.

Contact Chief Frank Twohy or Board Chairwoman Nona Barker for more information:

**Fire Station 760-744-2186**

**Chief Twohy 619-851-2801**

**Nona Barker 760-415-6635.**

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## What's Happening At The Fire Department

By Captain Dawn Pettijohn



November marks our official announcement of the result of our ISO Re-evaluation. We're pleased to announce that we've been successful in improving our classification to a split rating of 4/9. That means a big savings in homeowners insurance for a majority of our communities. This has been a year-long project and we consider this an excellent achievement. Please call the station at 760-744-2186 for questions regarding your property.

Training in November will focus on Swiftwater Rescue in preparation for the possibility of heavy rains this winter. As we saw in mid-October, three days of rain can bring a lot of water. The power of moving water is deceptive. For your safety, never attempt to cross moving water and always observe road closed signs.

Our EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) class is complete and graduated seven members. Capt. Steve Barker, FF Jeff Coppens, Eng. Bob Kephart, FF Bryan Mortenson, FF Mike Patton, Capt. John Rayes, and FF Mike Shea successfully completed the written and skills part of the class. They are now ready to test for state certification through the CA State Fire Marshall. A big "Thanks" to Paramedic Luis Ortiz for his patient instruction of this "energetic" group.

A grant application was submitted to the San Diego County EMS Trust Fund for 30 M-2002 New Generation Fire Shelters and six Training Fire Shelters. This new fireshelter is the first complete redesign of the original 1977 version and the latest technology in entrapment/burnover protection. If awarded, this grant will help us provide this new fire shelter to our firefighters by the start of the 2005 fire season. If our firefighters are ever faced with a fire shelter deployment situation...they deserve the best!

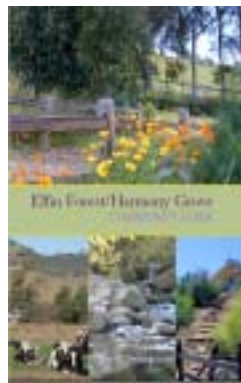
Welcome aboard to new probationary firefighters Lance Candelaria, Rodney Ortiz, Mark Light, Matthew Conroy, Elizabeth Lutz and Brianna Saulnier. That brings the department staff up to 30 personnel. Although that might seem like a lot of folks, we are always looking for willing in-district residents to join the department. If you have an interest, come down and see what we do. Training days are the first and third Tuesday at 7PM and the fourth Saturday at 8AM.

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## Community Guides Are Here – Special Offer

By Evelyn Alemanni



Our brand new community guide is here and will be available at all town council meetings. This is a beautiful, keepsake edition with 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 \$25 or five for \$100. *If you ordered your community guide already, pick it up at any town council meeting.*

**When you renew your newsletter subscription for two years, you can purchase the community guide for \$20. Renew for five years and the guide is yours for only \$15.**

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## Local Wildlife Photos

By Todd Nordress

Elfin Forest Reserve park ranger Todd Nordress' wildlife photos are available on the web at: <http://community.webshots.com/album/32612742YsWYxv>

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## Free Wildflower Seeds

By Evelyn Alemanni

The America in Bloom Committee has a wonderful gift for you! So that you can do your part in beautifying Elfin Forest, we will have packets of wildflower seeds for you to take home at the December town council meeting.

Plant the seeds where they'll receive full sun and periodic water in case we don't get much rain. They can be planted right away and look lovely along the roads. They will naturalize and become more beautiful every year.

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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.

## Prop C Consolidation – What Does It Mean For Us?

By Chief Frank Twohy

The November 2<sup>nd</sup> passage of Proposition C, the consolidation of fire departments, has raised a number of questions. At this point I would say that it is too early for answers.

The way I like to think about proposition C is a little like being asked if you want ice cream after dinner every night. Who would say no! Upon some reflection though, questions about how this could happen would surface.

- What flavor will the ice cream be? --- What will be the department's make up be?
- Who will deliver my ice cream? --- Paid staff, volunteer, or a combination of both?
- Can I keep the ice cream I already have? --- Will our community firefighters still be a part of the department?
- If I like sprinkles on my ice cream can I get them? --- What about swift water rescue or over the side rope rescue, and back country search and rescue?
- Who is going to pay for the ice cream? --- What mechanism will fund this new department?
- Will the money I now spend on ice cream continue to go toward purchasing ice cream for me or everyone? --- Will our benefit money stay here or will it become part of a general fire department budget?
- My neighbor has purchased his ice cream with a loan. Will I become responsible for paying his bill? --- Will all the debts of existing fire departments for engines, facilities, and retirements become my responsibility?

At this time there are no answers to these and any number of additional questions. I will report more as soon as I know anything.

## 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) and [elfinforest.com](http://elfinforest.com).

## OMWD Update

By Sue Varty, Director, OMWD

There is a lot happening at the OMWD (Olivenhain Municipal Water District) that I thought would interest Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove residents:

**Water Rates:** It's been widely reported in the press the state of California is having fiscal difficulties. The state is trying to close the budget gap by taking property taxes collected by special districts. OMWD is going to lose \$2.8 million over the next two years.

To put this in perspective: OMWD is going to lose all its income for more than one month, in each of the next two years! Can you imagine your employer saying that he is going to take your paycheck away next month? And then he's going to take it away again next December? The reasoning is that special districts just have to raise rates. In my opinion, this is nothing more than a "back door tax". After working so hard to build the dam and treatment plant without raising rates, we now have to raise rates due to no fault of OMWD.

OMWD knows they have to raise water rates. The problem is how to do it. In the past, OMWD has had a tendency to raise the rates on the bigger users (higher tiers) and keep the lower tiers the same. This has meant that reliable income has shrunk over the years, while unreliable income has increased. The higher tiers are classified as unreliable because during a drought the high users will cut back and therefore revenue will decrease.

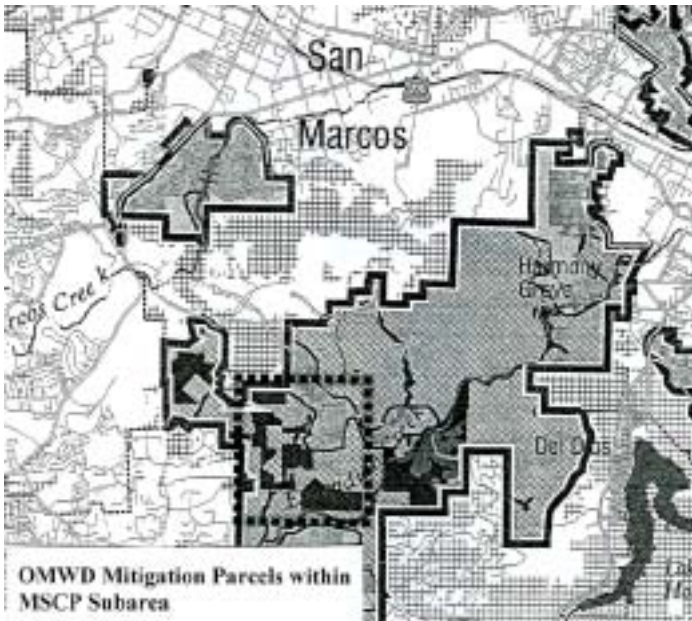
Property taxes are (were!) classified as reliable income. The rating agencies have a strong desire that OMWD have as much reliable income as possible and if the reliable/unreliable ratio "gets out of hand" they have the option of raising the interest rates on all outstanding debt. That would be a disaster.

In order to replace this reliable income the board has suggested increasing all the tiers in almost the same percentage. We still have public hearings and more discussions but the suggestion is that rates increase about 11%. **It would be helpful if you let your congressional representative know how you feel about this back door tax.**

*(Continued next page)*

*(OMWD Update continued)*

**Mitigation Land:** OMWD continues to purchase land in the Elfin Forest area as mitigation land. I am very proud of this commitment. Other agencies have purchased mitigation land through land banks or in cheaper parts of San Diego County, but OMWD has staunchly refused to buy land outside Elfin Forest. Mitigation land is land that will always remain open. OMWD has contributed to a wildlife corridor, preserving not only wildlife, but also valuable coastal sage scrub. Over the years, OMWD purchased 70 acres of land along this corridor. With the construction of the dam and treatment plant, OMWD purchased another 155 acres. In addition, OMWD and SD County Water Authority own 850 acres surrounding the dam (see map), for a grand total of 1,075 acres, all in Elfin Forest.



**Sewer:** OMWD has a sewer treatment plant in the 4S development, just east of highway 15 and south of Harmony Grove Road. This treatment plant will provide sewer to the south and east of OMWD's service district. Cielo and Cielo Norte will be pumping their sewer east to this treatment plant. OMWD has no plans to provide sewer north of Escondido Creek. This doesn't mean no sewer will ever exist in Elfin Forest. Vallecitos and Cardiff Sanitation District are on our boundaries and they may provide sewer in the future. I can say, fairly confidently, that while I am on the board of directors, OMWD will not provide sewer to Elfin Forest.

**CIRC:** Initiated by OMWD, CIRC is a group of agencies that promotes interagency cooperation. For example, OMWD and the Encinitas Fire Department were both maintaining fire hydrants in areas of Encinitas where OMWD is the water supplier. OMWD and the fire departments from EFHG, Rancho Santa Fe, Encinitas and (recently) Carlsbad now participate in a cooperative effort to maintain all hydrants with electronic reporting, standardized maintenance and shared resources. In addition, SD County Water Authority has recently agreed to be CIRC's lead agency in a shared website to coordinate pipeline shutdowns, human resource management amongst the agencies, and emergency coordination. During the Cedar Fire, it was difficult getting information from agencies in need. This should never happen again.

**Cost Control Goes Up a Level:** All at OMWD believe in controlling costs. The dam and treatment plant were funded with grants, participations with other agencies, and low interest loans. A hydro-electric system generates electricity which contributes a large portion of the cost of running the treatment plant. Another hydro-electric system generates electricity at the Miller tank. Carter's Hay and Feed and the dog training facility located on OMWD property rent their land from OMWD which generates income to offset costs. Nextel and Verizon pay the district a monthly fee for cell towers located on remote tank sites in the district. The employees have recently split into two groups and each group is challenging the other to provide more offsets like those listed above. It will be fun to see who wins! Donald Trump would be so proud!



**Elves turned out in force on November 6<sup>th</sup> to spread wildflower seeds along our roads, preparing for a glorious spring. It rained just a few hours later.**

# San Marcos Development Update

## By Evelyn Alemanni

The town council received an eight page list of active developments in San Marcos. The list below is just the ones near us. For more information contact: San Marcos Planning Department 744-1050 x3233.

### Commercial/Office Development

- San Elijo Hills Golf Course: A draft biological analysis has been completed and a hydrogeotechnical study is still needed to evaluate water seepage from the hills above Lake San Marcos. The CUP application is still on hold.
- San Elijo Hills Town Center: An SDP for the mixed use portion of the Town Center has been submitted to the City. This will entail ground floor retail with two stories of residential above, including a market.

### Industrial Development

- Questhaven/La Costa Meadows Business Park Area: The City Council approved the movie studio Specific Plan. The movie studios are pursuing final approvals from the County due to existing deed restrictions.
- Martin Business Park: Approximately 28 acres at the intersection of Diamond Street and the Melrose Drive extension is anticipated to move forward upon completion of construction of Melrose Drive. The project is an expansion of the existing La Costa Meadows Business Park.
- Hunter Industries – Diamond Street: Under construction with tenant improvements for remodeling 60,000 s.f. @ 1940 Diamond Street.

### Residential/Planned Communities

- San Elijo Hills (3,126 SFR's & 204 affordable apartments); KB Homes (Santa Fe Hills) (820 SFR's); Hallmark (33 SFR's, Pinehurst) Loma Alta (94 units); Twin Oaks Estates (29 SFR's). The developers in San Elijo Hills are: Standard Pacific 162 condos and 93 SFR; Shea Homes 92 SFR; Continental Homes 171 SFR; Greystone Homes – 121 condos; Bridge Housing 204 affordable units (first phase); Richmond American 100 SFR; John Laing Homes 86 SFR; Beazer Homes 77 SFR; Ryland 74 SFR; Colrich-Pulte 240 Condos.

- San Elijo Ridge was approved for 131 units by the City Council. The development area has been annexed into the City.
- University Commons: The project is in the final grading phase. The Melrose extension, connecting Rancho Santa Fe Road to San Elijo Road, and San Elijo Road to the terminus of the project is under construction.
- Shea Homes has purchased Planning Area 3 and Centex Homes has purchased Planning Area 8, 9, 11 (245 single family homes). Site Development Plans have been approved. Centex Homes has been issued model permits for Dove Valley, Hawks Point and Falcon Crest. First phase production units are under construction. Site Development Plans are also being processed for Planning Area 6 (Shea) and 12 (Brookfield).
- Camden is processing 350 apartment units in Planning Area 10A, which did receive SDP approval.
- Southern California Housing - 114 unit affordable housing Site Development Plan has been approved. The City Council approved the issuance of multi-family housing revenue bonds for the approved 114-unit affordable rental housing project. Building permits are expected to be issued in December '04.

### Affordable Housing

- Rancho Santa Fe Village – Rancho Santa Fe and First Street. An application has been approved for a mixed use development of 120 senior apartments and 14,500 s.f. of retail. The project is in the foundation phase.
- Copper Creek Apartments – San Elijo. Bridge Housing has been issued permits for 204 units at the Copper Creek Apartments, which is one of two of the affordable housing projects in the San Elijo Hills Specific Plan. The project is in the first phase of occupancies.
- Sage Canyon – San Elijo. Bridge Housing has been processing plans for 72 affordable units. This is the second required affordable housing project in San Elijo Hills.

# Minutes Of Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove Town Council Meeting

By Patti Newton

**Date:** November 3, 2004

**Board Members present:** Jan Denny, Patti Newton, Bob McGurk, Greg Parman, Evelyn Alemanni, Mid Hoppenrath

**Call to Order:** 7:35 PM.

**Item #1:** Board updates. **Mid Hoppenrath** announced the county planning commission approved the county trails plan after years of input and the efforts of staff and residents. It will now go before the Board of Supervisors for final approval. If you would like to make comments, send an email or call beforehand.

Next month's town council meeting will be the traditional holiday dessert potluck party. There will be fun, prizes. Members of community organizations will be available to discuss these organizations and answer any questions. The community service awards will be moved to the January meeting.

**Evelyn Alemanni:** Betty Williams, Sheriff's department liaison reminded residents there will be a neighborhood watch meeting Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>. The North County Times printed an article about the poppy seed program in Elfin Forest. Interested residents are encouraged to pick up free seeds to sprinkle along Elfin Forest, Questhaven, and Harmony Grove Roads to beautify them for the America In Bloom contest. Go to Elfin Valley Nursery on Saturday 9:30 – 10:30 – rain or shine. Garden Festival planning is well underway. NUW made a donation, tickets are already being sold, and vendors are being lined up.

Volunteers are always needed and are appreciated. Mark your calendars for April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Greg Parman** anticipates the weight limit signs will be up by Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>. **Bob McGurk** gave the treasurer's report. Expenses for the month of Oct. were \$410; income was approximately \$840; the net was approximately \$430. **Jan Denny** continues to work on the road sign/boulders project. She submitted a grant application to the EFCF to help pay for the project. **Bob Kephart** is working to get the best price from contractors. Residents will pitch in a nominal amount toward the effort, as will the fire department and town council. The town council is working on bylaw revisions and is finalizing them into a format

for community approval during the February elections. Contact Jan if you have input. **Patti Newton** is chairing a small sign committee to explore alternatives for two permanent sign installations for meeting announcements and other items of interest to the communities. **Jim DePolo** won re-election to the RSF school district board which has two other new members -- Richard Burge and Ty Miller. Sites – the board is still working with Cielo on the details of that proposed site. The proposed Quail Ridge project is under consideration as one of alternative sites. All sites are very preliminary at this point. A home adjacent to the existing RSF School is now up for sale; the board will consider the potential for its utility. A bond issue may come up in March or June but that is speculative. A Certificate of Participation (like a mortgage) may preclude the need for a bond.

**Item #2: Dave Hughes**, Superintendent of Escondido High School District. He gave some historical background to illustrate the growth of the district and its need for another high school. He showed several maps of district boundaries and its steady growth patterns. The existing schools are at or beyond capacity now. In 2010, the student population is projected to be 9,200 students. There is a real need for a new facility to handle this growth. The district has been chipping away at the problem for years; they bought property a few years ago – a 34 acre sloping property but neighbors were concerned about the possibility of eminent domain. Because fifty acres (net) are required to build a high school, they abandoned any idea of building on that particular parcel. The district owns a parcel on Citracado which they may ultimately sell, or utilize for a smaller magnet school site and delay construction of a larger site.

There are many options to consider in addressing the growth. Hughes doesn't believe a magnet school will be sufficient to handle the growth; he wants to ensure they are set up for the build-out of the district. The prospect of finding 50 developable acres now, much less ten years from now, is bleak. The timeframe is a problem so thinking quite a bit ahead is critical to meet the demands of the district. It looked at the 80-acre Dorn property which is currently for sale by owner with approved map of 34 homes. Neighbors were vehemently opposed to it for a variety of reasons, i.e., traffic, environmental issues, dark sky, impact on wildlife, etc.

*(Continued next page)*

**(Minutes EF/HG Town Council continued)**

It is a tough parcel to develop. Preliminary engineering studies determined development of the parcel would be very expensive. Hughes and staff asked a realtor to scout reasonable possibilities for development. He identified a handful of sites for consideration. Among them were Avenida del Diablo, Mountain Meadow near Deer Springs, Mesa Rock, Jesmond Dene, and Eden Valley; all were under consideration; all had challenges. There were seven in all. In Aug. they narrowed the choices down to Dorn, Citracado and Avenida del Diablo, and the Mesa Rock sites. They may find insurmountable problems and need to reconsider earlier contenders. A feasibility study re cost, grading, layout, etc. will be performed in December. No decision is expected until January when the public input has been gathered. An interesting fact is that it takes seven houses to generate one high school student. Question and answer and general discussion followed.

**Open Forum: Alan Lasnover** discussed cell towers in Elfin Forest. Cingular offered his neighbor money to place a tower and associated concrete structure on their property. One neighbor wrote a nasty letter to SDPG and copied neighbors underscoring that when neighbors purchased their properties the utilities were all underground. He threatened to sue. Since then the project seems to have gone away because Cingular was sympathetic to the neighbors' concerns. Because tower placement will continue to be a problem Alan would like to see the town council develop a policy for our residential area. Evelyn noted we fall under county policy as an unincorporated area but this assumes the supervisors would protect/enforce its policy on our behalf. RSF is dealing with this issue now – we may benefit from their efforts. People have expressed their desire to have cell phone reception in the area so it will pop up again. Alan expressed his desire for the town council to take action.

**Frank Twohy:** The fire department finished its ISO rating and, effective Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>, any home within 1,000 ft. of a 'real' fire hydrant goes from a 9 to a 4. This may save homeowners up to 40% on their fire insurance.

**Jan Denny:** Does the fire department have an opinion about cell tower on fire dept. property, assuming it doesn't present a visual blight or other significant objection? Frank stated that yes, they are amenable. Nextel is potentially interested but it may be too costly to do as the department desires -- it

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wants to use it as a hose tower versus Nextel's fake tree proposal.

**Jet Ridge** development grading is underway. Developer is unresponsive to calls and emails.

**Doug Dill:** The San Dieguito Planning Group's 11/18 meeting will hear Peng Tan's 32-home Victoria Shangri La proposal.

**Alan Lasnover** announced that he is acting in the Patio Playhouse production of "Inspecting Carol". Performances are on Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m., running from Nov. 19th through Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>. Find details at [www.patioplayhouse.com](http://www.patioplayhouse.com).

**Adjourned:** 9:15 p.m.

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## Alan Lasnover Acts Out!

By Alan Lasnover

Linking to <http://www.patioplayhouse.com/> will introduce you to the particulars surrounding the forthcoming production of "Inspecting Carol," a comedy presented each weekend between November 19 and December 12 at the Patio Playhouse in Escondido, CA.



Needless to say, I am delighted to be part of the cast of this production and look forward to a successful "run," however short it is planned to be. Saturday and Sunday performances begin at 8:00 PM, Sunday performances at 2:00 PM, and the price is right! I hope that many of you will visit and provide essential encouragement.

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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

Sgt. Dan Wilson – COPPS – 760-510-5231

Betty (B.J.) Williams – Crime Prevention  
Specialist/Neighborhood Watch 760-510-5254



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## America in Bloom – Heritage

By Evelyn Alemanni



This is the fourth in a series of articles on Elfin Forest's 2005 entry in the America in Bloom contest

([www.americainbloom.org](http://www.americainbloom.org)). In May, 2005, we will be judged on eight criteria: community involvement, tidiness, heritage, environmental

awareness, turf and groundcover, floral displays, landscape, and urban forestry. In 2003, we lost points in the area of heritage. The judges suggested that we work on signage to indicate where the old stage stop was as well as other projects.

What is our heritage? Our heritage is in agricultural uses of the land and in the pristine open spaces which we work hard to preserve. Questhaven Retreat is one of the leading resources in this aspect, preserving 640 acres. The retreat dates back to 1940 and has some of the oldest buildings in the valley, although they are not really *old* by East Coast standards. It also incorporates olive groves which were planted in the 1800's by Olivenhain's early settlers. Although the olive groves burned to the ground in the Harmony Grove fire in 1996, the trees have resprouted, and a cadre of volunteers has adopted the trees to prune them back into shape. It's a huge job.

Another aspect of our heritage is our strong town council and its program of honoring a citizen of the year. The town council is in the process of having plaques made for each past citizens of the year. The plaques will be placed on or near the trees along the Elfin Forest Road trail.

Cheri Smith is heading the heritage committee for our America in Bloom entry. She needs your help. Please contact her at [cherismith@earthlink.net](mailto:cherismith@earthlink.net) to volunteer.

To help keep you up to date on who's on the committee and what we're doing, check the town council website, [www.efhgtc.org/aib.htm](http://www.efhgtc.org/aib.htm). If you would like to help in any way, please contact me at [alemanni@allea.com](mailto:alemanni@allea.com) or 760-471-7224. Judging will be in early May 2005, so we need to get busy now!

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## Cigarette Butt Hotline

Excerpt from the North County Times

Now there's we can do something about those idiots who toss cigarette butts out the car window. People can anonymously report violators on the toll-free (800) NO SMOKE hotline. Callers will be asked to report the vehicle's license plate number, location and direction of travel, and the date and time of the violation.

The California Highway Patrol will send the registered owner of the vehicle a warning letter, said Chief Robert "Skip" Carter, commander of the Highway Patrol's Border Division. He said the three Highway Patrol offices in this county, including one in Oceanside, have written 5,367 citations to drivers since 2002 for throwing lit substances onto highways.

First-time violators of the law may be fined from \$340 to \$1,000. Any firefighting costs would also have to be paid.

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## Beautify Your Road Name Monument or Boulder

By Evelyn Alemanni

As part of our America in Bloom beautification efforts, Ron Martin of Elfin Valley Nursery (Saint Ron, we like to call him), has offered to donate plants from his nursery to beautify our road name monuments. All you need to do is come up with a design, plant the plants, and keep them watered. Ron has a list of plants that will thrive in our area, and you can augment them with divisions of things that do well from your own garden.

Check your copy of the community guide for lists of deer and rabbit-resistant plants. Get your plantings in the ground right away, or wait until the end of February – your call.

A contest for "best looking road monument or boulder" will be held in April, so get together with the neighbors on your street and come up with something stunning. We will all enjoy the beauty!

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## The School Yard

By Jim Depolo ([jdepolo@rsf.k12.ca.us](mailto:jdepolo@rsf.k12.ca.us))

Welcome back to the School Yard

**New School Board Members** - We wish to say thank you to all four candidates who ran for the School Board. Their consideration, dedication and willingness to take on the responsibility and commitment to our community and school is exemplary. We thank Bill Ruh in particular, for pitching in to make our school a better place and we know that we will continue to benefit from his support in many ways. We welcome new members Ty Miller and Richard Burdge, who will join me, along with Kathy Stumm and John Stiker, to fill the five School Board seats. Ty Miller and Richard Burdge will be sworn in at our December 9<sup>th</sup> board meeting. I know we all look forward to working for our children and our community.

**Meeting on Nov 18<sup>th</sup>** - One item on our agenda was a decision regarding the purchase of a property near the school that is for sale. While not directly adjacent to the school, this site is adjacent to parcels that we hope will be available in the future, and does provide options for potential non-classroom uses that will help us. As we said in the open session of our last Board meeting, we do NOT yet have definitive plans for this property, as we are considering it for a variety of potential options in the future depending on how other adjacent properties line up. As Board President Stiker said "sites do not always make themselves available in the order we may like, but to pass up this property which is so close to the school would potentially put it out of our reach for 20 or more years. That would not be very wise."

**December 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting and Activities** - Our regular board meeting of December 9<sup>th</sup> will start at 7PM, however there are some activities that will precede the official meeting. First at 4:30PM we will have Academic Awards night, where awards will be presented recognizing many of the outstanding academic achievements of our students. Then at 6PM the chorus will lead the annual Holiday Sing at the Inn, with a more traditional presentation planned for this year. We expect a fun filled evening.

**Path Forward** –We look forward to seeing you at our next School Board meeting. As always we welcome your comments at our board meetings or via email.

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## December In The Garden

By Evelyn Alemanni

December is a great month to relax after you finished all the fall planting. If you haven't finished, get busy! Make room for bare root plants (roses, berries, fruit trees) which start arriving in nurseries toward the end of the month. Gift certificates from nurseries are welcomed by all your gardening friends because they can buy exactly the right plant at the right time. Other nice gifts for gardeners include soft leather gloves ([www.bionicgloves.com](http://www.bionicgloves.com)), Neptune's Harvest Fish Emulsion, Felco pruners, SuperThrive, Marilyn's Own Humate ([www.marilynsown.com](http://www.marilynsown.com)), garden tools made of stainless steel ([www.leevalley.com](http://www.leevalley.com)).

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### Maintenance

- As days and nights get cooler, cut back on watering. If it rains, stop watering!
- Prune pines and conifers.
- Prune deciduous fruit trees and spray with dormant spray; prune grapes.
- Prune trees and shrubs, removing any branches that maybe susceptible to damage from high winds.
- Continue applying snail and slug bait.
- Divide perennials.

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### Plant Now

- Keep planting spring bulbs – narcissus, iris, anemones. Hyacinths, tulips, and crocus should have been refrigerated at least 6 weeks before planting.
- Plant trees, shrubs, vines.
- Plant azaleas and camellias. Be sure to check your soil pH and adjust if necessary.
- Plant bareroot strawberries, grapes, cane berries.
- Water newly planted items at least weekly until rains start.
- Plant winter vegetables: carrots, beets, lettuce, cabbages, brussel sprouts, cauliflower, broccoli, peas.

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### Fertilize

- Feed spring annuals now for good bloom in the spring.
- Fertilize lawns.
- Fertilize trees and shrubs that bloom in January and February.

## Keeping Your Pet's Holidays Happy

By Evelyn Alemanni

Lots of things change around our homes during the holidays – we bring in pine trees and decorate with colorful plants and plant materials. We cook new and delicious foods and more guests than usual may be in our homes. This creates tempting curiosities as well as potentially dangerous situations and stress for pets. With a little planning, you and your pets can make it to the new year without a mishap.

- Poinsettias, mistletoe, and holly are poisonous to cats and dogs. Locate plants where animals can't chew on the leaves.
- Christmas trees are tempting. Cats like to climb them, dogs like to body slam them or use them as they do exterior trees. Nothing like the sound of the tree crashing to the floor as Fido scarfs up all the frosted decorations, popcorn chains, and candy canes. Secure Christmas trees to the wall and/or ceiling so that cats and dogs can't pull them down. Pine needles, when ingested, can puncture holes in a pet's intestines, so keep pet areas clear of pine needles.
- Keep your fragile ornaments out of the reach of a curious pet which might be attracted to the shiny surface and try to bat it off the tree. Tinsel and ribbons can block the intestines if swallowed.
- Secure wires for holiday lights. They can also be fatal if a dog, cat or bird chews through them.
- Pets will mistake water in the tree stand for drinking water. It may contain preservatives which can be poisonous to your pet. Also, the standing, stagnant water may contain bacteria which can cause intestinal upset. Snow globes often contain antifreeze which is poisonous to pets.
- When guests are coming to visit, particularly those who may be unaccustomed to pets, be sure your pets are wearing current ID tags in case they escape when guests come and go. Do not let guests feed human food to your pets. Fatty meats, gravies, poultry skin, bones, chocolate and alcohol can cause illnesses including vomiting, diarrhea, pancreatitis and other toxic reactions.
- If you suspect that your pet has eaten something toxic, call your veterinarian and/or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center's 24-hour emergency hotline at 1-888-4-ANI-HELP.

December 2004

## Free Kelp By Evelyn Alemanni

When it comes to plants and garden supplies, free is my favorite word. And FREE is the price of kelp until the end of December. California Soil Solutions has lost their lease and needs to find a home for 100,000 cubic yards of kelp. They will be glad to load your truck for you or even deliver (for a fee). Contact them for hours and location, 619-398-6852. [www.casoils.com](http://www.casoils.com).

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[alemanni@allea.com](mailto:alemanni@allea.com)  
[www.allea.com](http://www.allea.com)



Don't forget to harvest or you'll end up with a mutant vegetable like this as a conversation piece. Carrot cake, anyone? From an EF garden.

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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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## News From Questhaven Retreat



Sunday worship is at 10:45 a.m.  
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 p.m. Led by Jean Michalewicz.

### The Way Within Meditation Classes

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at 12:00 Noon Phyllis Isaac

### Sunday Services

12/5 *The Path of Mysticism Leading to God*

12/12 *Christmas: A Time of Anticipation*

12/19 *From Darkness to Light—A Luminous Season*

### CHRISTMAS RETREAT, December 24, 25, 26

Friday, 7:30 p.m. *Candlelighting Service*

Saturday, Christmas Day *A Time of Joyous Reflection*

Sunday, 10:45 a.m. *Awaken to the Inner Side of Christmas*

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## Celebrate Christmas at Questhaven Retreat

You're invited to join in the Christmas celebration.

Friday night, December 24, 2004 will include an evening candle lighting service with music by the voice and bell choirs and sacred dance. It will be followed by social time in Friendship House. As midnight approaches, an additional evening service will be concluded by a special ceremony at midnight honoring our gifts to the Lord Christ.

On Sunday, December 26, 2004 the talk will be "Awaken to the Inner Side of Christmas."

We are going to have a special get-together on New Year's Eve, Friday, December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2004. There will be a potluck dinner and music celebration to usher in the coming year. Come and join us in fellowship.

For more information, call the office at 760-744-1500. [www.questhaven.org](http://www.questhaven.org).

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## December Playgroup Schedule

By Anna Waite

Holidays are approaching quickly so I thought we would just focus on two fun events for the kids and moms.

Thursday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 6:00-9:00PM - Elfin Forest Playgroup Mom's Christmas Party. Please bring one white elephant gift wrapped (something that you don't want) and one nice gift wrapped \$25.00 to exchange. Also, please bring an appetizer or dessert to share. At the home of Anna Waite, 1465 Paint Mountain Road. RSVP 760-752-1835.

Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2:00PM - Children's Christmas Party. Please bring over in advance a wrapped gift for your children to have Santa give to them. Bring them to Michele Sidwell's home prior to the party at 6856 Los Vientos Serenos, 760-471-8877. Also, bring a side dish to share. May you and your families have a wonderful holiday season.

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## Brushing, Grading, Clearing Questions?

If you have questions about guidelines, policies and standards for brushing, grading, and clearing, or if you need to report a violation, call the County Department of Planning and Land Use 888-336-7553.

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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 note 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 to receive the PDF version only.

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## San Elijo Hills Contact

If you need to report any problems with the grading, blasting, traffic, etc. regarding the San Elijo Hills (SEH) project, please contact Phil Stillman who is SEH liaison with the community. He can be reached at [philstillman@fstlaw.com](mailto:philstillman@fstlaw.com). If you feel the problem was still not resolved, call San Elijo at 760-918-8200.



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## Happy Holidays from your Friends at New Urban West!



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**For Sale:** 2003 Feather Lite two-horse slant trailer with dressing/sleeping area. Also horse for lease. Lori. 760-744-3858.

**For Sale:** Solid Oak Bar - Great Condition, stainless steel sink, tiled counter w/shelves, approx. 7 feet long. Asking Price: a \$250.00 donation to the Elfin Forest Fire Department. If interested please call Lynda Clerke @760-510-0143.

**For Sale:** Firewood: Split & seasoned eucalyptus w/some oak. Pick up in Elfin Forest: \$ 90/cord, Trumpet/ King: lightly used w/case \$100; Fencing, building materials, etc: tons of used but usable peeler log poles, wire, misc gates, carved panels, windows, doors, tools, misc., etc. Open to offers. 760 - 744-0670.

**For Sale:** New toilets in unopened boxes. (Originally bought to fulfill Fire Department's wish list, but new plans mandate handicapped height.) Proceeds will go from me towards EFHG Fire Department. You offer. 760-744-0670.



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