



MERIT
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Important changes in our Sponsor
Group meeting location and schedule -
now twice a month - see inside

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Should Campo and Lake Morena enact a
Moratorium on building until GP2020
has been enacted into law? Does your
Sponsor Group know your feelings?

MERIT

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Newsletter #8 - 9 November 2000

MERIT - MISSION STATEMENT

“The primary objectives and purposes of MERIT shall be to provide education and information that will 1) protect and maintain the natural resources, 2) promote responsible use of ground water, and 3) preserve the rural character of the community.”

MERIT OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

Mike Thometz - President Pat Noblitt - Vice President Bev Esry - Treasurer Gary Watkins - Director

Members of MERIT would like to hear about your concerns for the future of Campo and Lake Morena and include: John and Debi Inman, John is an 18 year resident (John is VP/General Manager of CP Mfg. in National City and Debi is a teacher at Mountain Empire), Marilyn West, a 23 year resident (Marilyn is VP/ Homemakers and was a long time board member of the Rural Transit Board), Bruce and Penny Willett, residents since 1980 (Bruce is Systems Installation Mgr. for CP Mfg. and Penny is Treasurer and a rider for the Mounted Patrol of the Laguna Mountain Volunteers), Debra and Otto Bohnstehn, residents since 1999 (Otto is retired Air Force and Debra is Secretary of the VFW).

HOLIDAY FESTIVAL TO BE HELD AT CAMPO ELEMENTARY DECEMBER 9TH

Fun for all children in the community and a spaghetti dinner for parents and seniors is planned for December 9th from 5 PM to 7 PM at Campo Elementary School in the MultiPurpose Room. The price of admission is one can of food that will be donated to holiday baskets for local families. All the booths will have activities, games and prizes for children. This will be fun for the kids and you are encouraged to attend.

IMPORTANT CHANGES IN MEETINGS DATES AND LOCATIONS FOR CAMPO/LAKE MORENA SPONSOR GROUP

At the October 23rd meeting of the Campo/Lake Morena Sponsor Group the members decided to meet twice a month. This decision was made on the basis of the many issues on the agenda and the lack of sufficient time to adequately discuss those issues. Community members in attendance strongly supported this decision due to their many concerns about GP2020 (General Plan 2020) that have to be evaluated and the time needed to formulate and submit responses to the Board of Supervisors. In addition, issues on the agenda such as a Moratorium on building could not be adequately and properly debated because of lack of time. A number of community residents attending their first Sponsor Group meeting expressed reservations about parts of the GP2020 guidelines and wanted more discussion on these important issues of land use, density and zoning.

The Sponsor Group voted to hold ***TWO*** meetings each month for the next few months while our GP2020 decisions are being formulated by the community and the Sponsor Group. These meetings will be on the second and the fourth Mondays of each month at the regular time of 7:00 PM. This month's meetings are November 13th and November 27th. The November 13th meeting will be held at the Pavilion at John Lyons/Lake Morena Park and the November 27th meeting will convene at the Campo Community Center. Please mark your calendar attend these meetings. **Important decisions will be made and these decisions will affect your property, minimum parcel size, your property rights, zoning, roads servicing the area, etc.** One issue that will be discussed November 13th is the recommendation the community approve a building moratorium on major developments until GP2020 is adopted.

The agenda for the Nov 13th meeting includes proposed changes to the County Grading Code, updates on Camp Lockett State Park, Lake Morena Community Center and Playground plans, La Posta Ranch, Lake Morena Fire Dept. station, Campo Hills, communications towers, and a subdivision on Buckman Springs Road. Consideration of a **MORATORIUM** on further development until GP2020 is enacted is scheduled for discussion and possible action. There will be an opportunity for individual land owners to discuss land use issues such as infrastructure, population densities, parks, trail systems, view sheds and ridge lines, scenic roads, unique policies dealing with drought, etc.

Another important change for the Sponsor Group is the expiration of the terms of four of the Members in January 2001. Applications are being accepted for those positions and a number of the incumbents are not planning to seek an additional term. You can have a major impact our future if you become a Member. Interested parties should submit a letter to the Sponsor Group (PO Box 590) indicating your interest and giving some background information about yourself. The elections will be December 11th.

Will there be a PromiseLand Ranch expansion???????

Tom Dyke recently purchased two land parcels totaling almost 120 acres located between Highway 94 and the 200 acre parcel Tom had donated earlier to St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP) for their PromiseLand Ranch. This property is northeast of the former Rock Mountain Recycling facility. While it is not known if these 120 acres will become part of the PromiseLand mega-development, a large Caterpillar tractor operated by SVDP has been at work on these properties. The tractor operator trespassed on Railroad right-of-way and drove across the tracks without permission and without building a crossing. While this damaged the 80 year old rails and created a dangerous situation for a trainload of 250 children, a railroad inspector examined the unauthorized crossing and the damage and ruled it was safe to travel over the tracks. Consistent with previous failures to tell Campo residents and neighbors of the property the details of what SVDP is planning to do with the land, no one knows if this already gigantic development is going to increase in size and be built to accommodate hundreds of additional children. Additional percolation tests are being performed on the new property which is only a few feet away from one of the new, very deep wells SVDP has drilled in the area for a public water system.

Camp Lockett State Park

On October 25th a meeting was held in Campo about the proposed park. Present were Roger Willmarth (State Dept. of Parks & Rec. - Office of Acquisition), Roger Challberg (Mtn. Empire Historical Society), Tony Neff (Southern Health Services), Randy Ford (San Diego County Parks & Rec.), Homer Townsend (State Dept. of Parks - retired), Brian Fallgren (MERIT), Nitta Elizaga (San Diego County Parks & Rec.), Larry Johnson (local land owner with property next to the park area) and Ryan Smith (Supervisor Dianne Jacob's office). The day included a tour of the San Diego Railroad Museum, the Truck Museum, a complete tour of all the sites of the former Camp including the Base Hospital (now the Juvenile Ranch Facility for the San Diego County Probation Department) where Superintendent Susan Blackwell outlined the County's plans for their facility.

The group had two hours of discussions on the vision of the proposed Camp Lockett State Park. The current status of the area regarding use of the old buildings and the ownership of the land and buildings was reviewed. A consensus of the participants was that we must retain the quiet, scenic, rural character of Campo. State Parks was pleased that the Border Patrol would be moving (see below). There was agreement that it would take a combined effort of government (State, County, local and Federal), non profit museums, local Indian tribes, and private groups. The group felt that success would require an individual assigned to coordinate the task of putting together this coalition. San Diego County government was a suggestion and the County Parks & Rec. participants will seek support from County government.

Mr. Willmarth suggested that the County might give the title of the Stone Store property and the old Stable Building to the State as a start for the building of a State Park. Future acquisitions could be added to the Stone Store. The archives and the docent staff of the Stone Store could provide visitors with information regarding the history of the area. The involvement of SD Railroad Museum and the Motor Transport Museum is very important to the possibility of obtaining a new park.

Sheriff Department and Border Patrol plans

Roger Challberg has advised MERIT that the San Diego County Sheriff's Department is planning to construction a major facility locally. They have purchased land from San Diego Gas & Electric on Old Highway 80 west of Buckman Springs Road. Their primary facility for our area will be built there with the work proposed to be done in about 18 months. The station will provide **24/7 coverage** (24 hours a day and 7 days a week) for the Campo, Lake Morena, Pine Valley and Boulevard area. The Campo Sub Station would continue to be used for investigations and other routine activities.

The Border Patrol is also planning to move and wants to locate to a new permanent facility. The Border Patrol is also considering the same general area as the Sheriff's Department on Old Highway 80 west of Buckman Springs. They are also looking at some private property and some BLM parcels. A Border Patrol move would take longer than eighteen months but could be done within the next three years. The Border Patrol wishes to be closer to major transportation arteries. Their move would greatly reduce the road congestion in Campo and on local roads like 94 and Buckman Springs. This was very appealing to the State Park people as it would enhance the ambience of the setting for a park.

New Campo Library Plans

Plans for the Library are moving forward. On November 2nd a meeting of local library volunteers, planners from the County and an architect discussed the needs of the community. All participants felt that a design picking up the style of the Old Stone Store would be appropriate. The next meeting will be Nov. 16th at 9:30AM at Campo Elementary. The committee very much wants input from the community. When finalized the design will be presented to the community for their comment at a Sponsor Group Meeting.