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MERIT  
Post Office Box 665  
Campo, CA 91906

Very important Sponsor Group meeting 7PM December 11<sup>th</sup> at John  
Lyons Pavilion Lake Morena Park

Larry Plaster/SVDP Presentation to update Community on Tom Dyke  
Ranch/ PromiseLand Ranch Plans

POSTAL PATRON  
CAMPO, CA 91906

## MERIT

Mountain Empire Resources Information Taskforce  
Post Office Box 665  
Campo, CA 91906-3106  
619-478-9549  
Newsletter #9 - 7 December 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 are always interested in talking with other members of the community about our concerns for Lake Morena and Campo. Our members include Terry Lynn Schmitt, a property owner since 1977 who works at Rancho del Campo and East County Lumber; Shelia and Duane Jamison, are residents since 1988 and Duane works for a local ranch; Dennis and Jennifer Harmon, are active in numerous community activities including coaching youth sports and Dennis is with the Border Patrol. You can also call MERIT at 478-9549 and leave a

message.

### **MORATORIUM - Yes or No**

MERIT is undecided on the question of a moratorium until GP2020 is adopted. No one wants a moratorium on all building. Some members are against any moratorium, some members are in favor of a moratorium on large scale projects that are not in character with our community, and some members are undecided. MERIT is taking a wait and see attitude. We listened with interest to Duncan McFetridge, SOFAR, who spoke at the last Sponsor Group meeting about a moratorium as part of his visiting all Planning Groups to discuss the subject. A moratorium with all possible extensions can only last for two years. Diane Conklin, who was instrumental in the vote of the Ramona Planning Group to ask the Board of Supervisors to adopt a moratorium on large scale projects, will speak at the December 11<sup>th</sup> Sponsor Group meeting. Mike Thometz has spoken in favor of a moratorium but that is his personal opinion and is not the opinion of MERIT.

### **AGENDA , MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS FOR CAMPO/LAKE MORENA SPONSOR GROUP**

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. State law requires planning be based on density and not on parcel size as has been done in San Diego. The County of San Diego must meet the State's requirements for a new plan and GP2020 is the County's process to satisfy the State's mandate density based planning. Most agree that many aspects of the current General Plan, almost 15 years old, put development ahead of resources. The General Plan does not accommodate the tremendous changes we have experienced in the last decade. More information is at <http://www.co.san-diego.ca.us/cnty/cntydepts/landuse/planning/GP2020>. Sponsor Group meetings will be on the second and the fourth Mondays of each month at the regular time of 7:00 PM. The meeting schedule for the next two months is:

December 11      January 8      January 22

Please note that there is no meeting on the fourth Monday in December since it falls on Christmas Day. The December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting will be held at the **Pavilion at Lake Morena Park** since the regular meeting place, Campo Community Center, will not be available.

The December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting will be one of the most important of the year because **elections** will be held to fill four of the positions. The terms of Roger Challberg, Mike Mikesell, Pat Heinig and Shirley Perkiss Driscoll expire. Mike Mikesell and Shirley Perkiss Driscoll have indicated a desire to serve again. Roger Challberg is undecided and Pat Heinig has elected not to serve again. In addition to Mikesell and Driscoll letters announcing an interest to serve the community as a member of the Sponsor Group have been received from Bill Slaff, Jan Foster, Randy Lenac, and J. C. Cook. The sitting members of the Sponsor Group select the nominees and the Sponsor Group selects the individuals to fill the vacant positions. Their list is then submitted to the Board of Supervisors which actually selects who will serve.

Of special interest at the December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting is a 30 minute presentation by **Larry Plaster, St. Vincent de Paul** and PromiseLand Ranch/Tom Dyke Ranch, who has asked to address the Sponsor Group. There will be time for questions after the presentation. This meeting will also have discussions on GP2020 regarding viewsheds and ridgeline protection. The Trails Committee will report on their recommendation for GP2020.

The preliminary agenda "Continued consideration of General Plan 2020...discussions of land use issues, especially the effect of proposed residential density categories on our community (related topics to include changes to road classifications, scenic roads or highways, future locations for parks and recreational facilities, policies dealing with drought, preservation of viewsheds and ridgelines, review of map designating commercial property, hiking and horseback riding trails) and a report of the GP2020 Steering Committee meeting of December 9th

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend Sponsor Group meetings. Important decisions are made and some of the decisions affect your property, minimum parcel size, your property rights, zoning, roads servicing the area, etc. A number of residents have appeared before the Sponsor Group and have modified the preliminary GP2020 recommendations on parcel size for their property. Campo/Lake Morena residents should be proud of their

Sponsor Group. Our Sponsor Group has involved the community and has had extensive discussions on the issues of GP2020. In many areas of the County residents are not informed about GP2020 and those desiring a change in the parcel sizes have had to go to San Diego and appear before the Planning Commission to request a change (an all day process) or hire an expensive consultant or lawyer. We are able to resolve concerns in the community.

### **ANNUAL SPAGHETTI DINNER AND HOLIDAY CARNIVAL**

This event will be especially fun for kids. There will be games and crafts and photo buttons. Admission will be one can of food which will be used to help fill our local holiday food baskets. The Carnival will be held in the Multi-Purpose Room at Campo Elementary School on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup> from 5PM to 7PM.. Park in front of the school and walk around to the back to gain access to the Multi-Purpose Room. MERIT hopes to see you there.

### **HOLIDAY CONCERT**

Fun and enjoyment for all can be found at the Holiday Concert organized by Tina Bloomquist, Mountain Empire Music Teacher. This concert will be a joint effort of the High School Band, the High School Choir, the Junior High Choir, and Elementary School Bands. The music starts at 7PM on Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at Mountain Empire High School.

### **COOKIE TRAIN with SANTA CLAUS**

Once the kids get started with the Holiday Spirit at the Holiday Carnival, how are you going to keep them going until December 25<sup>th</sup>? The answer is the Cookie Train with Santa Claus that arrives the following Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. The train will depart the Campo Station at 6:30PM and there will be entertainment by the High School Band starting at 6PM. Admission to the train is one bag, box or sack of cookies. You should dress warmly - it is winter. There will be refreshments on the train and there will be lots of singing of Christmas songs. The trip should be great fun and the train returns after a 90 minute ride. The ride is the Railroad Museum's thank you to the community.

### **PROPOSITION JJ and CAMPO FIRE AND RESCUE**

In a past newsletter we implored all to vote because the election was so close one vote per precinct could be the difference. All too true. Many who did not vote now wish they had. In Campo (excluding Lake Morena which has a different system) 65% of the 631 registered voters cast their ballots. The vote on Proposition JJ was a close as the US Presidential race. The ballot required a 2/3 majority and the final tally was 254 yes and 131 no. The measure fell short by 3 votes - if three voters had voted yes instead of no the measure would have passed. In the last election a similar issue fell short by 4 votes.

Campo Fire and Rescue receives less than \$19,000 per year of the property taxes by our community. This meager allocation by the County does not cover fuel costs and insurance. The fuel budget will be exhausted after only six months of the year. Without donations from Campo organizations (Homemakers donated over \$500) and concerned residents (MERIT members have donated over \$600), Fire and Rescue would not be able to respond to emergencies. More than 70% of their calls are **medical emergencies and accidents**, and lives are at risk when they respond. Now that winter is here, CDF has shut down and is not available to provide any coverage. Everyone is dependent on Campo Fire and Rescue. Their automatic aid agreement with the Rural Fire District means they respond to all calls in Potrero and Lake Morena in addition to Campo. They are the primary responder for a large part of the Mountain Empire.

MERIT urges you to consider sending \$25 or \$50 or \$65 to Campo Fire and Rescue (PO Box 55) to help them and ensure that they will be there when and if you need help.

We have been advised that Air Quality Management has directed CDF to severely limit burn permits this year. If you are planning to burn brush, you should check with CDF. Many people are upset with this restriction. Calls to CDF, letters to Dianne Jacob and calls and letters to Air Quality are in order if you want this changed.

### **LA POSTA RANCH**

We reported that La Posta Ranch had been red tagged by DPLU for violations. When grading work started at the site, Guy Munshower, County Code Enforcement Compliance Officer, visited the site in response to complaints. After a tour of the site, Mr. Munshower informed Lori Rimaldi that the work was in violation and that

the property would be cited. Two other neighbors, Nancy Slaff and Shelia Jamison, were informed by another individual in the department that the site would be red tagged. On the basis of those statements to three residents MERIT reported the incident. However, the enforcement officer failed to execute his statement. He never tagged the site. Mr. Munchower has also failed to return numerous calls asking for him to explain why he did not follow through.

### **PAT HEINIG**

Pat is leaving the Sponsor Group when her term expires in January. Pat has done an outstanding job as the Chairman. She has worked many hours each week reading reports and correspondence, writing letters, meeting with people in the Department of Planning and Land Use, attending meetings of numerous committees including the GP2020 Steering Committee, and talking with many members of the community about their interests and concerns. She is totally organized and is prepared for all the Sponsor Group meetings. She runs an excellent meeting. Our community has been blessed to have her at the helm and we will miss her greatly. We do not want her to go - but we all thank Pat for a splendid job.