

Campo/Lake Morena Calendar

July 19th Thu. **Friends of the Library** 9:30 AM Campo Elementary
July 26th Thu. **Southern Health Services Board Meeting** 8 AM Campo Community Center
July 30th Mon. **Lake Morena/Campo Sponsor Group** 7 PM - 9 PM Campo Community Center
Aug 1st Wed. **Lake Morena Village Council** 7PM Lake Morena Fire Station
Aug 2nd Thu. **Lake Morena Lower Village Water District** 7:15 PM Lake Morena Fire Station
Aug 5th Sun. **Lake Morena Upper Village Water District** 7 PM 29893 Canadian Honker Road
Aug 13th Mon. **Mountain Empire Collaborative** 2PM - 4PM Campo community Center
Aug 13th Mon. **Lake Morena Volunteer Fire Association** 7 PM Lake Morena Fire Station
Aug 13th Mon. **DPLU Community Plan Workshop, Lake Morena/Campo Sponsor Group** 7 PM - 9 PM Campo Community Center
Aug 16th Thu. **Friends of the Library** 9:30 AM Campo Elementary.
Aug 20th Mon. **Campo Fire & Rescue** 7:30 PM Campo Fire
Aug 27th Mon. **Lake Morena/Campo Sponsor Group** 7 PM - 9 PM Campo Community Center
Aug 30th Thu. **Southern Health Services Board Meeting** 8 AM Campo Community Center

MERIT Recycling Center Sunday 9:00 to 1:00, Monday 9:00 to 1:00

Campo Homemakers Thrift Shop Thursday 12:30 to 3:00 Saturday 10:00 to 2:00

Mountain Empire Historical Society Museum 11:00 to 5:00 Saturday and Sunday

Mountain Empire Kiwanis Thursday @ Old Oak Inn, 6:30 AM

VFW Steak Fry First Friday @ 5 PM and 3rd Sat @ 4 PM

Campo Seniors Meeting and Potluck Dinner 5 PM on the third Monday in the month, Pancake Breakfast 7 AM to 10 AM on the second and fourth Saturday in the month

Adult Computer Class Every Tuesday 2-5 Campo Community Center

Campo/Morena Village Library Library hours are Tue 9-noon, Wed 9-4, Thu 1-8, Fri 1-4, Sat 9-12.



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Campo, CA 91906

Change!! Change!! Change!!

Sponsor Group Meeting Monday July 30th at 7:00
PM Pavilion John Lyons Park in Lake Morena

POSTAL PATRON
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MERIT

Mountain Empire Resources Information Taskforce

Post Office Box 665

Campo, CA 91906-3106

619-478-9549

Newsletter #17 - 18 July 2001

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.”

Recycling Center Makes Initial Contributions

MERIT Recycling made its initial contributions to community organizations. \$100 was sent to Campo/Morena Village Library, \$100 to Campo Fire & Rescue, and \$100 to local youth activities. In addition, \$100 was given to MERIT for the cost of publishing the newsletter. The more residents recycle, the more can be contributed to the community. We hope you will visit the center soon and return often.

MERIT Recycling is open for donations every Sunday and Monday 9AM to 1PM. All revenues in excess of expenses are donated to the community including Campo Fire, Friends of the Library, various Mountain Empire youth activities and to MERIT to offset costs of publishing this newsletter. No money is paid for materials donated. MERIT members volunteer their time to work at the center. MERIT Recycling accepts: **Aluminum cans**, **glass containers** including both clean food containers and beverage containers, **newspaper**, **mixed paper** which includes junk mail, magazines, telephone books, **cardboard**, **PET plastic** bottles which are the ones used for Pepsi, Coke and similar soft drinks as well as bottled water and which have the recycling symbol on the bottom with a **1** inside the arrows, and **HDPE plastic** bottles which have a **2** inside the arrows and include items like milk containers, large bottled water containers and detergent containers. We sort out the materials for you so you can put the glass and plastic and aluminum cans together. Very simple and very easy. No line, no check in, no money to pay, E-Z in, E-Z out. Come see us and bring your recyclables.

Campo Hills

This project is still in escrow. The purchaser, Campo Estates, LLC, has a La Jolla address and Jennifer Hoberman is the agent. The purchaser applied to the County to “Assume Agreement to Improve Major Subdivision, Lien Contract and Holding Agreement (for Campo Hills)” and this was approved by the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, July 10th.

This development of 222 mobile homes/modular homes for seniors located at the north end of Sheridan Road will have a major impact on Campo. One of the conditions of the project is that the developer must upgrade and rebuild Sheridan Road which is the access to the project. Bringing Sheridan Road up to County standards will support the proposed Camp Lockett State Park, the Campo Community Center and the Senior Center.

Campo Fire & Rescue

Campo Fire met Tuesday June 17th and one scheduled item was a report from the nominating committee on nominees for the Board to be elected at the July meeting. Three Board members (Larry Plaster, Janette Mills and John Dissler, who recently moved from the area) completed their two year terms in July. The nominating committee had not been formed and there were no nominees. However, the Board accepted volunteers to join the committee and there will be nominees for the elections this month. The meeting and election of Directors was held Tuesday July 17th.

There is also good news that the Department made it to the end of their year (June 30th) without running out of money. Despite a substantial increase in calls answered compared to the previous year, judicious spending coupled with support from a number of citizens and very effective fund raising enabled the department to overcome the increases in fuel and electricity and end the year with a few dollars. The Board should be congratulated for an outstanding job of overseeing the operations of the department.

Chief Steve van Heertum resigned to accept a job in Borrego Springs. The new Chief is Mitchell Sanchez and he worked closely with Steve during the last few weeks so that the transition went very smoothly. We will all miss Steve because he did an excellent job and was instrumental in the continual improvement in the Fire Department's readiness and capabilities and their increased professionalism. The commitment to service and protection continues. Chief Sanchez is an officer with the California Highway Patrol in his other life.

Janette Mills reported the Fire Department's consideration of sites for location of a second facility in Campo had been finalized. CFR wanted a new location close to the junction of Highway 94 and Buckman Springs Road. This general area was selected because it was felt to be closer to the center of their call area which includes many calls outside the Campo Fire area. One large (10 or more acres) site on Highway 94 west of the rail road tracks and north of the Truck Museum was offered for a rent of \$1 per year. PromiseLand Ranch offered a second site further east on 94 and also offered to design a new station and to build the station at no cost to the Fire Department. The building would be leased to the County reportedly for \$1 per year and the County would lease the building to Campo Fire. Other locations in the vicinity of 94 and Buckman were investigated but were rejected because the land would have to be purchased and funds were not available to purchase.

Campo Fire decided early in the process that the PromiseLand site is the one they wanted. No serious negotiations were held with any other parties. Campo Fire convened a three member panel of outside fire experts to review the two sites and select one. The SVDP site was selected prior to the June 17th meeting. This does not mean that the County has approved a fire station at the SVDP site or that one will be built there. The proposed station will be submitted as part of the SVDP Major Use Permit for their entire project. The MUP and the Fire Station may or may not be approved and a final decision is still a couple of years away.

The August meeting will return to the regular schedule of the third Monday of the month and will be on August 20th.

Campo/Morena Village Library

The Summer Reading Program financed by Friends of the Library will continue through August 2nd and it is not too late to participate. The programs are each Thursday at 3PM and Friday at 2 PM. This Friday, July 20th, a Magician will be at the library at 2:00. On Friday July 27th at 2:00, there will be a puppet. On Thursday, Aug 2, at 3:00 there will be a party. There are crafts on Thursday July 19th and

July 26th at 3:00.

The Library is the source for information on community land use and planning issues. Copies of all materials sent to the Sponsor Group for discussion and action at the meetings are also sent to the Library. You are encouraged to visit and check out this reference source. In addition related documents such as the Ad Hoc Committee Statement on Community Character is at the Library and documents from the Back Country Revitalization Committee are in the Library. In some cases copies are available if you need one. You can also copy documents and the cost is 15 cents per page. MERIT has also made copies of the minutes of past Sponsor Group meetings available and each month the current minutes will be added. We are also working to develop a set of reference materials for GP2020.

Library volunteers have been working hard to raise money for furniture for the new Library. In addition to the \$120,000 for site preparation and permits, Supervisor Jacob gave the Library a gift of \$88,000. The Library will apply for Prop 14 money to actually build the library when the applications are available in March 2002. They still have to furnish the new Library out of funds raised by the Friends and they have about \$3,500. The very exciting news is that Sid and Jean Fox donated \$1,000 towards the furniture fund. We all want to express our gratitude to the Foxes for their generous support.

Library hours are Tue 9-noon, Wed 9-4, Thu 1-8, Fri 1-4, Sat 9-12.

Boy Scouts Explorer Post #8997 sponsored by Border Patrol

The community responded generously and all the Explorers who attended the week long Academy last month were sponsored for the entire cost of \$220 each for uniforms, equipment, food and supplies. The Explorers and the Border Patrol thank you for making the Academy a reality for a number of local youth.

Campo Transfer Station

What is today's rumor? All of you received the Kiwanis sponsored mailer. I urge all of you to send these cards to Allied and to Supervisor Jacob. Is this a prelude to closing the both transfer stations? Will the reduction in service be cancelled? Will recycling be eliminated at Campo? If recycling is eliminated, remember you can recycle everything and more at MERIT's recycling facility.

The last rumor we heard was that the hours were going to remain the same but the Campo facility was going to eliminate their recycling operation. Each and every one of you should express your feeling on this issue to Supervisor Dianne Jacob and to the Sponsor Group and the Back Country Revitalization Committee.

Campo/Lake Morena Sponsor Group Ad Hoc Committee on Community Character

The committee presented its report at the June 25th Sponsor Group meeting. Copies are available for your review at the Library. The Sponsor Group members planned to review the report and the report was be considered at a special Sponsor Group meeting on Monday July 16th. This meeting also was scheduled as the first of a series of community meetings with County Department of Planning and Land Use (DPLU) staff that will produce a Lake Morena/Campo Community Plan which will become part of the new General Plan. The Community Character statement will form the basis of the Community Plan. Additional Community Plan meetings will be held Monday August 13th and Monday September 10th. These meetings will be at Campo Community Center at 7PM and the entire community is invited to help us write the plan that will guide land use and growth and development during the next 20 years.

Community Calendar

As a regular part of our newsletter we will publish a calendar. This newsletter is always printed on the third Monday of the month. Any community meetings and activities that groups in the Lake Morena/Campo area wish to be publicized should be turned in to MERIT by the third Monday for the following month. Call 478-9549 to leave a message, mail information to PO Box 665 or email to thometz@sciti.com We will do our best to produce a complete and accurate calendar.

MERIT also publishes and regularly updates the Community Calendar on Mountain Empire Net. As soon as the information is submitted the calendar is updated. The Community Calendar can be accessed at www.mtnempire.net/Merit.html. On the Mountain Empire Net site click on Community Events, then on Campo and then on the MERIT logo. The current newsletter is published on line on Tuesday before the mail delivery and can be found at www.mtnempire.net/MeritLetter.html along with other MERIT information. **Sponsor**

Group Meeting June 25th

The Community Center was standing room only. Valerie Stallings was there but Father Carroll did not attend. Southern Health Services sent mailers to the community urging attendance and support of SVDP and SVDP sent out at least two mailers urging attendance. The daughter of a member of the audience who attends Mass in San Diego said Father Metzdorf had urged the parish to come and show their support. The audience thought there would be presentation of the final SVDP PromiseLand MUP. SVDP told people the MUP would be filed June 29th. SVDP did make a presentation of the latest version of their plan which contained a number of changes from the April 7th version. The audience was informed that submission of the MUP would again be delayed and that the plan would be split up into two MUPs, one for the northern parcel and one for the southern parcel. One possibility presented by SVDP was that they might develop only one portion of project which would be the southern parcel for the foster children. Even that half of the project is planned for development in phases. SVDP commented that if they develop the first phase (homes for 80 children) and then find out that they do not have enough water or have other problems, they would not go further. The community would be left with an unfinished project and who knows what impact that would have on all the "public service" buildings they say they are building on Highway 94. Only some of those "public service" buildings are in the first phase of the southern parcel. There is a distinct possibility as demonstrated by SVDP's uncertainty that all phases could be built that the promised public buildings might not be built. Brian Mooney told the audience that the MUP's would be filed in a couple of weeks and later said that they would be filed later in July. (As of Monday July 16th nothing had been filed and there had not been a request for a pre application hearing submitted to DPLU.) At the end of the meeting at almost 10PM (one hour later than the normal adjournment) the entire audience was stunned by Tom Dyke stepping forward and chastized Metzdorf and PromiseLand for using his property that provides access to Highway 94 without his permission and for their failure to meet with and consult with the neighbors.

MERIT plans to make a presentation to the community on the PromiseLand Ranch project after SVDP files their Major Use permits. We would like to see a plan and a project before we comment because every iteration of the plan changes substantially. We also think the community would like to see a final plan

and see some substance rather than beautiful concept drawings that are useful for a fund raising lunch in Rancho Santa Fe or La Jolla but which do not give you a detailed understanding of the project.

Sponsor Group Meeting July 23rd

There have been reports in the community that the next Sponsor Group meeting would be July 30th. The correct date for the meeting is July 23rd. The Agenda for this meeting is

What is the Truth and Who is Telling the Truth

Father Metzdorf started his presentation at the June 25th Sponsor Group with a long diatribe that studiously avoided names but was clearly directed at MERIT and essentially impugned our honesty and integrity. This is not the first time that SVDP has tried to discredit MERIT with incorrect or misguided comments. Metzdorf singled out this newsletter.

Let us examine the facts. Metzdorf referred to the last newsletter which had a lot of information about SVDP's problems in their Las Vegas operations. All of the information we presented was in the Las Vegas Review Journal in a series of articles written between February and June. Anyone can access these articles on line (www.lvrj.com and search under MASH Village). In addition, MERIT will be happy to provide anyone in the community with copies of the entire series of articles (call the MERIT phone and leave a message or email to thometz@sciti.com) and copies will be available at the Sponsor Group meeting.

The information was published because it directly bears on the PromiseLand Ranch project and raises serious and important questions about the ability of SVDP to carry out this project. SVDP has had five years to raise \$5 million in Las Vegas and has been unable to do so. They want to raise \$40 million here. Can they if they can not raise \$5 million? The lack of money forced them to close down a woman's shelter last year which was an integral part of their program. Will they be forced to close local operations (if they are ever approved and built)? SVDP has stated they have never built or operated a facility like PromiseLand and their program is still in a state of flux. When city officials and board members of their Las Vegas facility bring up serious questions about the management ability of SVDP based on how they operate in Las Vegas, are those not valid concerns for a much larger facility that is operating in an area of social service that is new to SVDP? Local San Diego radio shows have also brought forward this concern with the ever increasing budgets and buildings and yet so many not served. Everyone lauds the goals of SVDP and likes Father Carroll but there is a major concern about the ability to manage the very large sums of money. Will they be able to build the facilities they promise because now they are going to build all types of building that are supposed to serve the local residents. This will cost substantial additional money for plans and the buildings and the permits and the approvals and the maintenance and upkeep. So far no data has been presented on what it will cost SVDP to bribe the community to accept this project. However, every single dollar is taken away from what they say is their purpose - foster children. Those of you who have been at the meetings with SVDP from the start know that initially SVDP was not going to let any of the community use any of the facilities and they were not going to provide any public service facilities. Now they say they will do this. Is it because that is the only way they think the project might win community approval? Father Metzdorf can be insulted if he wants when these issues about management ability and money raising capabilities are presented to the community for their consideration. In fact, he should hear the doubts and concerns of the public and respond instead of slandering MERIT.

MASH Crash in Las Vegas - Father Carroll and SVDP encounter problems The Las Vegas Review Journal

recently ran a series of articles detailing problems SVDP and Carroll have had with their homeless shelter and with their "one-stop" service concept. SVDP has operated homeless shelters in Las Vegas for six years. They closed a 160 bed woman's shelter last year and appear to be ready to close the family shelter despite free land, \$5 million they received in 1995, and an annual operating subsidy of \$500,000 (all from Las Vegas and Clark County). SVDP has not been able to raise the \$5 million they promised in 1995 for new buildings. SVDP also told the City of Las Vegas they are taking up to \$1 million a year from their San Diego operations to fund the Las Vegas project. Carroll says, "I'm pouring money into MASH from San Diego I can't afford." One wonders what impact the transfer of San Diego funds and their inability to raise money will have on their proposed PromiseLand project.

These articles contain some pretty strong words coming out of Las Vegas and raise questions about SVDP and Carroll's management style and ability. The paper quotes Carroll "We made mistakes (*a phrase we here in Campo have heard often*) ... we were not as top notch as we thought we were." A former Board member complained "... (SVDP has) done a horrendous job of building community relations." The acrimony between Carroll and the city reached a level where the Mayor said "...they lied to me. I won't tolerate a lie." Carroll called the Mayor "...no man of honor." A priest on the MASH board who negotiated with the city on behalf of MASH characterized Carroll's behavior as "... arrogant and unacceptable ..." Of course the victims of this power struggle are the homeless of Las Vegas, who may find themselves back on the street after SVDP pulls out of LV leaving behind a shelter, medical clinic, crisis intervention center and winter shelter for men. Carroll "...ignored advice ..." and the self-described "hustler priest" said "... we recently inked a deal to develop a 600 acre ranch for troubled boys in Campo ..." These

statements should give you pause to consider . One statement quoted in the Las Vegas Review Journal repeats a theme we heard and it sends a warning signal "If you know anything about me, I do not like people telling me what to do." Carroll has said on the record that he does not want public monies because he wants to do it his way and does not want anyone telling him how to do things. Private money allows him to do whatever he wants to do. Is Campo going to be the next "management" mistake in Carroll's career.

PromiseLand Problems in San Diego

In addition to the problems in Las Vegas which may affect SVDP in San Diego, the Union Tribune reported a lost donation in the millions of dollars to PromiseLand Ranch. The Sunday June 3rd edition had a front page article on a lawsuit against General Dynamics involving \$101 million in damages that was overturned on appeal. The lawyer was going to give most of his multi-million dollar fee to SVDP. The story reports "Carroll planned to name part of the complex Monaghan Town. The project is likely to be delayed while his organization seeks money from other sources, Carroll said."

More bashing by outsiders - Fox News O'Reilly Factor Dismisses Campo/Lake Morena on National TV

In an effort to promote the proposed PromiseLand project, Joe Carroll of St. Vincent de Paul Management, Inc. appeared on the nationwide Fox News show "O'Reilly Factor" shown May 17th. In doing so Carroll and SVDP allowed Bill O'Reilly to literally trash the foster care program in San Diego County. In an obvious attempt to justify this multimillion dollar mega development, Joe Carroll cast a shadow on the reputations of caring and supportive foster families, many of them in the Mountain Empire area. There was no mention of the thousand of successful interventions where foster parents have opened their hearts and their homes to foster children. Instead, foster families were alluded to as child abusers and their homes were characterized as mere pastures where children would stay for a couple of weeks with no stability. It was no surprise that Saint Vincent de Paul did not mention the money they would receive for taking care of these same children. While a foster family receives a few hundred dollars a month to care for a child, SVDP has said they would receive on average \$3,000 per month to care for these same children.

Later in the program O'Reilly disenfranchised the entire Lake Morena/Campo community. Asked about resistance to the project Carroll said "Oh yes. I mean there are neighbors who think it is going to be too much for the neighborhood. It is a rather rural area. They are afraid we will bring too many people." O'Reilly's response was "**Nah, forget about them.**" Are the people of Lake Morena and Campo not important? How does one just forget about a community that is working to preserve and protect the environment and way of life that attracted us to the area. Of course maybe we should begin to expect this kind of attitude from outsiders, after all isn't that the same attitude the City of San Diego is taking as they drain the life out of Lake Morena?

Possibly because Father Carroll thought he had "inked a deal to develop (PromiseLand) a 600 acre ranch for troubled boys in Campo", when asked by O'Reilly about building the ranch, he indicated it was almost a sure thing. Carroll said "We are beginning the process going through the permit that you have to get - a Major Use Permit." O'Reilly "But you will get it, right?" Carroll "We're pretty sure. We're confident. You're never sure till the final vote is taken." O'Reilly "**Well, if you don't get it, let us know and we will do something about it.**" O'Reilly apparently has decided he will make decisions for the Campo/Lake Morena community, for the Sponsor Group, for DPLU and for the Board of Supervisors.

As a community service MERIT has purchased both the transcript and the video of this program. If you are interested in viewing the video and reading the transcript, please contact us. We also have the videos of the two recent Channel 4 Cox Cable programs - one on PromiseLand and one on Father Carroll - and we will provide these for your viewing. Call MERIT.

Discussion of Healthcare District June 23rd Important meeting

Dr. Dennis Wilcox, Grossmont HealthCare District Board of Directors, will discuss the Grossmont District which covers the Campo/Lake Morena area. The meeting is at the Campo Senior Building on Sheridan Road at 4:00 PM. Bring your questions and concerns regarding this very important subject which affects all of us in the East County. We know the Sharp/Grossmont merger of affected the residents of this Hospital district. Dr. Wilcox will discuss this problem. Southern Health Services is exploring the idea of withdrawing the area they cover from the Grossmont District and setting up a separate district. Would it be feasible for East County to have its own HealthCare District?

New Casino on the Campo Indian Reservation

There has been a lot of discussion recently about how there is a need for jobs in the community. However, most people do not see this need and many of the residents in this area moved here for exactly the opposite reason. We wanted to escape where all the jobs were, to escape the hustle and bustle and frenzied activity where there are lots of people and traffic. We wanted a place that was dark at night and wanted to live some place that was quiet and peaceful and full of nature and scenery. Now we will have a new Casino just a few minutes east of Campo on Interstate 8 that will open this summer. The Union Tribune reports employment will be 500. Will local residents be hired? Will area unemployment be eliminated? Will residents change from jobs in the City? Since this project was built ten times larger than originally proposed, what will be the impact on water and sewage and traffic in the area? Many residents are expressing concern about this very large project being dropped down in the Back Country and its impact on the way of life in this area and the growth inducing effects.

The first jobs applications were made available to members of local Indian Nations and to local residents. According to an employee at Viejas who lives locally and who applied to the Golden Acorn, more than 100 Viejas employees, who are already approved for work in a casino, have applied. Both local realtors and local residents are being contacted by people living in Potrero, Alpine, El Cajon and other cities near San Diego who want to move here if they get a job in the Casino. If the full 500 are hired and consideration is given to local residents and to members of local Indian Nations, unemployment in Campo and in the local Indian Nations should vanish.

