

Campo/Lake Morena Calendar

Sep 2nd Sun. **Lake Morena Upper Village Water District** 7 PM 29893 Canadian Honker Road
Sep 10th Mon. **Mountain Empire Collaborative** 2PM - 4PM Campo community Center
Sep 5th Wed. **Lake Morena Village Council** 7PM Lake Morena Fire Station
Sep 6th Thu. **Lake Morena Lower Village Water District** 7:15 PM Lake Morena Fire Station
Sep 10th Mon. **Lake Morena Volunteer Fire Association** 7 PM Lake Morena Fire Station
Sep 10th Mon. **DPLU Community Plan Workshop, Lake Morena/Campo Sponsor Group** 7 PM - 9 PM Pavilion - John Lyons Park
Sep 17th Mon. **Campo Fire & Rescue** 7:30 PM Campo Fire Station
Sep 20th Thu. **Friends of the Library** 9:30 AM Campo Elementary.
Sep 24th Mon. **Lake Morena/Campo Sponsor Group** 7 PM - 9 PM Pavilion - John Lyons Park
Sep 27th 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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MERIT
Post Office Box 665
Campo, CA 91906

Sponsor Group Meeting Monday August
27th at 7:00 PM Pavilion John Lyons Park
in Lake Morena ***** PromiseLand
Ranch MUP application still not filed.

POSTAL PATRON
CAMPO, CA 91906

MERIT

Mountain Empire Resources Information Taskforce

Post Office Box 665

Campo, CA 91906-3106

619-478-9549

Newsletter #18 - 23 August 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.”

MERIT's Pledge

Our pledge is what you read here in this newsletter is factual. We are not inventing anything. We report the information. Anyone in the community can get the same information. You may not like the information you receive or you may love it but you can know we work very hard to ensure the accuracy of what we report. We encourage you to ask questions if there is something that concerns you.

Full Health Care is Here in Campo

Just prior to the July 27th St. Vincent de Paul presentation to the Sponsor Group on PromiseLand we all received a Mountain Health flyer asking us if we were interested in having a full-time doctor and dentist. Well guess what, Campo and Lake Morena already have that. Perhaps one of the best kept secrets in the Mountain Empire District is Southern Indian Health Council's clinic in Campo located at 36190 Church Road. This clinic welcomes all members of the Mountain Empire community, serving both Indian and non-Indian residents. The clinic has a full time doctor, registered nurse, dentist, dental assistant and part-time dental hygienist. The clinic, funded with your tax dollars, accepts MediCal, private insurance and private pay. Not only is the health care great, the cost is very reasonable, often less than half of what you would expect to pay down the hill. Give them a try, their number is 478-2225. We think you will be pleasantly surprised.

The Eastern Empire Guardian

Many of you are probably aware of this new publication which is in its fifth issue. The publication comes out every Wednesday and is published by Billie Jo Shepherd, Campo resident and former Managing Editor of the Alpine Sun. You can not get the paper at the corner store - it is a Internet publication available at <http://www.billiejo.net> A lot of excellent information and reporting on what is happening in our area. The publication is updated between issues when there is an important subject. The Letters to the Editor section has some lively commentary. Many links to web sites that are useful to the community. We recommend that you check it out every week.

PromiseLand Ranch Major Use Permits

Jack Limber, Deputy General for the Metropolitan Transit Board, advised MERIT on August 17th that the license to cross the SD&AE tracks being negotiated by SVDP was still not finalized. This license, combined with a lease of the property on both sides of the tracks, would provide access from Highway 94 to the landlocked southern PromiseLand site. Until the license is finalized and approved by MTDB, SVDP can not legally access their property. In addition, MERIT was informed on August 10th that the partnership had not signed a lease with SVDP so that SVDP could cross the partnership's property flanking the tracks and that it was uncertain when and if the lease would be signed.

The long awaited Major Use Permit applications and accompanying Specific Plans that were to be submitted on July 27th by St. Vincent de Paul Management, Inc. were postponed and rescheduled for August 6th. That date was cancelled. At the August 13th Sponsor Group meeting Brian Mooney told the Chair that Father Carroll and Father Metzdorf were on vacation in New York and that the MUP's might be filed in a couple of weeks. SVDP's Bill Bolstad told the Eastern Empire Guardian last week that the applications were incomplete and there was no new target date for filing the applications.

MERIT asked SVDP to provide copies of the MUP applications and the Specific Plans to the Campo/Morena Village Library so that you would have a copy available for your review. SVDP refused to provide the copies. However, once the MUP is submitted MERIT will make a complete and unabridged copy and deliver it to the Library where it will be available for your review.

Campo/Lake Morena Sponsor Group Meeting 30 July 2001

This meeting was lengthy and ended at 10:20 PM. The first two hours were devoted to the discussion of the sand trucks on Buckman Springs Road and the operations at the Railroad Museum. A panel of experts had been convened by Randy Lenac with assistance from Supervisor Dianne Jacob. The panel included a CHP commercial officer, a representative from the Back Country Revitalization Committee, CalTrans staff, a local County Sheriff, County Department of Public Works (roads) staff, the owner of the company responsible for all of the hauling, and a representative from the Back Country Revitalization Committee subcommittee on Roads and Highways. Unfortunately the Railroad representative did not appear. The discussion was wide ranging. A lot of information was provided including the fact that the trucks can run as long as they want because Buckman Springs Road is a NAFTA designated road named in the NAFTA legislation. Buckman Springs was included in the NAFTA legislation because it connects a Port of Entry (Campo) with the nearest Interstate Highway. As such the trucks can operate on that route 24 hours a day. State law also gives them that right. Of course the surprise to all of us is that the Campo Port of Entry opened on March 2nd when the first trainload of sand arrived without the community being informed. There was no Environmental Impact Report and no public notice. Another interesting statement was that the railroad has the right by law to do anything they wanted along their right of way 24 hours a day 7 days a week; in other words they can load and unload sand anytime they want despite the noise and dust that affects all the neighbors.

While we learned a lot, the message was simple. They can operate whenever they want and they will continue to do so and there is nothing we can do except change the laws of California. While that is a daunting task, many did not accept that as an answer and are continuing to work on the problem. Letters are being written to Senator Boxer, Congressman Hunter and Supervisor Jacob.

It is ironic that one reason they operate such long hours out here is that they can only operate from 6:00 to 3:30 at many places in the City and County that are not NAFTA roads. So they work out here before the day starts in the City and then out here after the day ends in the City. When the suggestion was made to work out here from 8 to 3 so as to reduce the traffic when school children are on BSR and eliminate the noise that is keeping people awake in the early morning or late evening, the answer was no.

This operation was to last for two months and it has already been in operation six months. They said Campo was selected as a terminal because the tunnel that would take the sand train to SD was burned out. The tunnel clean up took longer than expected but it is open and there has been no change in their operations. Even if the sand trains go to San Diego the economics work out that it is cheaper to haul the sand to Campo and then on to any place east of Highway 67. If this is true they will be hauling sand from Campo for years to come since there is more than 15 square miles of sand deposits in Mexico and Mexico seems determined to be the low cost leader.

Mike Scott of Mike's Trucking, who controls all trucks hauling from Campo, gave his rules for truckers and also his phone number. He said "Call him anytime of the day or night if his drivers violate his rules." He has a No Tolerance policy - his way or the driver do not return. His 24 hour phone number is (619) 885-0088. His rules are: 1) No Jake brakes anywhere in Campo or on BSR, 2) No caravanning - all trucks must be at least 200 feet apart, 3) No speeding and all trucks must be going 55 or less, 4) No passing by trucks anywhere on Buckman Springs Road.

At the August 13th Sponsor Group meeting it was announced that the hours of operation would be changed to reduce the impact on local residents. Operations will start one hour later in the morning with the new schedule to commence at 5 AM.

Campo/Lake Morena Community Plan/Ad Hoc Committee on Community Character Meeting August 4th, 13th and 18th

The special Sponsor Group meeting on July 16th was devoted to a discussion of the Community Plan being prepared for our area as part of the GP 2020 update. DPLU staff was there to walk us through the process of how do a Community Plan and how to take our Community Character Statement and restructure it as the Community Plan. The Committee completed some initial formatting of the information into a broad outline of a plan.

The Committee met August 4th and August 18th at John Lyons Park from 9 to 12 and there was a second Sponsor Group meeting devoted to the Community Plan on August 13th again at John Lyons. All future meetings will be at John Lyons Park in the Pavilion with the next scheduled meeting for the Community Plan to be a Sponsor Group meeting on September 10th at 9 AM. The public is invited to all meetings working on the Community Plan.

County DPLU staff reported at the August 18th meeting that we are making wonderful progress and are far ahead of any other group in the County. This should give us time to review and fine tune the Community Plan so that it effectively states our will and desires for the future of our community.

Where is the Sponsor Group meeting?

Currently the Sponsor Group Chairman has switched all SG meetings to John Lyons Park in Lake Morena at the Pavilion. The switch results from failure to agree between the Sponsor Group and Southern Health Services, which operates the Campo Community Center under a lease with the County. The conflict arose when SHS decided to charge a fee for use of the building because of the greatly increased utilities costs. SHS did not bill the County saying it was the SG responsibility to prepare and submit a bill to the County. The Sponsor Group said that SHS had to prepare a bill. Neither did; no rent was paid; and eventually SHS said no more. The Sponsor Group eventually prepared a bill for the arrears and submitted it to the County. Now SHS says they are happy to have the SG meetings at the Center. The clean up problem was solved by Freedom Ranch. We need the SG Chairman and the SHS Chief to resolve the billing questions. Once that is accomplished, the community can decide where they would prefer to meet. This can be done at the next Sponsor Group meeting.

Campo Fire & Rescue

The July 17th meeting included an election of three new Directors. The Nominating Committee submitted the names of two incumbents, Larry Plaster and Janette Mills, and a third nominee, Mike Huffaker. Nominated from the floor were Debra Bohnstehn, Mike Tortora and Bill Slaff. The vote was Tortora 25, Slaff 24, Bohnstehn 22, Mills 18, Plaster 17 and Huffaker 14. The new Board elected Shannon Simental to a full term as President, Lynn Neff as Treasurer, Debra Bohnstehn as Secretary and Rick Shaplin as Vice President. Mitchell Sanchez was formally authorized as the new Fire Department Chief.

The Fire Department has done a excellent job during the past two years. During that time the Department has grown and has continually improved it skills and level of competence. The service to the community has improved dramatically and the Department is recognized as the best in the area. They answer calls 24/7 and many of their calls are outside the Campo Fire area and their call volume continues to grow. In 1999 CFR handled 187calls, in 2000 they handled 290 calls and during the first **seven** months of 2001 they have handled 200 calls.

You are encouraged to patronize their car wash fund raiser held the second and fourth Saturday of every month at the Fire Station.

Campo Hills

We have been unable to find out if this transaction has closed. When we learn more we will let you know and will contact the purchaser, Campo Estates, LLC, to obtain a statement of their plans.

Superior Ready Mix and Campo Valley

The only recent news is a report from a local rancher who talked to Mr. Kemp. The report is that Mr. Kemp told Superior's realtor he had absolutely no interest in discussing sale of his property, a large piece of land in the valley just west of the Superior property and north of Campo. We will stay involved with this potential development and advise you of what we hear.

CDF Station Rebuilding

We reported earlier that the old station which has been there many many years was going to be torn down and a new, larger improved station would be built on the site as part of a \$3 million project. The process has started and is supposed to be finished by the end of the year. The CDF staff and equipment has moved to the Cottonwood Station. This station is on Buckman Springs Road on the west side on the way to I-8. The number for the Cottonwood CDF station is 473-9834. However, all calls to the old Campo number 478-5516 are forwarded to Cottonwood. The new station will have more sleeping quarters and we all hope that might lead to year round staffing. This might also support an expanded controlled burn program which we all know is desperately needed here in the East County.

Campo Transfer Station

Apparently all your cards and letters had some effect on the issue of hours, prices and recycling. A flier being distributed at the transfer station says effective September 1st the price for a 32 gallon bag of trash would be raised to \$5, larger bags would be \$9 and you would be charged \$3 for each bag of recyclables. HOWEVER, never fear MERIT Recycling is here. If you recycle the broad range of materials we accept (see below) you not only will save a larger part of your trash bill but you will be helping the community and helping the environment. The transfer station hours will be Sunday and Monday 8 AM to 4 PM. We thank the operators for continuing Sunday and Monday operation. A reduction in days and hours would negatively impact most of us and would result in some people dumping trash in the wilderness rather than taking it to the dump.

MERIT Recycling

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, and 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. Our last donation was \$100 to Campo Fire, \$100 to Campo/Morena Library, and \$50 each to Mountain Empire Band and to Mountain Empire Track Team. 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.

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.

Campo/Morena Village Library

Summer Reading 2001 at the Campo-Morena Village library was great fun for children and adults alike with a special "Space Craft" every Thursday and Special Performers every Friday. A magician, The Amazing Dana, was truly "amazing" and all 29 visitors enjoyed his visit on July 20. The August 2nd party with lots of prizes and free books was a great success. A "BIG" thank you goes to the Friends of the Library who purchased t-shirts and alien dolls for the children and also paid for the magician and a very special storyteller to visit the library and entertain the children. A 4 pack of Padre tickets was won by the Monroe family and a 4 pack of tickets to Legoland was won by the Daubach family.

On another note the Board of Supervisors has approved allocation of \$100,000 to complete required steps and processes for a Prop 14 application for funds to build the Library. A new, larger library for the Campo/Lake Morena community will soon be a reality.

Campo Elementary School

Campo Elementary has a new principal. Phil Yoon comes to Campo with an excellent record of success as a principal in schools in the San Diego Unified School District. School starts August 29th and all parents are invited to stop at the office and meet the new principal.

Golden Acorn Opened August 15th

Everyone must know that the Casino opened on August 15th. News radio was reporting traffic delays on I-8 at the exit to the Casino. Initial reports from local residents indicate this new operation is having the problems that new organizations have in getting organized and operating efficiently. It seems like everyone knows someone or two or three who has been hired to work at the casino complex. This new business has brought many new residents into our community and they will still be hiring to staff the facilities that are not yet finished.

SVDP in Las Vegas

Previous newsletters reported on the serious problems SVDP and Father Carroll were having with their homeless operations in Las Vegas. These difficulties included inability to raise \$5 million over 5 years, the need to transfer up to \$1 million a year from San Diego to Las Vegas to support the operations, disputes with the City and the Mayor, questions about management abilities, and reduced services. In May and June there were threats on both sides to close the operation. However, Carroll worked out some of the problems and some Las Vegas businesses contributing money to keep operating. SVDP decided to keep the shelter open while working on a long range solution. However, one of the solutions proposed by SVDP was to take over the vacant historic downtown Post Office building for a homeless operation. This was not the City's plan or the Mayor's plan and this dispute has still not resolved and may not be for a number of months. While all this is happening in Las Vegas, we think you should know about management decisions and funds transfers that affect SVDP. These decisions can impact PromiseLand Ranch and, therefore, if PromiseLand is ever realized, can impact our community.

ATTENTION - Bargain Hunters

Mountain Empire Homemakers Thrift Shop will be hosting their famous "Bag Sale" on August 23rd, 25th, 30th and Sept. 1st.

Campo Branch of Cuyamaca Bank to Close November 7, 2001

A terse uninformative letter dated August 9th was sent to account owners at the Campo Branch of Cuyamaca Bank transferring their accounts to the Santee office and saying, "We look forward to serving your banking needs for years to come." This is a great disappointment for the many residents who supported the bank by opening and maintaining accounts here. This is certainly **NOT** serving our needs.