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MERIT
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**Star Ranch Open House Report
John Ray on the future of Campo
at the Planning Group on Monday
A Clear Choice for the Planning Group
ESRY SLAFF NOBLITT MORSE**

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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.”

Will this election be the most important election ever held in Campo? Is it a watershed event? Will this election chart the course for the future?

Most of the community believes the answer is yes. Regardless of your point of view on the issues most agree that the election will either protect and maintain Campo as the kind of place we like as it is or will generate subdivisions and increases in traffic and more development. It really is a choice between becoming another Alpine or remaining rural.

If the slow growth candidates for the Planning Group are replaced, Planning Group decisions that advised the County we want much lower density and fewer houses and less traffic and more secure water supplies will be revisited and will be reversed. A Planning Group with the HOPE slate in place will very likely vote to approve the 460 homes Star Ranch wants on their property including lots as small as 8400 square feet (5 homes per acre). That type of development can only be accommodated by construction of a sewer plant and a water district which will lead directly to much more construction and development beyond the Star Ranch boundaries. The County is very open about the impact of a sewer treatment plant as growth inducing. Star

Ranch would very likely be just the first of many developments.

MERIT does see this election as the most important our community will ever face. We think you will also and we encourage you to **vote for the ONLY candidates that can truly preserve and protect our community - Esry, Slaff, Noblitt and Morse.**

Quick Guide to Election Facts

Contrary to HOPE's allegations of no growth, Campo and Lake Morena have continued to grow for the past 15 years as measured by building permits, fees paid to the schools and post office deliveries. Growth continues at 3 % a year. The current Planning Group has approved that growth and would continue that pattern.

The current Planning Group is strongly supportive of property rights. During the Commercial and Industrial planning for GP 2020 they voted to preserve the existing commercial zoning of every landowner who wished to retain the designation.

The blue and gold signs are not slow growth and are not growth at a rural pace. Those signs are for the group who thinks Campo and Lake Morena was once a good place to live but now is a bad place with decaying houses and inadequate facilities and unhappy people who do not like what they have.

Esry, Slaff, Noblitt and Morse (the red white and blue VOTE signs) love our community and want to work to keep our rural life style and hold down traffic and demand on water and retain the quiet and peaceful and private existence that attracted most of us to move here.

HOPE has spent over \$10,000 on this election by September 30th and who knows how much more since then. The slow growth candidates have spent less than \$2,000 and that money was all theirs and unsolicited contributions from members of the community who want slow growth. They refused contributions from people and organizations outside the community. They will be obligated only to you.

SLAFF, ESRY and NOBLITT have fulfilled at every opportunity their promise made to you when you elected them in 2002. They are the people who made it possible for you to have the opportunity to vote for Planning Group members.

Your Community Character Statement details what our community wants. You can read it now. www.merit-campo.org/PDF%20Docs/LMC%20community%20character%20statement_final.pdf You can also go to www.MERIT-Campo.org and click on Community Character Statement.

MERIT brought the error about incorrect absentee ballots being sent to Campo residents to the attention of the Registrar of Voters and sent out notices to many in the community about this error. Correct ballots have now been mailed and received. If you received an incorrect ballot, destroy it.

MERIT is an organization dedicated to land use issues and protecting our environment. We do not normally support candidates or issues that are not related to land use. However, we do recommend for the Mountain Empire School Board Ralph Davis, Jim Banks, Rob Romero and Holly Stover.

A Very Simple Choice for Voters on November 7th

The choice is Bill Slaff, Bev Esry and Pat Noblitt based on their performance during the past four years. Denise Morse also deserves your vote based on her platform and experience.

Since 2002 the Planning Group you elected has worked to protect the special place that is Campo and Lake Morena. They have recommended denial of projects that would create urban style density, they have spent many hours to work out a plan for Cameron Corners, they have set up the first Groundwater Committee in the County to educate you and themselves so land use decisions will protect our Groundwater, they have developed a comprehensive Community Character Statement that guides the County and the Planning Group to make land use decisions that reflect what you want for our community, they have been instrumental in the County's undertaking an analysis of the groundwater situation and the County's preparation of a better Groundwater Ordinance, they have developed a Trails System for integration into the County's trails system.

All the work they have done and the actions they have taken are because that is what you wanted done and elected them to accomplish. Bev Esry, Pat Noblitt and Bill Slaff fulfilled their campaign promises. They have listened to what you have said in meetings and in personal conversations. They carried out what you told them was right for our community. They have honored their pledge for Growth at a Rural Pace. Some of you

know that as “slow growth” and that is what you want. That is what will protect the lifestyle you have chosen.

The Cameron Corners Committee had more than 30 members and 80% of the members favored a small area of development and some housing that would have minimal impact on the visual landscape that is Campo. Developers want to change that. Campo/Lake Morena is the only rural community with a defined Community Character Statement guiding land use decisions. Developers want to change that. Our Planning Group is probably the only Planning Group in Southern California with a Groundwater Committee.

On the basis of their record in representing you, Bill Slaff, Bev Esry and Pat Noblitt deserve to be elected. They have no special interests. They have no property to develop. They have no hidden economic interests or connections to anyone who does. They have served you because of their love for their community and their desire to bring about only positive change.

The HOPE candidates present a very different choice. A different choice for the future of Campo and Lake Morena. They have made the choice very clear. Lots of money to dazzle you with fancy signs and clever slogans. Words that do not tell you what they want to do. We can not fail to see the irony of the slow growth candidates (Esry Slaff Noblitt) carrying out their promises to work for **Growth** while those who want dramatic growth masquerade preserving and enhancing. MERIT asks you to consider what you have seen from both sides and make your choice - Growth at a Rural Pace or dramatic growth.

Alpine Past and Present featured in a San Diego READER article - Will they be writing a similar article about Campo in 2020?

The current San Diego Reader has a very interesting article on Alpine. Considering the parallels being drawn in this election between Alpine of old and Campo today and the future you would find the article very interesting. You can read the article online by accessing

<http://www.sdreader.com/php/cover.php?mode=article&showpg=1&id=20061019>

Some quotes from the article may give you a flavor of the story.

"The biggest population growth occurred between 1970 and 1990. This started after public water came to Alpine and Interstate 8 came through. I just saw a picture of the old fire station taken in the mid-1960s. There's a sign in the picture that gives Alpine's population as 2600. That was pre-water and pre-Interstate 8. We were connected to public water in 1962, and Interstate 8 came in 1969. Before that time, people had only well water to rely on."

"When we got to Alpine in 1988, the main difference was that there was less traffic. No traffic lights. The only stop sign in town was at Alpine Boulevard and Victoria Drive. There was one grocery store. Two small shopping centers. There were fewer houses. Even where we live now on Victoria Drive, the land around us has been filled with houses. I think the population was around 11,000 when we moved here, and it's 17,000 now."

"Even now when I tell people that I live in Alpine, their reaction always is, 'Oh, that's a nice place!' So we have this sense of wanting to keep it nice. Wanting to keep it small and not have the problems that people have elsewhere. I don't think we have quite the problems that other places have with gangs and drugs. It's just more of a cohesive mixture of people."

"What did Morrison see as the big problems facing Alpine in the next 20 years? 'Growth. Some people want to continue to build houses in an almost uncontrolled manner, and there are others who recognize the importance of growth but understand that it must be controlled. We want to keep the rural atmosphere. Controlled growth is possible, but there needs to be more cooperation between the slow-growth people and the developers.'"

"She relaxed when she started talking about how her family came to Alpine in 1983. 'It was so quiet. That's what we loved. Rural living. No traffic. It was totally country. You drove around and you saw cattle, chickens, horses. I'd been living in Clairemont but had lived in a number of areas in San Diego, Point Loma, the beach areas. We wanted quiet. I remember it took us several months to find a place. We didn't have an agent, and Alpine is the sort of place where you really do need an agent. It's not laid out on a grid. There are lots of hills and valleys. Lots of hidden-away areas. Little nooks and crannies.' 'I also remember that by 1996 or 1997, I had to keep the front door to the office closed. Fumes from cars driving down the boulevard starting wafting in, and the traffic noise was awful. That was when I definitely noticed that Alpine had changed.'"

"Sewage," she said. "Sewage is the issue. Only very few homes in Alpine actually are connected to a

sewage line. Out here, almost everyone has a septic tank. Over the years, state and county regulations have increased the amount of land you need in order to have a septic tank. It's something that people in cities don't really have to think about. But out here, sewage has played a big role in the community's development, and it's one of the reasons why Alpine will reach a limit to how big it can grow. It's not that septic tanks are difficult to maintain. Nowadays they're no problem at all."

Star Ranch holds an Open House on October 18th

There was an open house held by Star Ranch on short notice to talk about possible changes in their plans. The County's Department of Planning and Land Use told Star Ranch two months ago that the conceptual plan presented to the Planning Group and denied by the Planning Group also was not acceptable to DPLU . (Does that mean HOPE thinks DPLU is no growth?) So Star quickly prepared some new plans and presented these concepts at the open house. The plans were so new that Barry DeVorzon of Star Ranch, who came down from Santa Barbara for the event, said he had not even seen the new plans until the day of the meeting.

About 80 people came to the open house. Forty (40) were either associated with Star Ranch, with slow growth candidates or with HOPE.

Two new concepts were presented. These will be shown to the community again. Concept A was a reduction in the number of homes from 460 to 415 with higher density and smaller lots and an increase in the area left for ranching. This plan includes approximately 30 single story triplex or quadraplex attached home buildings. Those south of Highway 94 would be for senior citizens and those immediately north of 94 would be for new home owners. A sewer treatment plant (still not allowed under current County policies) and a water district would be needed. There would also be a number of homes built on the west side of 94 between Cameron Corners and the Old Stone Store.

Concept B was a plan that did not include a sewer district. That plan would also not include any commercial development at Cameron Corners although there would be five acre lots set aside that could be purchased by a developer or a business to build a commercial operation. This plan would have 260 homes all on two to three acre parcels and would occupy a greater area of the ranch (a bigger footprint) reducing the amount of land available for ranching by 400 acres.

It appears that Star Ranch is listening to the many concerns that have been raised by the County and the residents of Campo. However, they think that those of us who want a slow growth and want to retain the ambiance and community we have are wrong and have to change. There will be many more opportunities to review the various plans they are considering and to comment on them before they finalize their plans.

One interesting statement from Star was their estimate that it would cost them \$15,000 per house for a septic system and \$25,000 per house for building a sewer system, \$65 million for the entire infrastructure including undergrounding utilities, sewer and water lines, roads, lighting, paving, etc. and something like \$2.5 million per mile for each of the 15 miles of roads. Lots of money involved here.

Can you guess where MERIT stands in the election?

MERIT recommends the individuals who would do the most to preserve the rural character of our community, do the most to protect and preserve our groundwater, and who will protect and maintain our natural resources. SLAFF, ESRY, NOBLITT and MORSE will work to keep growth at a rural pace.

Campo-online Website carries community comments on our upcoming election

You might find the exchange of opinions posted on this website to be interesting. Go to <http://www.campo-online.com/v-web/bulletin/bb/viewtopic.php?t=292&start=0>

Camp Lockett Study and Historical Designation Public Workshop November 9th

The consultant working with the County to prepare a plan for Camp Lockett will hold a Public Workshop on November 9th starting at 6:30 PM at the Community Center. This is the second workshop for the public. The consultant will present their progress on developing the plan which is a conceptual model of facilities and uses for the Camp Lockett site. The consultant wants public comment and input. This report is to be followed by a final report to be completed by the end of 2006.

These meetings and the planning for Camp Lockett are extremely important. The future of Camp Lockett will have a major impact on our community. You will be impacted. It makes no difference if you support HOPE's vision of massive growth for the community and all the impacts that brings or if you support

Growth at Rural Pace that is the position of the current Planning Group and MERIT to bring slow growth to Campo, you will be impacted. Many residents on both sides of the growth issue are very supportive of the development of Camp Lockett as a park and historical site. Your input to the planning process is so very important if you want to see Camp Lockett become an asset to our community.

Plan Now for the Annual Campo Cookie Train and the North Pole Express Trains

Our Pacific Southwest Railway Museum is once again proud to share the museum and train rides with friends, neighbors and volunteers for the Christmas season. Please plan on joining the museum for the annual Campo Cookie Train on Saturday, December 30th. The train leaves the “under rehabilitation” historic Campo depot at 12:01PM. (A prize for those who know why the train doesn’t leave at noon). Why not come by earlier and allow us to show you the hard work done by the volunteers at the depot site and around the entire museum site. The Museum has made a lot of progress this year.

As usual, it will be first come, first served for tickets – which are available until they are gone any weekend from 9:00AM to 5:00PM at the Campo Depot from Robin. You will need to present identification with the zip code of 91906 and you are asked to limit your tickets to no more than four so train can accommodate all of their Campo neighbors. They also ask that everyone bring cookies, brownies, etc to share onboard the train. This tradition continues. Yes, the train will go rain, snow or shine.

Speaking of snow, the museum has teamed up again with the Mountain Empire High School and Brian Elmore, along with new corporate sponsors Golden Acorn Casino and Qualcomm to present their second annual North Pole Express evening trains. These trains run on Friday and Saturday starting November 24th through December 16th. Tickets are going extremely fast and some dates are already sold out. If you would like to join, go to <http://www.psrn.org> and click the link to North Pole Express. The museum uses an online ticketing service only for these tickets – they are not available at the Campo depot. Brian Elmore is currently looking for help with his North Pole Santa Village display as well as the ongoing rehabilitation of the Campo depot and the soon to start construction of our new public toilets.

The Pacific Southwest Railway Museum is hosting the Third Annual Pumpkin Express

The dates for this great event are Saturday October 21st, Sunday October 22nd, Saturday October 29th and Sunday October 30th.

Each youngster with a child-fare ticket will be allowed to pick out their favorite pumpkin from the Pumpkin Patch at the Campo Depot to take home with them. For all others, pumpkins will be available at \$2.50 each. A walking tour of the Museum is included with your train ride, of course!

The Pumpkin Express will leave the historic Campo Depot at 11:00 AM and 2:30 PM on each day. The regular excursion fares of \$15 for adults (13 & over), \$5 for kids (6 - 12), with 5 and younger being free, will apply. Reservations are not required, but please let the Great Pumpkin know that you will be visiting by sending a message to pumpkins@psrm.org. Pumpkins available while supplies last.

Official Historic Highway 80 Opening and Celebration Saturday October 21st

The State has recognized Historic Highway 80 and there is a celebration of this recognition and the Highway’s 80th birthday on Saturday October 21st. There will be events held throughout the day along the route from El Centro to San Diego. The schedule can be found at the San Diego East Visitors websites which are www.OldHighway80.com and www.visitsandiegoeast.com

Viejas Casino will be the a central location for a number of the events including an antique car show but there are all day events in Jacumba and a procession of old cars traveling the route west from Yuma. There will be stops in Holtville, El Centro, Jacumba and the Golden Acorn. Alpine has a big celebration planned. This should be a fun event and something we all can enjoy. Call the Visitors Bureau for additional information at 445-0180.

Planning Group Agenda (preliminary) for October 23, 2006 Meeting

Item (a) and (d) under Old Business and Item (a) under New Business will be taken out of order and heard at the beginning of the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- a. We have received a response from DPLU regarding our complaint to Dianne Jacobs on their lack of follow-up on MUPs.
- b. We have received correspondence from a neighbor of Freedom Ranch with clarification of the property owned by them. She wants this board to know she owns the property just south of Freedom Ranch and Freedom Ranch owns

- c. the property just south of her, therefore, surrounding her property on both the north and south sides. We have received the “official filing” from ROV for the nine candidates running for the four seats up for re-election of this board.
- d. The Pacific Southwest Railway Museum will be operating their annual Campo Cookie Train on Saturday, December 30th departing at 12:01pm. Tickets will be on a first come first served basis and are available any weekend from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Campo Depot from Robin until they are gone. Identification showing your zip as 91906 will be required and you are asked to limit the number of your tickets to four.

COMMITTEES/LIAISON REPORTS: Status update for each committee 2 minutes unless noted.

Camp Lockett Park (Chair – J. Bates)

County Trails – Shirley Driscoll

Disaster Preparedness Meeting – L. Johnson, Liaison

Comprehensive Ground Water Study - (Co-chairs L. Johnson & J. Carmody)

Wireless Communications – Bob Shea, Liaison

Transportation – Bob Shea, Liaison

Discussion and possible vote on suggesting Buckman Springs Road be designated a “safety corridor” - (20 min)

Jacumba Crossing – Bob Shea

Possible vote to combine this liaison position with that of Transportation liaison. (10 min)

OLD BUSINESS

- a. KB Homes Commercial Lot Replacement Map. This is for a 3,774 sq. foot 1 story commercial retail store to be built on Lot 63. Discussion and possible vote (15 min) This item will be heard out of order
- b. We have received a copy of DPLU’s letter to St. Vincent de Paul regarding A children’s Village. They have determined their responses to public comments on the draft EIR are not adequate pursuant to CEQA and County’s Environmental Impact Report Format and General Content Requirements’ and have requested additional information with an October 4, 2006 due date.
- c. Discussion and possible vote on revising Standing Rules to determine membership of Campo/Lake Morena Planning Group’s sub-committees. (20 min)
- d. A representative from SDG&E will give a brief presentation and update on the Sunrise Power Link. (Presentation and Q & A 20 min) Ashley Carter (858)636-3956
- e. County has notified us they are proposing to adopt a Negative Declaration on the 60foot high faux water-tank wireless facility (P04-019) located at 31906 Old Hwy 80 just west of Kitchen Creek. It can be reviewed at the Campo Library and all comments must be received no later than 4:00 pm on Oct. 31st. This project was approved by this board on May 25, 2004.

NEW BUSINESS

John Ray will give a 15 minute presentation on his plans for his property in Campo. This item will be heard out of order following Item (a) above

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING – November 27, 2005

If you want to maintain Campo and Lake Morena as a wonderful place to live If you want the County to manage growth and keep it at a very slow and gradual pace If you want to protect our water and our natural resources If you want to keep our rural character and our way of life If you do not want special interests

Vote for the Planning Group candidates who have demonstrated that is what they have done for you and what they will do for you

Vote for Bill Slaff Bev Esry Pat Noblitt Denise Morse