

EDITORIALS & LETTERS

The ECO Substation requires leadership to be built

Editor:

Our military and their families are making tremendous sacrifices every day to protect our freedom. Many have made the ultimate sacrifice and our Country is sacrificing its international prestige while at the same time supporting unfriendly tyrants motivated solely by the pursuit of more oil. Any reasonable measure to reduce our need for additional foreign oil should be pursued vigorously and without hesitation.

The construction of the ECO substation by SDG&E will reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and help San Diego and California lead the nation in clean energy. Therefore the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) should approve this project.

The substation project will help deliver clean "green" energy to our electricity grid by connecting renewable energy being developed in San Diego County's Mountain Empire and throughout our region. There is also hope that it

will create a few good jobs in our local communities that have been hit so hard by the recession. And it will help our region meet state and federal sustainable energy goals while at the same time allowing competitively priced power to enter the local grid. A more secure nation, local jobs, reliability and more affordable electricity are a win-win scenario for everyone.

The CPUC in the upcoming months will likely hear some dissent on this project from a few voices coming

from rural East County, but the commissioners are cautioned that these voices in no way represent the entire backcountry community.

Our region must stick to its long term energy plan if we are to continue to prosper, add vitally needed jobs and maintain our quality of life. That will take leadership locally, regionally and at the CPUC.

Randy Lenac
Campo

NEW EDITORIAL RULES: We do not allow personal insults, derogatory or racist remarks, or abusive, vulgar or obscene language. Please keep this in mind when writing letters to the editor.

We will not print any letter unless there is a verifiable, signed name. Please also list a phone number where you can be reached. All sources of contention will be fully researched by our staff, so please provide verifiable sources. Please see information below for our discussion board where most editorial restrictions do not apply.

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REAL promotes loop tour concept to bring customers to area businesses

SUBMITTED BY LARRY JOHNSON

The Highway 94 and Old Highway 80 loop between San Diego and the backcountry makes an attractive Sunday drive for families, vacationers and motoring clubs. This often-interesting parade of cars and motorcycles spends some of its time and money at local businesses. This is a great benefit and the Rural Economic Action League (REAL) would like to see area businesses benefit more by offering more people more reasons to "do the loop" more often.

That calls for promotion. That calls for a bright map of recreational and historic attractions and local businesses to post in hotels and visitor and civic centers. That calls for scenic and historic road designations on Highway 94 and Old Highway 80, complete with those cute little signs pointing to interesting trails and other local attractions. Old Highway 80 has already achieved the historic designation, but not the scenic one. Highway 94 has neither.

REAL is starting the process to get the appropriate road designations and historic markers, with the hope that the community will climb on board and help make this happen. Let's stop hiding our light under a bushel basket and give people a reason to keep

coming back.

REAL participation in CEDS process bears fruit for rural interests. The Imperial and San Diego counties' Comprehensive Economic Development Survey (CEDS) now contains a number of goals intended to benefit rural interests, thanks to the efforts of REAL.

In recent months, REAL has surveyed community members in Descanso, Pine Valley, Campo, Potrero, Boulevard and Jacumba, and hosted an informational presentation about the CEDS process and possible benefits to rural entrepreneurs. The group used this input to develop a list of suggestions, which were then submitted to CEDS writers with the strong request that they be incorporated into the survey, which will later be used as the basis for creation of a two-county economic development district.

Among the elements now included due to REAL's participation are infrastructure projects that support quality-of-life and visitor infrastructure, such as museums and parks, and planning and education support to help entrepreneurs to be more successful. See the full report at www.sandiegosouth.com.

The creation of an economic development district

increases opportunities for federal grants and other federal financing to help achieve the goals and policies contained in the CEDS.

REAL Conference with Supervisor Dianne Jacob REAL members Michael Sterns, Warren Larkin, Larry Johnson, Donna Tisdale, Carl Meyer, Billie Jo Jannen, Bill Slaff and Joseph Carmody visited District 2 Supervisor Dianne Jacob earlier this month to share the results of its surveys and participation in the CEDS process.

Among the topics discussed at the meeting were REAL's future roles in the new economic development district and in Jacob's Backcountry Revitalization Committee. The purpose of the revitalization committee is for residents from the various Mountain Empire communities to meet face-to-face with Supervisor Jacob and with each other to discuss ways that Jacob can assist with community needs and plans.

These might be anything from a block grant for playground improvements to furnishings for a fire station or community center. Recent projects include a youth/sports facility in Jacumba and the 4-way stop sign at Buckman Springs and Highway 94.

Among REAL's biggest concerns about the

committee is the limited participation of area residents in the economic planning element of the committee. Jacob said she also seeks more participation from backcountry communities. REAL intends to be a strong presence in the revitalization work and encourages other Mountain Empire residents to do the same. Learn more about revitalization efforts at www.sdcounty.ca.gov/sdhcd/organizations/revitalization.html.

All area residents are welcome to attend revitalization meetings, which provide a less formal way to meet and speak with the supervisor. The meetings are held at the Mountain Empire Community Center in Campo. The next Revitalization meeting is scheduled for Dec. 11, 2009. If you would like to be on our email list and receive committee and subcommittee reminders, please email us at REALBackcountry@yahoo.com or call REAL Chairman Larry Johnson at 478-5566.

Note: REAL members come from different communities throughout the Mountain Empire and are united in seeking an economic vision that helps to stabilize local property values and fosters successful businesses and sustainable community services.

Campo PTO and Elementary School in Disagreement

By TONY NEFF

The Messenger has been involved with listening to the two sides in a current dispute at the Campo Elementary School between the Administration and the PTO. In sit down interviews with Principle Diane Yopps and a group of PTO parents on separate occasions we have received much information. It appears the ownership of equipment and the name Campo Cougars are the center of the dispute.

We have received many emails and have had verbal conversations with concerned parents over who is at fault and what is the problem that began this war in the first place. I interviewed Superintendent Van Zant several days ago and he was aware of the problems at Campo Elementary. Mr. Van Zant assured me he would look into resolving the impasse at Campo Elementary.

I know in my heart everyone I have spoken with thinks the position they are taking is what the outcome should be. However to bring this distraction into focus, the time spent in this war of

words takes away from the true goal of helping the young minds of Campo Elementary go forward in their education. Parents and teachers along with school administration must focus on what is best for the educating of the children.

Each component of school; principle, parents, teachers, volunteer parents, and concerned citizens need to work together to bring the children a quality learning environment. In our small community we all know each other, some of us disagree politically, and some have thoughts about growth and land management that we all rarely agree upon. I know and respect each person to whom I have spoken about the "PTO TIFF" as it is known.

I wish to thank everyone who has sent me information about this situation, and after it is studied and a direction of recourse is found I will meet with Mr. Van Zant to recommend we all get together and discuss every aspect of this to everyone's satisfaction.

We will meet soon and what will be, will be.

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