

The
BASS LAKE BULLETIN

Vol. IV Issue 4

The Voice of the Bass Lake Community

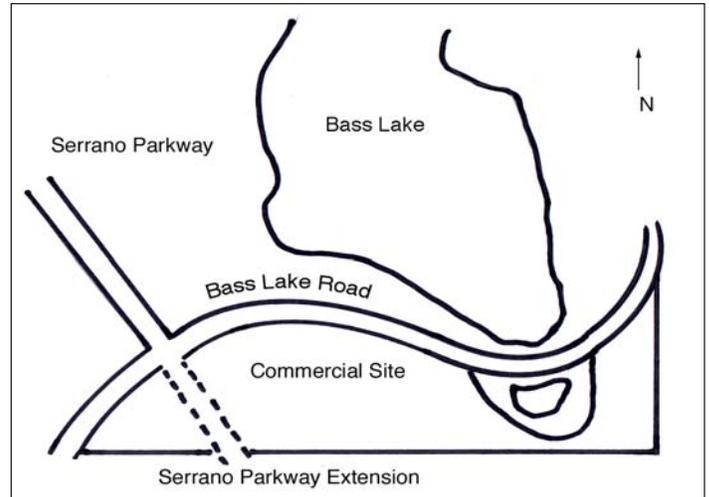
April 2006

www.basslakeaction.org

BASS LAKE TO GET SHOPPING CENTER



A view of the proposed shopping center site on the northeast corner of Bass Lake Road and Serrano Parkway



A map showing the commercial site on which the Bass Lake shopping center is proposed to be built

PARKER TO BUILD SHOPPING CENTER AT BASS LAKE ROAD AND SERRANO PARKWAY

Kirk Bone, director of government affairs for Serrano master developer Parker Development, has announced that Parker has begun developing plans for a shopping center on the east side of Bass Lake Road near its intersection with Serrano Parkway.

The area slated for development is a 45-acre portion of Village J that is designated in the El Dorado Hills Specific Plan as being set aside for commercial retail development.

Not all of the 45 acres are necessarily slated for commercial use, and some residential lots may be included in the design. Multifamily residences are specifically prohibited in this portion of Village J.

The Specific Plan provides that the 45 acres is intended to provide for a limited range of consumer goods and services. This area is to constitute the primary convenience

shopping center for the neighborhoods and the proposed developments east of Bass Lake Road. These uses are intended to meet most of the frequently recurring consumer needs of the area's residents.

The types of commercial uses will include, but are not necessarily limited to, a grocery store, a drug store, a variety store, beauty and barber shops, a restaurant or a coffee shop, and a cleaners.

The Specific Plan sets forth general commercial design guidelines for all commercial (retail) areas within the Plan. The commercial areas, through the use of landscaping and architecture, are intended to reflect the village concept and to be complementary to and in conformity with the community standards and the surrounding neighborhood. The Plan sets forth the following general guidelines:

First, the commercial area should not be defined by walls and solid fencing. Rather, commercial areas should be buffered from adjacent noncommercial land by landscaping, setbacks, drainage easements, open space easements, street, grade separations, or a combination of these features.

Second, site design should be accomplished in a manner that will integrate the commercial area with surrounding residential properties through the extensive use of landscaping, plazas, and buildings oriented away from streets.

Third, site development and landscaping shall provide for a variety of spaces and unique experiences for the resident and visitor. This can be accomplished through changes of elevation and use of courtyards breezeways, arbors, fountains, sculpture and dense landscaping.

Fourth, all loading and storage areas shall be screened from view and located at the rear of buildings. Screening can be accomplished by mounding, plantings, fences, wall, or a combination of these elements.

Fifth, loading docks and delivery points shall be located away from major vehicular and pedestrian circulation areas, as well as residences and meeting places utilized by the general public.

Other general commercial policies include the encouragement of natural materials such as wood and stone, the incorporation of na-

(continued next page)

SHOPPING CENTER *(continued)*

tive trees and shrubs in the landscape, and the size, color, and material of identification signs shall be consistent with the architectural theme of the village and commercial area.

In addition to the general guidelines, the Specific Plan provides a specific policy for the commercial development at the Bass Lake site. The policy calls for site designs and architectural styles that are harmonious with the natural character of the area and adjacent villages. Buffers between commercial areas and adjacent land uses are to be provided by walls and solid fencing, where appropriate, and should also incorporate the use of landscaping, setbacks, and street and utility easement locations. The policy also calls for fully integrated internal traffic circulation, parking and road encroachments.

The Specific Plan also provides that any developer of a shopping center built next to a residential development will be required to have an acoustical (sound) analysis done by a qualified acoustical consultant. The analysis will indicate building placement, truck loading, and delivery areas, that will be submitted as part of the building permitting process.

Bass Lake Action Committee is looking forward to working with Parker Development to ensure that the proposed shopping center will be a desirable amenity for the residents of Bass Lake. ~



THE DATE OF EASTER

Easter is an annual festival observed throughout the Christian world. According to the U.S. Naval observatory, the date for Easter shifts every year within the Gregorian Calendar. The Gregorian Calendar is the standard international calendar for civil use. In addition, it regulates the ceremonial cycle of the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches. The current Gregorian ecclesiastical rules that determine the date of Easter trace back to 325 AD at the First

Council of Nicaea convened by the Roman Emperor Constantine. At that time the Roman world used the Julian Calendar (put in place by Julius Caesar).

The Council decided to keep Easter on a Sunday, the same Sunday throughout the world. To fix incontrovertibly the date for Easter, and to make it determinable indefinitely in advance, the Council constructed special tables to compute the date. These tables were revised in the following few centuries resulting eventually in the tables constructed by the 6th century Abbot of Scythia, Dionysius Exiguus. Nonetheless, different means of calculations continued in use throughout the Christian world.

In 1582 Gregory XIII (Pope of the Roman Catholic Church) completed a reconstruction of the Julian calendar and produced new Easter tables. One major difference between the Julian and Gregorian Calendar is the "leap year rule." Universal adoption of this Gregorian calendar occurred slowly. By the 1700's, though, most of western Europe had adopted the Gregorian Calendar. The Eastern Christian churches still determine the Easter dates using the older Julian Calendar method.

The usual statement, that Easter Day is the first Sunday after the full moon that occurs next after the vernal equinox, is not a precise statement of the actual ecclesiastical rules. The full moon involved is not the astronomical Full Moon but an ecclesiastical moon (determined from tables) that keeps, more or less, in step with the astronomical Moon.

The ecclesiastical rules are that Easter falls on the first Sunday following the first ecclesiastical full moon that occurs on or after the day of the vernal equinox; this particular ecclesiastical full moon is the 14th day of a tabular lunation (new moon); and the vernal equinox is fixed as March 21. The result is that Easter can never occur before March 22 or later than April 25. The Gregorian dates for the ecclesiastical full moon come from the Gregorian tables. Therefore, the civil date of Easter depends upon which tables - Gregorian or pre-Gregorian - are used. The western (Roman Catholic and Protestant) Christian churches use the Gregorian tables; many eastern (Orthodox) Christian churches use the older tables based on the Julian Calendar.

In a congress held in 1923, the eastern churches adopted a modified Gregorian Calendar and decided to set the date of Easter according to the astronomical Full Moon

for the meridian of Jerusalem. However, a variety of practices remain among the eastern churches.

There are three major differences between the ecclesiastical system and the astronomical system. First, the times of the ecclesiastical full moons are not necessarily identical to the times of astronomical Full Moons. The ecclesiastical tables did not account for the full complexity of the lunar motion. Second, the vernal equinox has a precise astronomical definition determined by the actual apparent motion of the Sun as seen from the Earth. It is the precise time at which the apparent ecliptic longitude of the Sun is zero. (Yes, the Sun's ecliptic longitude, not its declination, is used for the astronomical definition.) This precise time shifts within the civil calendar very slightly from year to year. In the ecclesiastical system the vernal equinox does not shift; it is fixed at March 21 regardless of the actual motion of the Sun. Third, the date of Easter is a specific calendar date. Easter starts when that date starts for your local time zone. The vernal equinox occurs at a specific date and time all over the Earth at once.

Inevitably, then, the date of Easter occasionally differs from a date that depends on the astronomical Full Moon and vernal equinox. In some cases this difference may occur in some parts of the world and not in others because two dates separated by the International Date Line are always simultaneously in progress on the Earth. ~

"Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have."

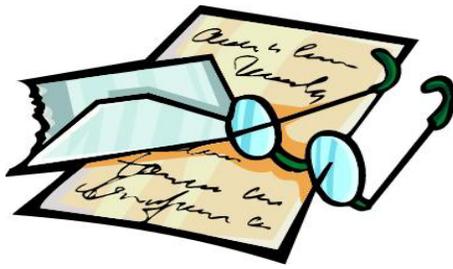
— Margaret Mead



Proposition 59



Government open to the people



THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello Everyone,

Fran and I were in Seattle the last week of March, and when we got home it was as if we were still in Seattle. Rain, rain, rain. Actually, we had a good time in Seattle, but it was good to get home to the Sierra foothills.

Speaking of rain, I have been getting a hail of emails (pardon the pun) from you folks about the new shopping center going in at Bass Lake. Many of you are upset about it. Most of you say that you didn't move here to live next to a shopping center. Neither did Fran and I.

Though your distress is understandable, and I sympathize with you, the property in question has been designated commercial land in the El Dorado Hills Specific Plan since 1987. Remember, the county decides how all land is used in El Dorado Hills. Cities are the only other form of local government that can decide how land will be used. The voters of El Dorado Hills turned down cityhood and the ability to control local land use last year.

We only vote for one of the five county supervisors (OK, maybe two out of five if you count Helen Baumann), so the majority of the supervisors have no interest in what goes on in El Dorado Hills (other than us being a cash cow for the county). Perhaps that's why they agreed that we should have a shopping center next door.

The BLAC board has been aware for a long time that the land was commercial and that some day a shopping center would go in there. As the construction of new houses marched towards Bass Lake over the last year, it became obvious that the day was fast approaching. That day has arrived.

We at BLAC do our best to try make sure that what goes in at Bass Lake has the least negative impact on our community. The development process,

and the steps that must be taken under state law, must be followed. We know that process. Three big development projects are in the works that will affect all of us in Bass Lake: the county park, the new school, and now the shopping center.

Our position is that any new project must not negatively impact our Bass Lake community. The three biggest impacts from any development are traffic, lights and noise. We communicate our concerns to the people proposing the new facilities. We say, "Traffic, lights, and noise must be minimized."

That's why we meet with the El Dorado County Supervisors and the County Park Commission. That's why we meet with the Rescue School Board and the Superintendent of Schools. That's why we meet with Kirk Bone and the folks at Parker Development. That's why we have engaged a land use attorney for advice. We at Bass Lake need to have our concerns addressed. No one else seems to be up to the task, so we do it.

But we can't do it alone. The old adage says, "The best thing politicians do is count noses." That is, they count our votes. The first thing that they want to know about any proposal is, "How many voters want this, and how many are against it?"

Are you for more traffic, lights and noise at Bass Lake? Or would you rather see less of those impacts on our quality of life?

Bass Lake Action Committee is working on minimizing these negative impacts, but we need your help. If you live in the Bass Lake Community and are not yet a member of BLAC, sign up now. Help us make Bass Lake a better community.

John E. Thomson

President
Bass Lake Action Committee



ASBESTOS DEBATE CONTINUES UNABATED

Last month the debate surrounding the threat of naturally occurring asbestos in El Dorado County took on a sense of déjà vu as County School Supervisor Vickie Barber and the school board's attorney Bill Wright launched attacks on those advocating asbestos remediation in the foothills of El Dorado County.

For those not familiar with the term, "déjà vu" is French and means, literally, "already seen." Those who have experienced the feeling describe it as an overwhelming sense of familiarity with something that shouldn't be familiar at all. It's when you have the feeling that you've already experienced something.

The sense of déjà vu is brought on because several years ago the Environmental Protection Agency found dangerous amounts of lethal microscopic fibers in the town of Libby, Montana. Those fibers were generated by a vermiculite mine owned by the Grace Company and had the same effect as deadly asbestos fibers. EPA scientists linked the fibers with numerous deaths that had occurred in Libby. At first Grace said that they were concerned about the residents and promised to fix things. However, faced with the costs of a cleanup, Grace went on the offensive. According to the authors of *An Air That Kills*, a book written about the Libby affair, Grace's lawyers promptly deluged the EPA headquarters with letters that argued that because the vermiculite fibers were not included in the legal definition of asbestos fibers that were at the time recognized as dangerous in the then current EPA regulations, the EPA could not regulate those fibers as "asbestos."

Then the firm of R.J. Lee, who ran a large analytical laboratory near Pittsburg, and who did a lot of work for Grace and the rest of the asbestos industry, sent the EPA what would be the first of many letters insisting that what the EPA's analysis called asbestos fibers found at Libby were "in fact cleavage fragments or bundles of fibers," and not really dangerous asbestos at all. A war of "experts" was soon ongoing, with Grace's defense methods eerily reminiscent of Big Tobacco's scientific claims that smoking was harmless to your health.

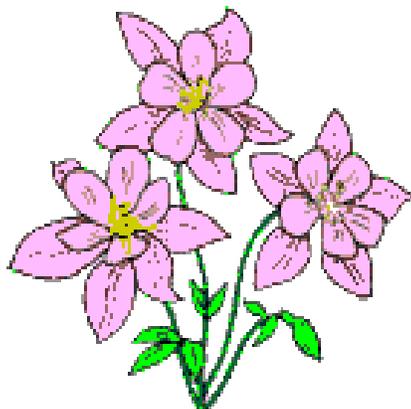
The EPA and the other federal agencies stuck to their guns, and in the end the U.S. Department of Justice launched an investigation to determine if the Grace company had conspired to release asbestos and to hide

health problems at its asbestos-contaminated vermiculite mine in Libby, Montana.

In 2005, a federal grand jury handed down an indictment against the Grace Company and seven top executives, saying that they conspired to release asbestos and to hide health problems at its asbestos-contaminated vermiculite mine in Libby, Montana (U.S. v. W.R. Grace & Co., U.S. Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit, #03-35924). The grand jury indictment accused the company of exposing its employees to asbestos, failing to disclose air monitoring results, interfering with an investigation by the EPA, and giving away asbestos-containing materials to schools and local residents. Charges included clean-air act violations and wire fraud as well as conspiracy.

Now let's look at the situation in El Dorado Hills. The EPA finds dangerous fibers in the schoolyards. The school board promises to fix things. Then faced with a costly cleanup, County School Superintendent Vicki Barber goes on the offensive. The services of local attorney Bill Wright are used to write complaining letters to government officials, and the firm of R.J. Lee is hired to do a study that attempts to refute the scientific findings of the EPA. Vicki Barber travels to Washington to pass out R.J. Lee's study and to urge officials to quash the EPA's investigation in El Dorado Hills based on Lee's discredited "fragments" and "bundles" theory. Leave it to the French for a saying: "The more things change, the more things stay the same."

A lot is at stake in the asbestos battle in El Dorado Hills. A lot of money for cleanup, that's for sure. Maybe a lot more in liability if and when folks get sick from asbestos. But the big stake is the health of the school children. Perhaps the threat is not as great as some would believe. Maybe it's worse. But we need to know. Denial is not an option. We must determine the real truth. ~



MEDICAL PROS TOP COUNTY PAY LIST

A recent survey by the Sacramento Business Journal shows that Mental Health Medical Director Tien Tran and Psychiatrist Robert Price are the highest paid El Dorado County employees, whose salary ranges start at \$157,664 and \$143,333 a year respectively. The survey only reports high and low salary ranges, but gives an indication of what the top county officials are making. Using a rule of thumb that estimates employee benefits as being about 30% of a person's base pay, that puts their total compensation packages at about \$205,000 and \$186,000, respectively. There is no way to determine if these offices are entitled to expense accounts, but it would seem reasonable to assume that they have that privilege.

Going down the list using just the lower range of base salaries (excluding benefits), District Attorney Gary Lacy makes at least \$142,430, County CAO Laura Gill at least \$132,454, and County Counsel Lou Green at least \$125,000.

Sheriff Jeff Neves reportedly makes \$138,715 plus benefits, and County Auditor Joe Harn takes home \$136,843 plus benefits.

The survey includes only the top 25 earners, and the list does not include the county supervisors, who before their last pay raise made about \$60,000 a year plus expenses. ~

JOIN BASS LAKE ACTION COMMITTEE

Residents of Bass Lake are encouraged to support BLAC by becoming a member. Membership is generally open to any homeowner in the villages of Bridlewood Canyon, Hills of El Dorado, Sierra Crossing, Woodridge, or anyone who lives along Bass

Lake Road. Membership dues are \$10 per year.

Membership applications are available by contacting John Thomson or Kathy Prevost, whose email addresses are nearby. You can also just send your check, along with your name, address, phone number and email address, to Tasha Boutselis, our Treasurer, 2076 Summer Drive, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762.

Contributions are also gratefully accepted. BLAC is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit corporation, therefore dues and contributions paid to BLAC are not deductible for income tax purposes. ~

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