



NYGAARD GIVES BASS LAKE ROAD UPDATE

In June, Russ Nygaard, El Dorado County Department of Transportation (DOT) Deputy Director, El Dorado Hills Engineering, spoke at the BLAC board meeting and outlined the status of the various road projects that affect Bass Lake Road and the surrounding area.

By way of background, Russ said that the General Plan provides for significant capital improvements over the next several years. The Foothills Division Engineering group oversees three types of projects: (1) County-driven capital improvement projects, for which Russ has full responsibility for design and construction; (2) Developer-driven capital improvement, for which the developer improves the roads needed per the General Plan. The developer prepares the plans and specs, and then DOT performs oversight and takes over to do the construction rather than the developer; (3) The Highway 50 Corridor, for which Russ's department will construct improvements to all interchanges from the County Line to Ponderosa Road, all of which will have major work done on them.

In his presentation to meeting attendees, Russ covered development plans for Bass Lake Road (including Silver Springs Parkway), the portion of Bass Lake Road from Hollow Oak Road to Highway 50, and the portion of Bass Lake Road that crosses Bass Lake. He also touched on plans for moving Country Club Drive and connecting it with Silva Valley Parkway, and responded

to member concerns about traffic issues. According to Russ, all the road development over the next several years on Bass Lake Road is planned to provide for two lanes (one each way) with a center median strip. However, the right of way will be graded for four lanes so additional lanes can be put in when the traffic load warrants it, probably by 2015 or so.

With respect to Silver Springs Parkway, several months ago Jim Ware, then DOT Supervisor for Development Services, Russ Nygaard, other DOT representatives, and the Silver Springs developers met with BLAC representatives at the Bass Lake Road Fire House to discuss plans for Silver Springs Parkway and a southern connector to Bass Lake Road. Russ said that since that meeting, Jim Ware has been promoted to Deputy Director of Transportation Planning, and Russ has been promoted to Deputy Director of Engineering. To establish a Department of Transportation presence in El Dorado Hills, Russ's engineering office has been relocated to the EDH Business Park. He is in temporary offices pending renovation to an adjacent building, and then a portion of the Construction office will also be moved down to El Dorado Hills from Placerville

On the north end of Bass Lake Road, the Silver Springs developers filed development plans for the Silver Springs Development on June 2, and Unit 1 of the Silver Springs development was approved. The plans have conditions attached that require the

construction of Silver Springs Parkway, and improvements to portions of Green Valley Road and the Green Valley Road-Deer Valley Road intersection. Since easements for the connector from Silver Springs Parkway to Madera have not yet been obtained, that section was not included in the filing or approved. The Silver Springs developers do want to put in that extension, however; and Russ expects to see plans for that portion of the connector within a month.



The developers will build the residential roads within Silver Springs, and DOT staff will inspect the work. The Silver Springs Parkway road construction will be done by DOT. Completion of the Parkway may be this year if the weather is good, but if not, the road will be completed next spring.

On the northern stretch of Bass Lake Road, developers will be responsible for improving Bass Lake Road except for the part that crosses Bass Lake and the portion in front of Bridlewood Canyon and Woodridge. If the proposed school, or regional park, or Serrano commercial area move forward, Russ believes that improvement of the road in that area could become a condition of such development. In response to a question, Russ said that the Silver Springs and Bass Lake Road intersection would have a traffic light. He expects the overall Bass Lake Road improvements to be completed by 2010.

On the south end of Bass Lake Road,



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ROADS *(continued)*

construction on widening and improving the portion of Bass Lake Road from Hollow Oak Road to Highway 50 is expected to start later this summer. The completed road will look similar to the realigned portion.

Work has also begun on the interchange at Silva Valley Parkway and Highway 50. Environmental and design efforts continue in order to update the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and the Project Report that was prepared and approved in 1991. Design work will continue concurrently with the environmental effort to expedite construction. Initial phases to prepare local roads for connections to the interchange will begin construction in 2006. The interchange construction is targeted for the spring of 2008.

Country Club Drive will be relocated northward and will eventually connect with Old Bass Lake Road, which will be rebuilt and eventually connect to Silva Valley Parkway. This project will take two years to complete, and probably won't begin until 2008.

Russ's goal is to plan ahead and do the job right. Typically developers will try to get by with the minimum standards. So far the County is backing Russ in requiring what he considers the appropriate standards for updating the roads. Members said they would like to have Russ come back every several months to discuss updates to these various projects. Russ said that he would be happy to do so. He also suggested inviting Jim Ware, in addition to himself, to add further detail to the planning efforts in the County. ~

**THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER**

Hello All,

The first day of summer, which fell on June 22 for us in the northern hemisphere, was also our longest day of the year. Astronomers tell us that the longest day is caused by the position of the earth relative to the sun. Without going into all the technical detail, I certainly found it nice to sit out on the patio and enjoy the long evening and late sunset on that longest day.

Another astronomical phenomenon will occur in July, the advent of what are known as the "dog days of summer." We all know that this term refers to the hottest and muggiest part of the summer season, but where does the term come from? Why do we call the hot, sultry days of summer the "dog days?"

Well, in ancient times, when the night sky was not obscured by artificial lights and smog, different groups of peoples in different parts of the world drew images in the sky by "connecting the dots" of stars. The images drawn were dependent upon the culture: The Chinese saw different images than the Native Americans, who saw different pictures than the Europeans. These star pictures are now called constellations, and the constellations that are now mapped out in the sky come from our European ancestors.

They saw images of bears, (Ursa Major and Ursa Minor), twins, (Gemini), a bull, (Taurus), and others, including dogs, (Canis Major and Canis Minor). Canis Major and Canis minor are the legendary hunting dogs of Orion the Hunter, another major star constellation. Remember that the Latin word for dog is "canis," which in English evolved to "canine."

The brightest of the stars in Canis Major (the big dog) is Sirius, which also happens to be the brightest star in the night sky. In fact, it is so bright that the ancient Romans

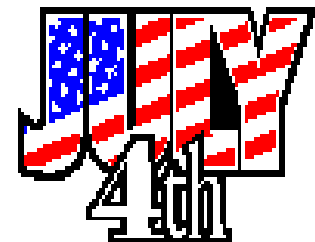
thought that the earth received heat from it. Look for it in the southern sky (viewed from our northern latitudes) during January.

In the summer, however, Sirius, the "dog star," rises and sets with the sun. During late July Sirius is in conjunction with the sun, and the ancients believed that its heat added to the heat of the sun, creating a stretch of hot and sultry weather. They named this period of time, from 20 days before the conjunction to 20 days after, "dog days" after the dog star.

The conjunction of Sirius with the sun varies somewhat with latitude. And the "precession of the equinoxes" (a gradual drifting of the constellations over time) means that the constellations today are not in exactly the same place in the sky as they were in ancient Rome. Today, the dog days occur during the period between July 3 and August 11. Although it is certainly the warmest period of the summer, the heat is not due to the added radiation from a far-away star, regardless of its brightness. No, the heat of summer is a direct result of the earth's tilt.

That said, break out the lemonade and stay in the shade. And save the memory of these hot "dog days" for when we shiver in the cold next winter.

John E. Thomson
President



Independence Day, July 4th, is one of the most important holidays in the United States. It celebrates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence by the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. The day has always been the occasion for parades and patriotic speeches and for every variety of noisy celebration.

GOD BLESS AMERICA



RANCHO CORDOVA POISED TO EXPAND

Most of us know Rancho Cordova as a sleepy little town along Highway 50 nestled between Mather Field and the American River. Incorporated only recently, in 2003, the city has not seen any substantial residential building for 15 years or so. But this sleepy little town is poised to grow from its present 50,000 residents to about 350,000 residents.

New construction is in planning or in progress in the city's vast southeast half, an undeveloped area characterized by mounds of rock tailings left over from gold dredging operations many years ago. The new land being developed is generally bounded by Sunrise Boulevard, Jackson Highway, Grant Line Road, and White Rock Road. Between 37,000 and 40,000 homes are in the pipeline, with more planned that will eventually fill this previously uninhabited land. Along with homes will come shopping centers, office buildings, schools, and parks to serve the new population.

The rush for available land in eastern Sacramento County and western El Dorado County has drawn the interest of developers and many local and national homebuilders. However, the scarcity of land and the high cost of infrastructure such as roads and parks are driving up building fees. Adding up planning fees, park fees and building permits, it costs almost \$220,000 to start construction on a new Rancho Cordova home. It costs developers about \$130,000 to create a finished lot, and then builders must pay another \$88,000 for a building permit.

City officials point out that the new residents are paying their own way. The fees will allow the city to develop new parks rather than wait five or six years as the neighborhoods around them are built. The new development also pays for major road expansions to give the new neighborhoods access to Highway 50. Rancho Cordova has in the past attracted home-shoppers looking for

lower-priced homes than in El Dorado Hills or Folsom. That has all changed with the increases in land values, the increased cost of building materials, and developer fees that require that growth pay for itself. ~



INDIAN CASINOS GENERATE RECORD REVENUE, DONATIONS

Tribes that own Indian casinos are generating more money and sharing more of it than ever before, according to The Indian Gaming Industry Report, a study released in June.

Indian casinos in the United States are growing three times faster than commercial casinos, and generated revenue of \$22.7 billion in 2005, which was a 15.6 percent increase over 2004, according to the study. Indian casinos in California generate 31.5 percent of the Indian gaming revenue nationwide. The state's Indian gaming revenue was \$7.2 billion in 2005, a 23.7 percent increase over 2004.

Alan Meister, an economist and the author of the study, is quoted as saying, "Tribal casinos have seen strong and steady growth, and what is amazing is how consistent that growth has been for such a long time." Along with the growth of tribal gaming, the amount of money tribes contribute directly to the economy has grown to \$1.1 billion in 2005, up 20 percent from \$913 million in 2004. Adding the taxes paid by the casinos brings the figure to \$8 billion in 2005, according to Meister.

The amount of money tribes are sharing with state and local government, nonprofits and neighbors is growing by a larger percentage than the total revenue. "Every time a compact gets renegotiated, there is more money shared by the tribes with local governments and with local groups," Meister says. The Rumsey Band of Wintun recently paid \$850,000 for Yolo County mitigation of its Cache Creek Resort Casino, with the bulk of that going toward flood control.

Commenting on the report, Doug Elmetts, a spokesman for Cache Creek, said, "What you see is that there are clear benefits from

Indian gaming. They create living-wage jobs. The tribes have a general belief in philanthropy, even though they get absolutely no tax benefit from their donations. Many of the tribes started from modest means before they had tribal gaming," Elmetts continued. "They had been the beneficiaries of nonprofit organizations when they were just getting by, and now that they can, they are giving back."

There are currently 227 tribes in the U.S. that operate 420 casinos in 30 states. The growth of tribal casinos has made tribes major employers. Across the country, casinos have 310,000 employees and pay \$10.5 billion annually in wages.

In California, 55 tribes operate 57 Class III casinos, which feature 59,670 slot machines plus table games. Class II casinos feature different machines as well as table games. California has the most Indian casino slot machines in the country. The study says ten tribes have state approval and are working to open new Indian casinos in California. ~

COUNTY SCOFFS AT TRIBE'S CASINO OFFER

The County Board of Supervisors is continuing to refuse to negotiate with the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok on the subject of what might be a fair monetary compensation to the county from profits the tribe anticipates from a casino it would build on its rancheria, according to a recent article in the Placerville Mountain Democrat.

Literature recently circulated by the tribe effectively renews a promise of \$5 million a year toward offsetting any increased county expense in providing typical services after a casino was built. County officials acknowledge reading a letter from the tribe in 2003 that mentions a \$5 million per year mitigation figure, but contend that the letter did not constitute a formal offer.

The county is currently in court to block a highway interchange project that would serve the proposed casino. Officials from the state Department of Transportation and from the county disagree sharply on the degree to which casino traffic might clog and force expansion of the highway. CalTrans engineers dispute the county's contention that a Shingle Springs casino interchange would gridlock Highway 50. The tribe has agreed to pay for the interchange.

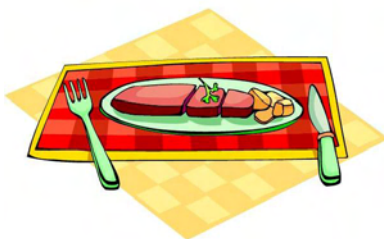
Placer County public safety departments receive approximately \$1 million per year

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from the United Auburn Indian Community to offset effects of the Thunder Bay Casino. The tribe makes some additional payments, and undertakes various other responsibilities designed to mitigate casino effects. Amador County receives \$182,000 per year in connection with the Jackson Rancheria Casino.

The legal fight goes on amid allegations by some that the county's position reflects the no-casino position of deep-pocketed Nevada gambling interests. The results of a poll of El Dorado county residents indicated that two-thirds of them have no objection to a casino. ~

DINING OUT WITH BLAC



By Lady Jasmine

HEMALAYAS A Taste of India

While living in Tokyo we experienced some of the finest and freshest food served at a wide diversity of restaurants. Most of them were within walking distance of our apartment, and delicious aromas would assail our senses as we walked to the subway station or bus stops. The selection was enormous, everything from the sushi shop on the local shopping street, to a delicious Thai restaurant only a block away, and a first-class hamburger place that served fried onions to die for; best of all, they delivered!

But our favorite by far was an Indian restaurant around the corner from our apartment. Serving the most deliciously fresh and pungently seasoned curries, tandoori and naan breads (one filled with raisins), this was often our restaurant of choice. We would often order food to go, and while waiting we would enjoy the crunchy textures of a salad or watch the cook as he made everything from scratch.

The other evening we dined at Hemalayas Restaurant in Cameron Park. We were pleased to find that Hemalayas is the closest

to our Tokyo restaurant that we have experienced since returning to the United States. Large and airy, the remodeled restaurant offers indoor and outdoor seating, and a full bar. The staff was friendly and prompt. We were fortunate to dine with friends, and we shared a number of different dishes.

We chose to skip the appetizers in favor of a selection of naan breads, which are available stuffed with a variety of chicken, cheese, onion, etc. Several soups and salads follow the extensive appetizer menu.

Each dish was served with rice, and there was ample food for all, with a little leftover to take home for lunch the next day. We enjoyed the flavorful tastes of the lamb saag, malai kofta, and saag paneer. My particular favorite was the chicken curry, which was also a traditional set lunch in Tokyo. Our friends started their meal with rogini naan and rita, then sampled the vegetable samosas, lamb rogan josh, and tandoori chicken. They pronounced the cuisine very flavorful, and agreed that the lamb melted in their mouths! Unfortunately, we were all too full to sample the tempting desserts.

Our personable waitress was never far away. She explained how the name of the restaurant came to be "Hemalayas" as a deliberate misspelling of "Himalayas."

Hemalayas has a large a la carte menu, and main course items range from about \$9.00 to \$17.00 per entree. The restaurant has a complete beverage menu, and serves several Indian beers. Hemalayas is located at 3420 Palmer Drive in Cameron Park, just off Cameron Park Drive, telephone 530-677-4880. ~



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GROUND BROKEN FOR HAWK VIEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Earthmoving equipment has begun the rough grading for the Hawk View housing development at the corner of Bass Lake Road and Hawk View Road. The 40-acre parcel is slated to be subdivided into 123 lots, made up of 114 single family lots, 5 landscape lots, and 2 open space lots. ~

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