

# BASS LAKE BULLETIN

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The Voice of the Bass Lake Community

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## COURT FINDS FAULT WITH TOWN CENTER APARTMENT PROJECT

*EIR for 250-unit Town Center project deemed deficient.*

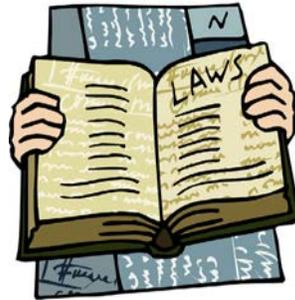
“The El Dorado Hills Town Center Apartments project approval has been overturned by the courts, one year after its approval by the Board of Supervisors.”

So begins a prepared statement from the group known as Citizens for Sensible Growth in El Dorado Hills released last week.

“The court ruling substantiates the public’s claims that the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors abused its discretionary authority when it ignored the El Dorado Hills Specific Plan, the El Dorado Hills Area Planning Advisory Committee and the El Dorado County Planning Commission, in addition to violating the county’s General Plan, density limits, design standards and the requirement to mitigate impacts to infrastructure in approving the Town Center Apartments project on Dec. 2, 2014,” the statement reads.

County supervisors had tentatively approved the project in 2014. Newly seated District 2 Supervisor Shiva Frentzen opposed the action at the time. During the November 2014 hearing supervisors heard testimony from numerous residents both in favor of and opposed to the project. Increased traffic congestion, along with the volume of new residents led the opposition issues. Many speakers praised the concept in general, “but not here and/or not that large.”

The El Dorado Hills Area Planning Advisory Committee reviewed the project three times, APAC president John Hidahl said at the time. “We liked the concept but we think  
*(continued on page 2)*



## NEW YEAR, NEW LAWS

As the new year approaches, here are some of the new California laws that are set to take effect in 2016:

SB 491 will make it illegal to wear earbuds or headsets in both ears while driving a vehicle or riding a bicycle.

Riders on electric skateboards must be 16 years or older, wear helmets and ride on roads with a speed limit of 35 mph or less. Under AB 604, it will also be against the law to ride an electric skateboard while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

The state’s emergency alert system, typically used as Amber Alerts in child-abduction cases, will be used to broadcast a “Yellow Alert” to find hit-and-run drivers in incidents that result in death or major injuries. AB 8 written by Assemblyman Mike Gatto (D-Glendale) takes effect on Jan. 1, 2016.

SB 61 grants a one-year extension to a pilot project in Los Angeles County aimed at curtailing drunken driving through use of ignition interlock devices that test the sobriety of drivers. Drivers must blow into the devices in order to start their vehicles. If their blood-alcohol concentration exceeds a certain level, the vehicles won’t start.

SB 277 will prohibit parents from seeking vaccine exemptions for their children because of religious or personal beliefs.

The hotly contested SB 277 will take effect on July 1, 2016 and will impose one of the strictest vaccination laws in the country. The bill, sponsored by Democratic Sens. Richard Pan of Sacramento and Ben Allen of Santa Monica, will only allow children with serious health problems to opt out of school-mandated vaccinations. School-age  
*(continued on page 2)*



## SERRANO VILLAGE C MOVES FORWARD

Parker Development received the go-ahead to add residential lots to its Serrano development at the Nov. 12 El Dorado County Planning Commission meeting.

Located near the intersection of Village Green Drive and Russi Ranch Drive in El Dorado Hills, the 122-acre site will be divided into 50 residential lots plus four open space lots. Making up Phase II of Village C in the Serrano Planned Development, the 50 new lots will join 377 others previously approved for Phase I. Altogether, Village C will include 427 lots with a mix of custom and production homes. Yet to be decided, however, are questions about the slope of the roads and whether there is a need for additional sidewalks in the new development.

Of particular concern to Commissioner Rich Stewart, as well as some people speaking at the hearing, is the impact the additional homes will have on traffic and on pedestrian safety. Serrano resident Angela Justice complained that traffic is already at gridlock on certain roads, especially when parents are dropping off or picking up their children at the nearby school. She also complained that Serrano was not enforcing street parking restrictions.

Stewart’s criticisms focused on the need for additional sidewalks and design waivers governing the slope of certain streets.

Put to a vote, the commission deadlocked 2-2 because of a difference in opinion over whether the design waivers should remain or be modified. Commissioners Stewart and Gary Miller wanted to modify them while Commissioners Dave Pratt and Tom Heflin wanted to leave them as proposed. Commissioner Brian Shinault was absent. Stuck in  
*(continued on page 5)*



## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello All,

When he ran for El Dorado Irrigation District Director to represent El Dorado Hills in 2013, Dr. Dale Coco was interviewed by Dawn Hodson of the Mountain Democrat. This is what he told the reporter:

"Listing the challenges facing EID, [Coco] included escalating rates, the failure to control debt, which is 25 percent of the cost of operations. Add in unfunded pensions and it makes up 30 percent of the cost of operations, he said. "Last we have to secure plentiful water for our county and protect it from outside interests. That is critical. **We have to deliver quality water at a reasonable rate** and make sure we have adequate water for our future."

"Getting into specifics, Coco listed what he would do as an EID director, saying the first thing would be to **freeze rates for three or four years**. "I'd also advocate for a rebate program for those who installed low flow and low energy appliances to save water and lower ratepayers' bills."

"As far as debt reduction, Coco said he would take some of the \$10 million profit EID made this year and put part of it into capital improvements and part into paying down the debt. He also advocates allocating a portion of all fees to pay down the debt and build a capital improvement fund."

As you know, there will be a Rate Hearing at EID's headquarters on January 11, 2016, at 9:00 am. The EID Board is expected to approve 2016-2020 rate hikes of 21.6% for water and 15.8% for sewer. According to the record, Dr. Coco has consistently voted for both rate increases and salary increases while a director.

Let's see who votes to increase our EID rates on January 11th.

Best regards,

**John E. Thomson**

President

## APARTMENTS *(continued)*

it's oversized at twice the size of high density zoning ... and what if the project doesn't make it?" He also recommended the project be located elsewhere in the county.

In the matter of Citizens for Sensible Development in El Dorado Hills v. County of El Dorado, the statement includes El Dorado County Superior Court Judge Warren Stracener's December 18 ruling, in part.

"As explained in detail below, (the judge's ruling comprises several dozen pages) the court finds the administrative record contains substantial evidence that the proposed project might have significant environmental impact that requires further review. The court finds that the project at issue is a new project, not a modified one and that substantial evidence exists to support a fair argument of significant traffic environmental impacts due to the project, despite existing or planned mitigation. The court also finds that in approving the project, Respondent (the county) has not proceeded as required by law under CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act)."

Quoting three resident activists who have consistently opposed the apartment project in particular and a number of large development projects in general, the statement cites Camino resident Sue Taylor's condemnation of the Board of Supervisors for "abuse of discretionary authority" and noted "the board ... proceeded in a similar action on Dec. 15, 2015, to approve the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance Update (TGPA/ZOU).

"Just like the board's action on the Town Center Apartment project, this General Plan and Zoning Ordinance overhaul forces the public to file a lawsuit against the county in order to protect the county's resources, the voter-approved General Plan, and historic zoning rights. This end-of-the-year action will have an enormous negative impact on the rural nature of El Dorado County."

Persons familiar with such lawsuits say that CEQA's broad scope and lack of clear thresholds often lead to litigation, both by groups that support development, and individuals and agencies opposing such development.

CEQA plaintiffs such as community and environmental groups often challenge projects on the grounds that EIRs are too brief or overlook possible impacts.

Plaintiffs in CEQA lawsuits may seek various forms of redress, such as amending the EIR, preparing a new EIR, agreeing to mitigation measures, or paying money to local agencies to offset environmental impacts.

The apartment complex developer, AG Spanos Corp., is considering its next move.

A Spanos spokesman for Stockton-based Spanos said the company was disappointed by Judge Stracener's decision.

The Spanos spokesman said the county and AG Spanos are considering their next steps, but did not specify which direction the company is leaning. Presumably, AG Spanos could revise the project to address the suit's concerns, perform a full EIR, appeal the ruling, or drop the project entirely.

The developer and the county reportedly have until January 4, 2016, to file an appeal of the judge's ruling. ~

*Credits: Chris Daley, Village Life and Ben van der Meer, Sacramento Business Journal*

## NEW LAWS *(continued)*

children who remain unvaccinated will need to be home-schooled.

SB 358 will allow female employees to allege pay discrimination based on the wages a company pays to other employees who do substantially similar work. The Fair Pay Act stipulates employers can justify higher wages for men only if the pay is based on seniority, a merit system, quantity or quality of production or any other "bona fide factor other than sex."

AB 775, otherwise known as the Reproductive FACT Act, will require pregnancy clinics to hand out or plainly post information about where women can obtain low-cost contraceptives, prenatal care and abortions. The bill, which was sponsored by Attorney General Kamala Harris, takes effect Jan. 1, 2016.

The law requiring slow-moving passenger vehicles to pull over safely to let traffic pass has been amended to apply to all vehicles. AB 208 will now also apply to bicycles.

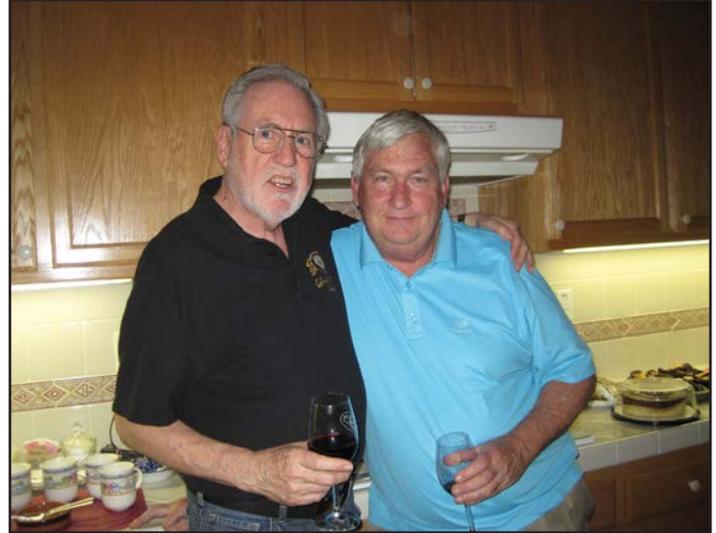
The above is not a comprehensive list, so be careful going into the new year! ~



# BLAC CHRISTMAS PARTY



EDH CSD Director Terry Crumpley and BLAC President John Thomson



Los Rios College District Trustee John Knight and BLAC President John Thomson



EDH CSD Director Noelle Mattock and CSD Director of Parks and Planning Kevin Loewen



Some of the festive crowd waiting for the pizza to come out of the oven



Members Anna and Igor Doncow



Members Robert and Grace Shauger with Lorraine McLaughlin

# BLAC CHRISTMAS PARTY



Members Ahn Nguyen and Dale Chambers with Walter and Hedi Oberloher



BLAC Vice President Kathy Prevost with Joann Prada and EID Director Greg Prada



Members Linda and Tim Sinwell



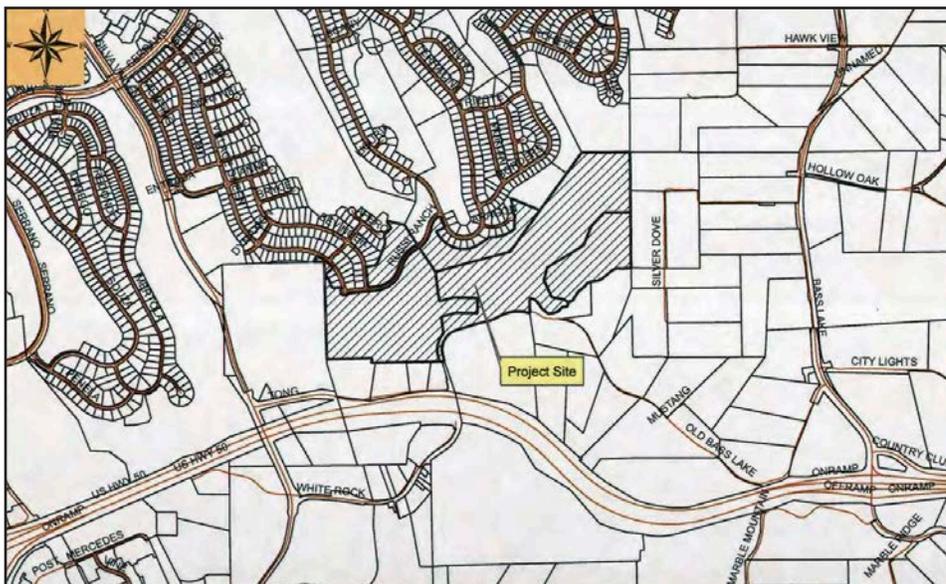
BLAC Webmaster Bryon Steiner and BLAC Treasurer Fran Thomson



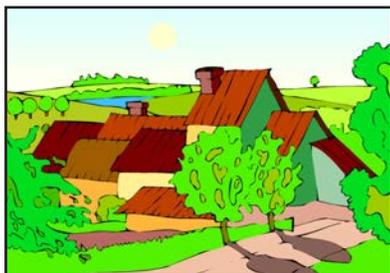
Maria Buxton and BLAC Secretary Jan Buxton



EDH CSD Director of Parks and Planning Kevin Loewen and EDH Fire Board Director John Hidahl



Map showing the location of the project, Serrano Village C in the El Dorado Hills Specific Plan (area map courtesy El Dorado County Planning Dept.).



## PARKER'S CENTRAL EL DORADO HILLS PROJECT ADVANCES

### *Conflicting visions cloud project*

After 91 percent of El Dorado Hills residents who voted on November 3 voiced their support for open space, a group of about 40 residents kept the momentum going by offering next steps at a kickoff meeting on November 16.

The United Neighborhoods of El Dorado Hills aims to bring all 72 villages together to develop an El Dorado Hills community plan; its first challenge — a plan for the former Executive Golf Course at Serrano.

United Neighborhoods of El Dorado Hills spokesperson and District 1 supervisor candidate John Hidahl led the meeting.

He explained a community plan would solidify a community vision, something that is overdue and integral to the county's long-range planning process and policies.

Resident Rachel Michelin said she modeled the idea for United Neighborhoods from the work residents have done in her Southern California hometown of Orange. She said the United Neighborhoods of Orange has proven when residents "show up" they have power.

"It can be very fragmented in El Dorado Hills," she said. "Showing up and being involved is the best way to shape public policy.

"It's a positive movement," Michelin continued. "We want to bring ideas together and we can do that not just by attending meetings, but by writing letters. We will send the message to our elected officials that we are paying attention and we want to be part of the process."

The United Neighborhoods of El Dorado Hills' mission statement reads, "A coalition of individual volunteers joining to set a vision and establish a community plan to enhance and protect our quality of life in El Dorado Hills."

"Let's raise our profile as people who are engaged," Michelin urged. "Measure E proved we can do it. People often find things out after the fact. Let's get representatives from all groups — Little League, Four Seasons, neighborhood watch groups. Let's educate people in what's going on—much like a community council."

A United Neighborhoods website is in the works and members are collecting names for email notifications. The group's most pressing first campaign, Michelin said, is to have a plan for the 98-acre former Executive Golf Course, the impetus for Measure E.

"If there isn't a plan for the golf course, my concern is it will be left unattended and unirrigated and that won't last very long," Hidahl said.

A draft environmental impact report was released Friday detailing the larger 257-acre project, or the Central El Dorado Hills Specific Plan, planned by property owner Parker Development Co. The plan is a mix of residential, open space and public land

## VILLAGE C *(continued)*

the middle were Parker Development's planners, who were plainly uncomfortable trying to redesign the project on the fly in response to Stewart's objections. To move the project forward, the commission decided to bisect the vote, first approving the tentative map but removing some of the design waivers. That motion passed 4-0. A second motion to approve the design waivers failed, 2-2. That issue now moves to the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors, which will make the final decision. ~

*Credit: Dawn Hodson, Mountain Democrat Staff Writer*

Happy New Year!

uses on the golf course and beyond.

Measure E was placed on the ballot by the El Dorado Hills Community Services District's Board of Directors to send an advisory message to the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors, which makes final land use decisions in El Dorado Hills and other unincorporated regions in the county. The measure was meant to be a loud call advising the supervisors that residents don't want the golf course rezoned from recreation and open space to allow for the development.

The county has released a notice of availability of a draft environmental impact report for the Central El Dorado Hills Specific Plan. The Draft EIR is available for a 60-day public review period. After that the project will go to the county Planning Commission and then the Board of Supervisors. The deadline to submit written comments is 5 p.m. on Jan. 19, 2016.

"The DEIR allows all of us to make an informed and thoughtful decision about the benefits the project can prove to El Dorado Hills and the county," Parker Development's Director of Government Relations Kirk Bone told Village Life. "Among the benefits are 130 acres of open space, pedestrian and bike trails and up to 26 acres of active recreation facilities."

The NOA and Draft EIR are posted on the Proposed Specific Plans project webpage: [edc.gov.us/LongRangePlanning/Proposed-SpecificPlans/Proposed\\_Specific\\_Plans.aspx](http://edc.gov.us/LongRangePlanning/Proposed-SpecificPlans/Proposed_Specific_Plans.aspx) (Click on the Central El Dorado Hills tab.) Public comments may be emailed directly to [cedhsp@edc.gov.us](mailto:cedhsp@edc.gov.us). ~

*Credit: Julie Samrick, Mountain Democrat*



## BLAC CELEBRATES, ELECTS 2016 BOARD AT ANNUAL MEETING AND CHRISTMAS PARTY

### *February Board Meeting Slated*

Holiday spirits were high on December 7th at BLAC's 2015 Annual Meeting and Christmas party held at the home of Fran and John Thomson in Woodridge. Twenty-five members and "Friends of BLAC" nibbled on an array of delicious appetizers and desserts before enjoying a variety of fresh-baked pizzas and salad as the main course.

Honored guests included: El Dorado Hills Community Services District Directors Terry Crumpley and Noelle Mattock, Kevin Loewen, EDH CSD Director of Parks & Planning and Acting General Manager; former District 1 Supervisor and current Los Rios College District Area 3 Trustee John Knight; El Dorado Hills Fire Board and Area Planning Advisory Council Director John Hidahl; El Dorado Irrigation District



Jack Frost

The door was shut, as doors should be,  
Before you went to bed last night;  
Yet Jack Frost has got in, you see,  
And left your window silver white.

He must have waited till you slept;  
And not a single word he spoke,  
But pencilled o'er the panes and crept  
Away again before you woke.

And now you cannot see the hills  
Nor fields that stretch beyond the lane;  
But there are fairer things than these  
His fingers traced on every pane.

—Gabriel Setoun

Division 2 Board Member Greg Prada; and Bryon Steiner, BLAC's Web Master and web site designer.

Time was taken from the festivities to conduct the annual election of officers, who were unanimously elected to the following 2016 Board positions: President, John Thomson; Vice President, Kathy Prevost; Secretary, Jan Buxton; Treasurer, Fran Thomson, and Director at Large, Hal Erpenbeck.

The next regular board of directors meeting of the Bass Lake Action Committee will be held on February 1, 2016, at 7:00 PM at the home of John and Fran Thomson, 501 Kirkwood Court in Woodridge, El Dorado Hills, 530-677-3039.

As always, all BLAC members are cordially invited to attend all meetings. For further information about BLAC meetings and membership, please contact Vice President Kathy Prevost at 530-672-6836. ~



## CORD-CUTTING IS ACCELERATING

The media industry may be in for a rude awakening. Television companies have been trying to reassure investors lately that the modest decline in pay-TV subscribers they've seen over the past year will continue at the same manageable pace.

But new data out in December from market research company eMarketer shows that cord-cutting is accelerating, driven by a

rapidly expanding panoply of digital video services. The number of pay-TV households will fall at an accelerating rate for at least the next four years, reaching a 1.4% decline in 2019, eMarketer estimates. By that year, eMarketer estimates that almost 23% of U.S. households won't pay for traditional TV.

Overall, the total number of households that don't subscribe to pay-TV—a combination of cord-cutters and the far more common "cord-nevers" who had never signed up in the first place—will hit 20.8 million by the end of 2015, according to eMarketer, or about 17% of U.S. households.

"This year, the number of digital video services expanded at a faster pace than ever before," said eMarketer's senior analyst Paul Verna in a statement. "In addition to stand-alone offerings from the likes of HBO, there are new digital bundles that include many of the channels consumers could only have received with cable and satellite subscriptions in the past. This widespread availability of digital content makes cord-cutting a viable option for a growing segment of the viewing population." ~

*Credit: Keach Hagey, Wall Street Journal*

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