



**Contenders
for RMA
Board Lay
Out Platforms**

PAGE 5

**Stewardship,
SOLOS
Encourage
Kids to Bike**

PAGE 2



RIVER VALLEY TIMES

39TH YEAR • ISSUE 39

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OCTOBER 27, 2023

**SEE
INSIDE**

**JOAN LAKE WINS
WOMEN'S GOLF CLUB
CHAMPIONSHIP**



PAGE 10

**FORESTER
UPDATES THE
RMA BOARD**



PAGE 4

**WATER SUPPLY
STUDY, AUDIT
ARE CSD TOPICS**



PAGE 3

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Corvette Club Helps Needy Kids

Event Held at Dillard Elementary for 14th Year



Club members show off some of the coats and other needed items they are about to donate for the 14th year in a row. They also will donate turkey dinner boxes at Thanksgiving. Photos by Gail Bullen

**By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter**

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - About 70 needy youngsters who attend C.W. Dillard Elementary School in Wilton will stay warm and dry in their

new winter coats this year thanks to the Rancho Murieta Corvette Club.

This was the 14th year that the club has tapped treasury funds for its annual coat drive. The Kiwanis Club of Rancho Murieta also chipped in \$500 this year.

Driving their gleaming Corvettes, members of the club rolled up to the school on Oct. 11 to deliver 70 winter coats, 25 pairs of shoes, 33 pairs of socks, 14 backpacks, six tops and seven shirts, six pairs of pants, 22 boxes of Kleenex and \$565 in gift cards.

Club member Karen Pearson organizes the annual event and buys the new coats throughout the year, mostly online late at night. "I enjoy hunting for a great coat for a great price," she said. "Most of all I love the cards we

Continued on page 2

CSD Slates Town Hall to Update Water Study on Nov. 2



The first town hall meeting about the Integrated Water Master Plan draws about 120 residents to the Rancho Murieta Country Club on March 18. More attendees are expected at the second meeting on Nov. 2. Photo by Gail Bullen

**By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter**

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - The Rancho Murieta Community Services District (CSD) has slated a second town hall meeting to update residents about a study currently underway that is using a data-based approach to forecast water needs over the next 20 years.

It will take place at 6 p.m. on Nov. 2 in the Murieta Room at the Rancho Murieta Country Club.

The community's water supply is a concern because of upcoming development, drought, climate change, and potential state curtailments of the Cosumnes River.

CSD staff and the consulting team will be on hand to explain and answer questions about the Integrated Water Master Plan (IWMP). It will replace similar studies done in the past.

The first town hall meeting was held on March 18 to explain what the study was all about with presentations by CSD Director of Operations Michael Fritschi and the two consultants. The first is Lisa Maddaus, who has her own engineering firm in California and helped work on the 2010 study. The second consultant is Dan Scalas from Adkins Engineering of Klamath Falls, Ore. He conducted the sonar survey of the Calero and Chesbro reservoirs that determined that both held less water than originally believed, especially Calero.

The March meeting unraveled at one point because some attendees believed the contracted facilitator was cutting off audience input. However, RMA Director Stephen Booth took control of the meeting at that point, and it ran smoothly after that. Booth will be facilitating the Nov. 2 meeting.

Fritschi and the consultants

presented their first progress report at the Aug. 16 CSD Board meeting. Fritschi described the IWMP this way. "There are basically three pieces," he said. "There is the supply, the demand, and what do we do about it."

The consultants presented a story map that incorporated historical information to describe the district's current and recycled water systems with links to the original source documents. The consultants said they would use the first piece as the basis for the next phase of the study to assess the demands for water and for the final phase to consider alternatives to meet future needs.

Fritschi also told the board that a second town hall would be scheduled once the consultants finished assessing water demands in the second piece of the study. He tentatively scheduled it for Oct. 14 but had to move it to Nov. 2.

District Secretary Amelia Wilder posted the first story map and source documents on the CSD website at <https://www.ranomurietacsd.com/master-water-plan/> after the August board meeting. An advertisement for the meeting is on the home page and on the district's Facebook page.

Per comments at the Oct. 18 board meeting, the second story map explaining the water demands will be posted on the district website well before the Nov. 2 town hall. Fritschi also said the staff would post questions and answers from the March 18 town hall on the website and would prepare handouts for the next meeting.

The district also has set up a separate email for questions with comments and requests - masterplan@rmcsd.com.

All residents, including those who live outside the gates, are encouraged to attend the Nov. 2 town hall. The gate officers will be apprised. ★

RMA Board Approves Minimal Monthly Dues Increase

**By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter**

RANCHO MUREITA, CA (MPG) - When Rancho Murieta Association members open their notices about increased dues for the 2024 fiscal year, they probably won't be going into sticker shock. That is because the dues will only go up to \$3.75 a month.

The current monthly dues of \$157.25 will increase to \$161 next year, which is an increase of only 2.4% percent. The RMA Board approved the increased assessment and \$4.7 million budget at a special meeting on Oct. 11.

The board also approved a 2024 reserve study that keeps the association's funded rate at 84%. The reserves are used to pay for the repair and replacement of infrastructure. Full funding is having enough money in the bank to equal the value of the physical assets after factoring in depreciation.

Noting that an 84% funded rate is "an A+ among HOAs," President Scott Adams told the board that RMA was heading into the next year with a great budget. "We have a nice, modest increase that is well under inflation right now, and we are in very, very good financial shape, which is excellent," he said.

General Manager Rod Hart began the budget discussion by outlining some of the cost increases and decreases expected next year in the draft budget. The most significant increases will be increasing the reserve assessment by \$60,000 to keep the funding rate at 84% and a wage increase of \$46,300. The most significant decreases were a \$22,000 reduction in health benefits because of staffing changes and a \$11,200 decrease in worker's compensation insurance because of the lack of injuries.

Hart also told the board he had budgeted \$45,000 for legal services next year, which is the same amount as this year.

Hart told the board that the proposed budget would increase member dues by \$99,950, which would translate to a 2.2% increase of \$3.50 a month, for a total of \$160.75 a month. Hart then asked if the board wanted to add any more items to the budget before finalizing it, noting that the Rancho Murieta Fishing Club was seeking \$3,000 to add forage fish to Calero Reservoir.

In the discussion that followed, the board agreed to add \$7,000 to the budget, which translated to a 25-cent increase. That increased the dues to \$3.75 a month, a 2.4% increase, for a total of \$161 a month.

The breakdown of the additional \$7,000 in funding was \$3,000 for the fish, \$2,000 for the Communications Committee to improve the association's website, and \$2,000 for the Recreation Committee to fund new events. ★

Corvette Club Helps Needy Kids at Dillard Elementary for 14th Year

Continued from page 1
get from the kids and parents that tell us how happy the coats make them. It can bring a tear to your eye.”

The club began its annual donation in 2010 with gift cards for needy families at Dillard and Cosumnes River Elementary Schools. Upon further research, they learned the need was far greater at Dillard.

The next year they added coats and never stopped. They deliver the coats and other donations, just before the weather changes.

Describing the club members as angels, Principal Sandy Wiest remembers when the Corvettes first rolled up to the school. “The first year it was mostly coats. But over the years it has gotten bigger and bigger,” she said. “They also

call me throughout the year to see what else we need.”

Wiest said she alerted the students about the club’s visit in morning announcements and encouraged them to look out the window. “Yesterday I was talking to them about kindness, and today we have the perfect example,” she said.

The coats are given to the children in a very private way. After their names are submitted by their teachers, they are called into the office to pick out a jacket. “Because we have other clothes and shoes, sometimes they are completely outfitted,” Wiest said. “Their faces are just beaming.”

The clothing is left in the office until the kids can pick it up after school unless their parents come



Dillard Principal Sandy Wiest expresses her thanks to club member Doug Ruley.

by earlier. The school office staff distributes the gift cards throughout the year.

Pearson said she wouldn’t be able to organize the annual coat drive without the support of everyone in the club. “The club is full of

wonderful people who are always willing to share and give,” she said.

When Jack Parker took over as the club president last year, he wanted to change things up. One was the annual tradition



Glaming Corvettes sit parked in front of C. W. Dillard Elementary School while their owners deliver coats for needy kids on Oct. 11. The photo shows one of four posters created by the students to thank the Rancho Murieta Corvette Club. Photos by Gail Bullen

of donating turkeys to the Sacramento Food Bank at Thanksgiving. “I thought why not cut out the middleman and just find a deserving community, which happens to be Dillard because of all the farm

workers,” he said.

The club donated 20 turkey boxes with all the fixings to Dillard families last year. They hope to do the same this year, or even better, according to Pearson and Parker. ★

Stewardship, SOLOS Encourage Kids to Mountain Bike

By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Created in 2004 and intended to introduce the joy of mountain bike riding to the next generation, Take A Kid Mountain Biking Day was celebrated for the first time in Rancho Murieta at Clementia Park on Oct. 7.

The Murieta Trails Stewardship (MTS) and Save Our Lakes & Open Spaces (SOLOS) presented the event with activities for tots who are just getting started and older kids in grade school. Two mechanics from Bob’s Cycling also were on hand for any needed adjustments.

About a dozen youngsters and their parents

showed up for the event. The kids were encouraged to ride the safety course marked with traffic safety cones that looped through the parking lot and the grass.

MTS member Jason Zenker explained the reasoning, especially for the youngest children. “We are teaching the little kids the right way to cross a street – stop and look both ways, bike courtesy and skills,” he said

After the young riders looped around the course several times, MTS member Mike Walker member asked the older kids to gather on the road in front of the patio so he could lead them on a trail ride around the water treatment plant. Before they took off,



MTS member David Rhodes talks to young cyclists Nikki Wise (left) and Brooke Wise with parents Nick and Stephanie Wise listen.

Walker reviewed a couple basics of mountain bike riding such descending a hill “with your butt back over the seat” and looking down the trail “instead of at their front tire” so they could see the obstacles in front of them.

One of the youngest riders was Aiden O’Brien,

who wasn’t old enough to go on the trail ride but kept zooming around the park. His father Vincent O’Brien said he was happy that MTS and SOLOS sponsored the event. “It’s a great community get-together to celebrate the trails,” he said. “Plus it will spark his interest in mountain biking.”



‘Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day’ unfolds at Clementia on Oct. 7 with Murieta Trails Stewardship (MTS) member Mike Wallace leading a trail ride for the older participants. A couple of other adults also went on the ride. Photos by Gail Bullen

The International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) created the event in 2004 to celebrate the life of a teenage mountain bike rider who died in 2002. The event also encourages an active lifestyle and develops a connection between kids, bikes, and the natural world around them according to the

IMBA website. Founded in 2010, the stewardship maintains more than 14 miles of dirt, single-track trails in the back areas of the community. SOLOS is a community action group that advocates for responsible development. They also jointly sponsor trail and beach clean-up days. ★

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The District is planning additional public engagement opportunities as the Master Plan is developed.

The District’s water supply and demand will be explored, along with the projected impacts of climate change on the supply. This data-driven approach to water planning will ensure Rancho Murieta’s water supply remains strong.

INTEGRATED WATER MASTER PLAN TOWN HALL MEETING

Thursday, November 2, 2023,
6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Murieta Room, Rancho Murieta Country Club
(Call 916-354-3700 for directions)

Visit <https://www.ranchomurieta.csd.com/water-master-plan> to find additional project information and ongoing updates, including responses to public questions.

Email your questions or comments to the District at masterplan@rmcsd.com

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Water Supply Study, 2021 Audit are CSD Board Topics

By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - An update on the overdue 2021 audit and questions and criticisms about a water supply study were topics when the Rancho Murieta Community Services District (CSD) met in public session on Oct. 18.

The board also spent several hours in closed session evaluating General Manager Mimi Morris and considering three legal matters. In the report afterward, Board President Tim Maybee said no action was taken but direction was given to staff.

2020/2021 audit

Morris presented an update on the long overdue 2020-2021 audit in her monthly report. She also attached a list of 79 audit tasks that have been completed except for two that have been “difficult to unravel” and a third that is pending. Morris said that staff are working with the auditors to address the unresolved issues in the next few weeks.

Director Stephen Booth commended Morris for detailing all the punch items from the auditors and making it part of the packet. He said it is important for community members to understand the sheer volume and scope of work that “our staff, limited staff, and lack of staff have had to produce. I think it is very instructive,” he said. “As I have said since I came onto this board last December, the more information we can share then

the less people have to speculate and fill in the gaps.”

Water supply study

Two agenda topics had to do with The Integrated Water Master Plan (IWMP) that is currently being prepared by Maddaus Water Management and Adkins Engineering & Surveying. The first was about a Nov. 2 town hall meeting, and the second was about a \$72,631 change order to the Maddaus – Adkins contract with the district.

Morris told the board that the operations staff was organizing the Nov. 2 town hall meeting to update the community about the IWMP. It will be held at 6 p.m. at the Murieta Country Club with Booth as the facilitator. Morris said the staff was working to gather and publish all questions from the March town hall meeting and has developed a specific email for community questions (masterplan@rmcsd.com.) She said all questions and responses will be published on the district website as part of the FAQs regarding the IWMP.

Booth asked Morris how she planned to announce the specific email. She and District Secretary Amelia Wilder explained it would be part of advertisement on the district’s website and Facebook page and in the River Valley Times.

Referring to a letter from resident John Merchant in the board meeting packet, Booth said he was recommending that the district also posts his questions and

answers in advance of the Nov. 2 meeting. “I think it would be very constructive for our folks are concerned about what we’re doing with the water plan,” he said.

One of the contentions in Merchant’s long, detailed letter was that Maddaus should acknowledge “that she understand the severe consequences of an interruption of the annual flow of the Cosumnes River.”

The IWMP was again a topic when Booth asked that a \$72,631 change order to the Maddaus – Adkins contract with the district be taken off the consent calendar.

The board first approved a resolution approving the change order in August. But it had to be amended because of an error so it was placed on the October consent agenda. In asking for separate consideration of the change order, Booth said he voted against it in August and wanted to do so again. He said a letter to the board in the packet explained his reasoning.

Board President Tim Maybee called for a vote. He and Directors Randy Jenco and Martin Pohll voted “aye”, and Booth and Director Linda Butler voted no.

The change order increases the consulting contract cost from \$335,007 to \$408,369. The money would come from the water reserves. The \$72,632 breaks down to \$27,000 to pay the consultants for their support at additional public meetings and \$45,000 for work outside the original scope of work. The original scope didn’t



Director Stephen Booth is the most outspoken director at the Rancho Murieta Community Services District Board meeting Oct. 18. Topics included an overdue audit and a water supply study. File photo by Gail Bullen

include updating the water demand forecasting per the Financial Services Agreements (FSA) with future developments.

Or, as Booth put it in his letter, “The explanation for the amendment, aside from adding town hall meetings, was to consider the specific lot sizes of the yet to be developed FSA properties to obtain a ‘more accurate’ projection of water usage,” he wrote. “Am I understand, then, that the contractors were prepared originally to prepare a less than accurate calculation pursuant of this item.”

Booth’s letter also criticized a September decision by Morris to hire the West Yost Associates to determine under what conditions Clementia water could be used to supplement the water supply.

“Requiring the district to issue a separate contract to a different consultant to perform this assessment brings the competence and commitment of Maddaus-Adkins into question,” Booth wrote.

Other business

• Morris reported that the district has hired Mark Matulich to become the new finance and administration director. He has been a CPA for over 20 years and worked as a controller for multiple organizations.

• Reporting on behalf of the absent Security Chief Kelly Benitez, Morris said 30 of the 90 patrol shifts weren’t covered in September because of vacancies.

• The board approved a new claims processing policy per the recommendation of the

CSD attorney. It gives Morris the authority to deny occasional claims for monetary damages under the Government that are under \$25,000 Claims and in consultation with the attorney without first going to the board. Andrew Ramos said the policy was needed because some claim-related deadlines are so short there isn’t time to bring them to the board. Butler was the sole “nay” vote.

• Butler complained about committee meetings being cancelled in previous months, particularly the Communications Committee, which she chairs. “I think that is where the work gets done and information is transmitted,” she said.

The board’s next regular meeting will be at 5 p.m. on Nov. 15. ★

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Forester Updates the RMA Board About Fuel Reduction Project

By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter

Registered forester Phyllis Banducci, who is supervising the groundwork for a ladder fuel reduction project in and around the community, provided a second update at the Rancho Murieta Association (RMA) Board on Oct. 17.

Her comments and PowerPoint slides were a preview of a much larger public meeting that is slated on Nov. 3 at 6 p.m. at the RMA Building to answer resident questions about the project that is being funded by a \$4.4 million Cal Fire grant.

The Rancho Murieta Fire Safe Council put together the grant application but couldn't submit it because it wasn't a nonprofit. Sacramento County Supervisor Sue Frost helped the council secure an agreement from Sacramento County Regional Parks to sponsor and administer the grant.

Banducci first updated the RMA Board about the Cosumnes Ladder Fuel Reduction Project project last December. She told the board that planning activities have been underway since then, which included identifying 947 acres for fuel reduction treatment.

That includes 380 acres, or 40%, inside Rancho Murieta, mostly on the outer perimeter adjacent to Deer Creek Hills and the Van Vleck Rancho to the east. Another 318 acres, or 33%, of ranch lands west of Scott Road also will be treated. The third piece consists of oak stands east of Scott Road and along Latrobe Road within the Deer Creek Hills Preserve totaling 253 acres, or 27%.

"Remember that is the big intent of this grant to clear these areas in case we have those north wind events," Banducci told

the board. "That's the fire that is going to blow into our community."

Banducci told the board that the environmental documentation for the project was approved by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors on Sept. 26. The county has posted a request for proposals from contractors to do the work. They must have the same certification for tree work that is already required behind the gates and must have access to a certified arborist. Banducci said she and other foresters will provide "lots of oversight".

Banducci said the supervisors will select the winning bidders at their Dec. 12 meeting. "The more contractors we have out there working, the quicker we can get this done," she said.

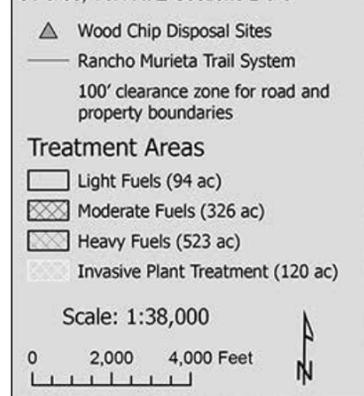
Although Banducci hopes to get the bulk of the work next year, the contractors will operate under a constraint because of nesting birds. That means they likely won't be able to work between February and August.

Banducci also projected a sample of the treatment prescription that she has prepared for each unit in the project. The slide showed two units off Murieta Parkway and Camino Del Lago.

The top of the page lists the treatment and protection measures required and the map underneath shows the trails in the wooded areas and other markings.

Banducci said she will put in a protection measure for a Heritage live oak so it won't be cut although everything underneath it will be cleaned up. She said the 100-foot treatment areas were marked with light blue. "Anywhere you are adjacent to property lines, which is a homeowner's property, or a road, I have 100% slash cleanup," she said. "That means that all those trees that came

Sacramento County Cosumnes Ladder Fuel Reduction Project: Treatment Map Date: 9/18/23
T8N R8E Sections 14, 16, 21-23, 25-28, 34 & 35; T8N R7E Sections 2 & 3



The map shows the areas around Rancho Murieta where the fuel treatments will take place. Photo Courtesy of RMA Board

down this past year (in the New Year's storm) and any accumulations of fuels have to be removed from that area."

Banducci also plans to address the trails. "Even though our trail crews (the Murieta Trail Stewardship) have done a wonderful job each year cleaning the trails, we have these huge accumulations of grass right next to the trails so they will be cleared back 50 feet as well," she said.

The prescription for every unit is unique, she said, including one for the "party beach" where people (teenagers) have been lighting bonfires.

Banducci was asked if the project was on budget. She said the county has spent about \$230,000 so far, which is about 60% of what was designated for administration. "I think we are on budget," she said. "I'm hoping the bids coming

are reasonable. We originally estimated a little under \$2,000 per acres, so we are keeping our fingers crossed."

In the ensuing discussion, audience member John Merchant and Director Patrick O'Hern asked her about slash piles throughout the community, which were either the result of the New Year's storm or were existing piles aggravated by the storm.

Banducci said she could only address slash piles inside the grant areas which were "fortunately or unfortunately" designated before the big storm. Nor can she prescribe remediation within 150 feet of the river because of the protection area. But the slash piles outside the project still need to be addressed, she said.

O'Hern indicated he would bring it up at a future board meeting, and



Registered forester Phyllis Banducci provides an update about the Cosumnes Ladder Fuel Reduction Project at the Rancho Murieta Association Board meeting on Oct. 17. The funding is coming from a \$4.4 million grant secured by the Rancho Murieta Fire Safe Council. Photo by Gail Bullen

General Manager Rod Hart said he would again contact the country club about a huge pile near

Hole 4 in the north. He said RMCC recently purchased a chipper, which should help. ★

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Trunk or treat slated at Stonehouse on Oct. 28

Get ready for a spook-tacular time. Dress the kids in their most creative Halloween costumes to attend the first Trunk or Treat event on Saturday, Oct. 28, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Stonehouse Park. Members of the Corvette Club and the Classic Cars Club will hand out candy from the trunks of their cars. The Rancho Murieta Association Recreation Committee will serve popcorn and hot dogs. The best decorated car will receive a \$50 prize.

RM Veterans Day celebration slated Nov. 10

You are invited to the "Been There - Done That Canteen" to honor all past and

present members of the USA Armed Forces. Mark your calendars for

Nov. 10 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the RMA Building. Coffee, donuts and conversation will be enjoyed by all the community as they celebrate our

dedicated veterans and current members of the armed forces. The event is free. Note the date is Nov. 10 instead of Nov. 11, which is Veterans Day. We are so very proud of our patriotic contributions by our children. This date will coincide with their holiday from school.

Consumnes Groundwater Authority slates workshops Nov. 1 & Nov. 4

The Cosumnes Groundwater Authority will host two public workshops on Nov. 1 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Hendrickson Hall in Herald, and on Saturday Nov. 4 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Wilton Community Center. There will be information about funding, the groundwater law, groundwater monitoring and more. We will also have several partners in attendance such as The Freshwater Trust and the California Department of Water

Resources. This event is free and open to all. No registration is necessary.

CSD Slates Water Plan Townhall on Nov. 2

The Rancho Murieta Community Services District will present a town hall meeting at 6 p.m. on Nov. 2 to update the community about the preparation of an Integrated Water Master Plan. Consultants are currently working on the study, which will forecast the community's water needs over the next 20 years in the midst of climate change and droughts. The meeting will be held in the Murieta Room at the Rancho Murieta Country Club.

Village craft fair and bake sale slated Nov. 4

Rancho Murieta residents can get an early jump of Christmas shopping for unique gifts and homemade goodies by attending the Murieta Village Craft Fair and Bake Sale on Nov. 4 from 9

to 2 p.m. at the clubhouse. Fudge, toffee and freshly harvested walnuts will be on sale along with a myriad of crafts ranging from Christmas wreaths to beautifully sewn or crocheted hats, purses and décor. Other wares will include jewelry, fine art and thunder drums made from gourds. Flute music from Paula Ramirez will add to the ambiance, and a secret Santa is expected to pop in. The kitchen also will open to serve hot dogs, coffee and cookies.

River Valley Garden Club Sponsors Smokey the Bear Contest

All students in grades one through five at any school are invited to participate in a poster contest sponsored by the River Valley Garden Club. The contest is about Smokey the Bear and needs to state somewhere on the poster - "Only you can prevent forest fires". Please contact Berniece Jones at 916-354-2873 to get poster paper and

more information about the contest. We will deliver poster paper and contest rules to anyone who wants to enter. The contest ends Nov. 1. Prizes will be awarded for each grade level. The first place prize is \$20 and second place is \$10. All first prize winners will be entered into the state level competition. River Valley Garden Club is affiliated with National Garden Club, Pacific Region, and California State Garden Clubs.

RM residents invited to learn about fuel reduction project

Residents concerned about wildfire threats are invited to attend a presentation about a ladder fuel reduction project that will soon commence inside and outside Rancho Murieta. The meeting is slated at 6 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 3 at the RMA Building. The Rancho Murieta Fire Safe Council secured a \$4.4 million grant from Cal Fire to do the work, which is being administered by Sacramento County Regional Parks.

Sheriff's Office to Host RM Meeting on Nov. 15

The Sacramento County Sheriff's Office is inviting all Rancho Murieta residents to attend a community meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 15 at 60 at the RMA Building.

Kiwanis Seeks Sweats for Vets Donations

Kiwanis Club of Rancho Murieta is once again asking for monetary donations to its Sweat for Vets program. This is 14th year of helping veterans who are hospitalized at the Sacramento VA Medical Center in Mather. Please make your check out to Kiwanis Club of Rancho Murieta Sweat for Vets. Cash donations and Walmart gift cards are also welcome. Mail donations to Kiwanis at P. O. Box 855, Rancho Murieta, or put them in a drop box at the RMA building. If you have any questions call Diann Swan at 916-343-0656. Thank you for your support of this program. ★

Contenders for RMA Board Lay Out Platforms

By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - Three incumbents and a challenger, who was a previous board member, laid out their platforms when the Rancho Murieta Association (RMA) presented a lightly attended Candidates' Night at the RMA Building on Oct. 10. Topics included security, development, and preserving the Rancho Murieta culture.

Three seats are being contested. Board President Scott W. Adams and Directors Renee Martel Bechthold and Danny Carrillo are seeking second terms. The challenger is David Roy Harmon.

Director Patrick O'Hern, who chaired the Nominating Committee, explained the rules and posed three questions from the committee and one from an audience member. The other two committee members, Doug Ruley and Maureen Ghormley were also present. Only nine residents attended the meeting. But others can watch from home as the video has already been posted online. Packets with candidate statements and information about the Nov. 30 annual meeting were to be mailed in late October.

After making opening statements, candidates answered the three questions from the Nominating Committee. The first asked about the main issues facing Rancho Murieta and what the candidate would do to correct them, the second was how their experience or background qualified them to be on the board, and the third asked which traits or qualities are important for a board member. A question from the audience asked the candidates about their three most important priorities if elected.

Since the questions and answers were often repetitive, here is a summary of the main points made by each candidate. Their answers about desirable traits for board members aren't included.

Renee Bechthold
Bechthold owns and operates Rancho Murieta Claims Services, which is an independent insurance adjusting firm, from her home. She has lived in the community for eight years.

Bechthold was appointed to fill a vacancy on the board a year ago. "I love being on the board. It's interesting. It's challenging. It's rewarding," she said. "I believe Rancho Murieta is a special place, and I want to work hard to protect it."

Bechthold sees security and safety as the prevailing issues in the community. Going forward, RMA and Rancho Murieta Community Services



Scott Adams

District (CSD) must work together to determine the community's security needs and ways to fill them. She is looking forward to a report from an ad hoc RMA committee that is taking a "deep dive" in the issue.

Bechthold also believes that gate protocols should be regularly reviewed and updated. "I think it is important to know who is in the community and who is coming in," she said.

As for her qualifications, Bechthold said she has learned from her business to anticipate emerging issues and to quickly work to resolve any problems. She also learned the importance of being transparent with her customers, which transfers well into the RMA board being transparent with residents.

Bechthold has served on several RMA committees, including chairing the general manager hiring committee. She also belongs to community groups including the Rancho Murieta Country Club, Save Our Lakes & Open Spaces (SOLOS), and the Rancho Murieta Women's Club.

"I have volunteered at most events that go on in this community," she said. "That has given me an understanding of the culture of Rancho Murieta and our small town feel that we are all trying to preserve."

Danny Carrillo
Carrillo, who is seeking a second term on the board, has lived in Rancho Murieta more than 40 years and has multiple generations of his family living in the community. He and his wife Sherry have been married 30 years and have one daughter.

Carrillo holds a bachelor's degree in business administration with a concentration in real estate and land use affairs. He has been a licensed real estate broker, a licensed contractor, and a licensed notary public. He recently retired from the California Department of Correction where he worked for 24 years in inmate rehabilitation and was promoted to a supervisory counselor. He also has worked on more than 100 homes in Rancho Murieta.

As for issues facing the community, Carrillo said he



Renee Bechthold

wants to improve the association's dissemination of information with modern technology. "During my first term, I've seen a lot of misinformation on social media that is either wrong, misleading or totally fraudulent," he said.

Carrillo also wants to improve the RMA website so it can be a one-stop shop to find "all things RMA". That would include forms to get bar codes, information on approved paint colors as well as clarified CC&Rs and FAQs.

Carrillo also wants to improve cooperation with CSD and the Rancho Murieta Country Club (RMCC), "to preserve our property values and to protect natural resources." He also stressed the importance of preparing the maintenance department for changes coming up because of development and General Manager Rod Hart's transition plan.

As for qualifications, Carrillo cited his experience as an incumbent director and his service on numerous RMA committees that includes the current chairing of the Architectural Review and Maintenance Committees.

David Roy Harmon
Harmon has lived in Rancho Murieta 18 years and has a bachelor's degree in management information systems. He works as a system engineer and his team handles Level 4 engineering tasks. "We do a lot of artificial intelligence, Python and that nature," he said.

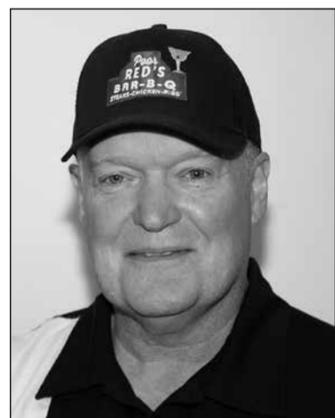
Harmon previously served on the board for three years and said he was excited about returning. "I just love Rancho Murieta. It is so refreshing to live here and to have a gated community, and my neighbors are so cool," he said.

Harmon feels passionate about two issues facing the community. "I believe we have toxins in our river and our lakes, he said. He believes the board should commission a scientific study on lake levels and conduct water testing. "I know labs that can do that. I've done so myself," he said.

Speaking later in the meeting, Adams reminded Harmon that CSD is in charge of water, not the



Danny Carrillo



David Roy Harmon



Contenders for three openings on the Rancho Murieta Association Board of Directors answer questions during Candidates' Night at the RMA Building on Oct. 10. From left are Scott Adams, Danny Carrillo, Renee Bechthold, all incumbents, and David Roy Harmon, who has served on the board in the past. Photos by Gail Bullen

association.

Harmon also believes the board should lead wildland risk mitigation to help reduce insurance premiums. RMA also should work on better security policies and team up with CSD to help with its challenges, he said.

As for qualifications, Harmon said he is very familiar with parliamentary procedures. He also was president of the Management Information Systems Association (a student organization at Sacramento State University.) "Mostly I like working with smart people," he said.

Harmon served on the RMA Board between 2009 and 2011 and missed numerous meetings. See the separate story in this issue.

Scott Adams
Adams, a corporate attorney, has lived in Rancho Murieta for more than 25 years and "absolutely loves it here." He filled a board vacancy in 2011 and 2012, was elected to a 3-year term in 2020, and currently serves as the board president. He and his wife have been married 10 years, and he has a son in law school. He currently lives on Colbert Drive, "which is the trick-or-treat capital of Rancho Murieta. Last year, we had 567 trick-or-treaters," he said.

Adams is a golfing member of RMCC and sees the country club as integral to the community. "The community's trails and amenities are incredible out here, and "I really like the Rancho Murieta culture in general," he added.

Adams sees the security and the safety of residents and development as the two most important issues facing the board.

As for security, the board has been addressing CSD patrol reductions and increased vandalism by placing more resources into compliance and by writing rules and leveraging technology to address the more egregious behavior and illegal activity. "But the board should continue to look for ways to deter that conduct," he said.

Adams said upcoming development will include 62 homes in The Retreats, 140 in Riverview, 198 in the Residences East and West, and some potential villages of homes in the proposed Rancho North subdivision.

"RMA has to be extremely involved with concerns about larger infrastructure issues including annexation, trails, streets, parks, traffic, esthetics, etc," he said. "This requires ongoing discussions with developers, which were are having now, and a very thorough understanding of

how our governing documents work."

Adams said the board is addressing wildland fire mitigation, having spent over a quarter million dollars in the last three years and by purchasing a masticator tractor for \$100,000. The community also has been awarded a \$4.5 million grant from Cal Fire (for ladder fuel reduction.)

Adams said his legal background has served him well on the board. "I am a corporate attorney who specializes in regulatory compliance requiring work with regulatory agencies, state agencies, and other agencies and individuals, who don't necessarily share the same point of view, to arrive at a mutually beneficial outcome," he said.

His experience drafting contracts and other documents has also helped him review RMA governing documents.

In addition to five years on the board as a director, Adams has served on numerous RMA committees since 2009. His community experience includes serving on the ETC Board and the RMCC membership committee and volunteering with youth sports, Summerfest, Cub Scouts, Pickleball, and directing traffic at the July 4 parade for 17 years. ★

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Speed Cameras, Vendor Tickets, Security are RMA Board Topics

By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)

The activation of new speed cameras, a proposed rule that would ticket vendors instead of residents, and a report from a committee looking into security were topics when the Rancho Murieta Association (RMA) Board met on Oct. 17.

Forester Phyllis Banducci also updated the board on the Cal Fire grant that will pay for wildland fire mitigation inside and outside the community. See the separate story in this issue.

Lidar cameras

General Manager Rod Hart reported that four new lidar cameras were operational but that the association wouldn't begin using them for speed enforcement until Oct. 23. For the first 90 days, drivers photographed speeding will only get a warning. "It won't be going against your record," he said.

The grace period would get everyone through the holidays before RMA begins sending citations, according to Hart. The intent is to slow traffic. "We are just trying to make things a lot safer since we have had some close calls," he said.

Audience member John

Merchant, who is researching the traffic impact of new development, asked Hart if the cameras could also be used for traffic counts. Hart said RMA would check with the vendor to if the cameras had that capacity.

The four lidar cameras have been mounted on poles on Murieta Parkway, Pera Drive, Murieta South Parkway, and Riverview Park.

Vendor Tickets

Director John Van Doran presented a request from the Governing Documents Committee at the request of its chairman, President Scott Adams, who couldn't attend the meeting. Van Doran said the committee

had completed its work on a new rule in which vendors with traffic violations would be issued citations, rather than their resident customers, as has always been the case before. Van Doran said the vendor fines will range from \$25 to \$100.

The board voted 5:0 to send the proposed rule to the membership for a 30-day review.

Security

Van Doran also reported on the Oct. 12 meeting of the ad hoc Security Committee since its chairman, Director Chris Childs couldn't attend the meeting. Van Doran said the committee discussed a number of topics related to the financing of the Security Department, which is currently operated by the Rancho Murieta Community Services District (CSD). The committee was formed to look at options since CSD lacks the funding to operate patrols 24/7.

Van Doren said the committee decided to seek a legal opinion on the feasibility of Measure J money being transferred from CSD to RMA. The group has also asked CSD for the figures



Audience member John Merchant asks if the new Lidar cameras that are intended to nab speeders could also be used to tabulate the volume of traffic. He was speaking at the Rancho Murieta Association regular board meeting on Oct. 17. Photo by Gail Bullen

on the costs to employ security officers. The committee also discussed the possibility of hiring a private security agency or using off-duty deputies to patrol the community, according to Van Doran. He said the committee will hold its next meeting on Nov. 9.

Other

In other business, the board took in reports

from the Architectural Review, Maintenance, and Recreation Committees.

The board will hold its next meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Nov. 14. The board decided at its September meeting to hold the November meeting a week earlier than usual because of the Thanksgiving holiday. ★

RMA Board Candidate Has Spotty Attendance Record

By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)

David Roy Harmon, one of four candidates in the upcoming Rancho Murieta Association Board election, had a spotty attendance record when he previously served on the board.

Harmon missed two meetings in 2009, six in 2010, and five in 2012, according to the board meeting minutes.

Marty Pohll, who now serves on the Rancho Murieta Community Services District (CSD), served on the RMA Board with Harmon. "I'm surprised that he is running again because of his lack of participation when he

was on the board before," Pohll said.

Randy Jenco, another CSD director, also served on the RMA Board with Harmon.

"I concur with what Marty said. I don't understand why he is running again based on the fact he missed so many meetings while he was on the board," Jenco said.

Vicky Lentz, who no longer lives in Rancho Murieta, also was a fellow board member. She said that missing two meetings as Harmon did in 2009 could happen to anyone. "But his second and third year was a pretty bad performance," she said.

The River Valley Times was unable to reach Harmon for comment. The phone number he provided to a reporter at the RMA

Candidates Night wasn't a good listing. He didn't include his phone number in his candidate's statement, and a 411 operator reported that his phone number was unlisted.

Harmon has a LinkedIn page, which says he hasn't posted yet. It states he earned a bachelor's degree from California State University - Sacramento in 1997 and was the president of the Management Information Systems Association, a student organization while attending the university. It also says that he has worked in IT Governance at Health Net from December 1997 to the present. The listing also states he was a founding member of the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) at Rancho Murieta. ★

SECURITY LOGS

The following is a summary of activity for the Rancho Murieta Community Services District Security Department for the following dates. Note: these log entries are condensed. For full security log details, go to the CSD website at www.rmcsd.com. A quick link to the security logs is on the home page.

RP = Reporting Person
GOA = Gone on Arrival
UTL = Unable to Locate
BOLO = Be on Look Out
NFI = No Further Information
QOA = Quiet on Arrival
HBD = Had Been Drinking

Rancho Murieta

Oct. 6

- One extra patrol.
- Disabled vehicle, 10:08 a.m. North Gate, tree service vehicle and trailer front down in front of the gate visitor lane, Placed safety cones around it until it could be towed.

Oct. 7

- Two extra patrols.
- Motorcycle escort 6:8 p.m. Lago Drive.

Oct. 8

- Five extra patrols.
- Follow up, 2:51 p.m. North Gate, investigating incident that occurred Oct. 7 at 12:12 p.m.
- Animal complaint, 10:42 p.m. Colbert Drive, quiet on arrival.

Oct. 9

- Three extra patrols.
- Parking enforcement, 3:36 a.m. north and south, two citations.

Oct. 10

- Three extra patrols.
- Parking enforcement, 4:17 a.m. north and south, three citations.

- Stop sign enforcement, 6:35 a.m. Murieta Parkway at Alameda Drive, three citations.

Oct. 11

- Juvenile delinquency, 6:03 p.m. Gazebo parking lot, report of juveniles fighting, Patrol contacted the juveniles and they said it was just horse play. No one was hurt or injured.

Oct. 12

- Two extra patrols.
- Stop sign enforcement, 7:27 a.m. Murieta Parkway and Albierto and Reynoso Drives, two citations.
- Overnight parking 8:31 a.m. entrance to Clementia Lake, contacted resident's adult son sleeping overnight in a vehicle with a friend. Advised to leave the area, which happened.
- Animal complaint 8:47 a.m. Stonehouse Road, large animal wandering on the road creating a hazard, UTL.
- Animal complaint, 12:01 p.m. Stableford Way, barking dog, referred to RMA compliance.
- Animal complaint, 2:12 p.m. Verona Drive, barking dog, owner not home, dispatch advised to contact owner by phone.
- Suspicious vehicle, 9:41 p.m. location not listed, upon arrival, the owner of the vehicle was nowhere to be found.

Oct. 13

- Three extra patrols.
- Animal complaint, 3:31 p.m. Rebaro Court, barking dog, patrol contacted homeowner who took care of the problem.

Oct. 14

- Resident complaint, 3:01 p.m. country club parking lot, man wearing camouflage apparently carrying a rifle case heading to the river. UTO.
- Stop sign violation,

7:42 p.m. Murieta Parkway and Celebar, two citations issued.

Oct. 15

- Four extra patrols.
- Motorcycle escort, 1:28 p.m. Anillo Way.

Oct. 16

- Seven extra patrols.
- Parking enforcement, streets on south, four citations.
- RMA rule violation, 6:20 a.m. The Retreats, construction workers arrived too early and were advised to make a U-Turn to wait outside the gate until 7 a.m. They disregarded instructions. Patrol located them at the construction site and escorted them off the premises.
- Stop sign enforcement, 9:45 a.m. north and south, three citations.
- Accident, 12:20 p.m. wooden bridge, report of a white golf cart involved in an accident. UTL. The accident wasn't reported.

Wilton Fire

- Eleven medical aids between Oct. 4 and 17

Oct. 9

- Commercial structure fire, 5:31 p.m. 12732 Hauschildt Road, Galt.
- Hazmat, 5:51 a.m. 8683 Rawhide Lane.

Oct. 12

- Grass fire, 12:51 p.m. 8885 Saddlehorn Court, Elk Grove.

Oct. 16

- Accident, 9:25 a.m. Highway 99 and Arno.

Oct. 17

- Vehicle fire, 3:48 a.m. Colony and Woods Roads

Sacramento County Sheriff's Office

- No incidents reported. ★

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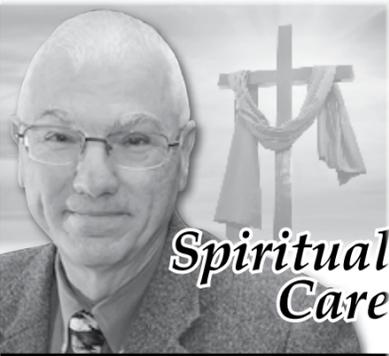
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BY NORRIS BURKES

Who am You When No One is Listening?

After 30 years serving as a hospital and military chaplain, I returned to the pastorate last year where I'm rediscovering the things I missed.

I can honestly say I missed preaching, potlucks and the playful fun I share with parishioners. (See how well a pastor can force alliteration into his/her points.)

But I must say, I don't miss the pressure clergy feel to recruit new parishioners. I was never much good at that.

However, in the Air Force I had ample opportunities to "troll for souls" because each base chaplain is assigned workplaces they must routinely visit. My assigned areas were the hospital and the Security Police station.

One day during a visit to the police station, I was warmly welcomed by a parishioner who worked as the desk sergeant. We sat down together inside his cubicle to talk about office issues.

But, a few minutes into our conversation, his boss called him away for a moment.

While he was gone, I remained in the cubicle, hidden away from the officers who just then entered the squad room.

Assuming they had an empty office, they began to talk.

Their "talk" quickly turned to the graphic nature of their dating life. As they told their can-you-top-this stories, one officer claimed his leading role as a "ladies man."

Each of his stories centered on his prowess with several women inside his large Ford Taurus.

But when they saw their supervisor reenter the room, they retreated to their break room.

"Do you want to have a little fun?" I whispered to my friend.

He gave me a hesitant nod, so I filled him in on the conversation I'd overheard. Then I asked him to introduce me to his fellow officers assembled around the donut box. (Apologies for the cliché.)

The sergeant and I entered the break room wearing matching grins.

Each officer gave me a hearty greeting.

I recognized the distinctive voice of the Taurus officer as I sensed his unspoken question, "How long have you been here chaplain?"

That's when my friend and I began our recruitment drive. "The chaplain thinks some of you might want to join him for chapel service."

Even with the police officers' sixth sense, they still did not surmise they were in the crosshairs of an incoming practical joke. Their answers focused on their excuses.

"I'm Catholic," one said.

"My wife's out of town," said the other.

"I don't have a car," said a third.

And with that divinely ordained cue, it was "Bombs away."

"Well, I understand that one of you has a nice big car you can use for church carpool."

They exchanged puzzled looks, but the eyes of the storied officer widened in fear. He knew we had him in "target lock."

"Yeah, I was sitting behind your supervisor's cubicle when you all walked into the office."

"You couldn't see me, but I could sure hear you. Which one of you has that Ford Taurus?"

Suddenly, my "smart (aleck) bomb" found its target in the one telling the car stories and he doubled over in excruciating embarrassment, retreating into his cubicle. From the noises he was making, I wondered if he was about to lose every donut he'd consumed on shift.

Pointing to the donut box, I said, "You know, I think it might have been Jesus who mentioned that it's not the things that go into a man's mouth that defile a man, but it's what comes out of the mouth that really messes him up." (Matthew 15:11 The Norris Paraphrase)

For a moment, the officer fancied himself the envied Casanova – but in the next moments, the exposure of his words melted him into shame.

In an effort to recruit friends, this officer had tried to be a different person to everyone he met. On his patrol beat, the officer was the protector for his community but to his friends he was the conqueror. And to his chaplain, he was a shy boy ashamed of what he'd said.

Recruiting friends and followers at the expense of who you are can get awfully expensive to one's integrity. My guess is that it's much easier to just be the same person to everyone we meet – which makes it much less likely we'll forget who we are.

My pastor gig starts at 10:30 on Sunday. Will any of you be joining us?

You can buy my new book "Tell It to the Chaplain" on my website, Amazon, or by sending me \$20. Send comments to comment@thechaplain.net. Leave recorded comments at (843) 608-9715 or write 10556 Combie Rd Suite 6643 Auburn, CA 95602. ★

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Joan Lake Wins 2023 Women's Golf Club Championship

By Lynn Baugher

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - The Rancho Murieta Women's Golf Club (RMWGC) held its annual championship on Sept. 10 and 17. After these two days of competition, Joan Lake had the lowest total score, ahead of her closest competitor by seven strokes. Her friends and fellow club members know her as a gracious, thoughtful and kind person, exhibiting those qualities on the course as well, with a healthy dose of competitive spirit. Not surprisingly, Lake was quick to credit her caddie, daughter Darcy Milligan, with keeping her calm, grounded and providing excellent advice.

Although Lake is one of the longer women hitters at Rancho Murieta, one of her playing partners reports that Lake's short game was "awesome." Joan admits that she was pleased at how well she was getting her shots "up and down."

As the 2023 champion, Joan will have her name engraved on the club trophy that was presented to her by Brian Little, Rancho Murieta's head golf professional. Yao Guo, the 2022 club champion, passed the perpetual yard sign on to Joan, who also received a pendant, flowers and \$150 in scrip.

There were additional winners in each of the three flights of the championship. In the Bronze Flight, (5500 plus yards), following Lake as the overall winner, Helen Kang in first place and Carrie Manriquez in second place. In the Combo Flight (5000 plus yards), the winners were Janet Olsen-Coyle



Joan Lake holds her trophy after winning the 2023 Rancho Murieta Women's Golf Club championship in the annual tournament. Photos Courtesy of Rancho Murieta Women's Golf Club



Other tournament winners pose for a photo. From left are: Therese Yannuzzi, Joanna Graf Janet Olsen-Coyle, Carrie Manriquez Joan, Anna Cowperthwaite Melissa Stepanick, and Alison Gomez, Helen Kang isn't pictures. the photo, was 1st in the Bronze flight.

first, Joanna Graf second, and Therese Yannuzzi, third. In the Platinum Flight 4300 plus yards, the winners were Anna Cowperthwaite first, Melissa Stepanick, second, and Alison Gomez third.

In addition to Lake's excellent play, there were two other notable rounds to mention. Anna Cowperthwaite had her lowest round ever with an 89 on the North, and Melissa Stepanick broke 100 for her first time during Sunday's play.

The RMWGC Championship is not new to Lake, as she played her way to the top in 2013. A 10-year gap in the title is unusual, and certainly impressive. It's a good message to all "mature" golfers that you don't have to be 20 or 30 or 40 to be a champ. Hats off to Joan.

Submitted by Lynn Baugher, baugher2@hotmail.com, edited by Gail Bullen

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