



Bulletin

Winter
2008

"Dedicated to Protecting the Quality of Community Life"

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION • BOX 9668, SOUTH LAGUNA, CA 92652 • FOUNDED IN 1946 • VISIT US AT WWW.SOUTHLAGUNA.ORG

WELCOME TO THE ANNUAL MEETING!

Tuesday, February 26, 2008, 7 p.m.
South Coast Water District, 31592 West Street

The program this year will feature Fire Chief Mike Macey, Fire Marshall Tom Christopher and a broad discussion on fire safety, including home safety, the urban-wilderness interface, protection of endangered species, water-cannons, gel-protective coating and evacuation.

As usual, there will be the election of board members for the coming year, both regular board members for a two-year term and alternates for one year. The nominating committee will propose a slate, there will be the opportunity for additional nominations from the membership and subsequent voting.

Also, of course, as specified in the bylaws, the annual treasurer's report will be available for all to see. Finally, great refreshments will be on hand. So come, renew friendships and make new ones. Participate in the happenings and future directions of South Laguna.

Carol Foote Thompson, 1923-2008

A 51-year resident of South Laguna, Carol Thompson was a stalwart and active member of the South Laguna Civic Association. She was consistently a moving force in issues that were important to the community. Most recently, she and her son, Gary, led the years-long, but ultimately successful, effort to keep one of Coast Royal's pedestrian easements open to the public.

In the early 1970s, Carol and her husband Rock operated the Third Hand Shop on the corner of Fourth and Coast Highway. At that time, the lot where the Video Store is now was mostly vacant, but it had a small shack that served as headquarters. The Thompson's "junk" was arranged in that building and on terraces throughout the property. In 1972, the couple hosted an SLCA garage sale there that raised \$11,000 for our legal fight to save the South Laguna hills in open space. Laura Wantz recalled that Rock and Carol were crowned king and queen of the Garage Sale. Later, Carol wrote a book, "The Joy of Junking." She and Gary, who lived with her for the past ten years, continued to be garage-sale regulars and swap-meet vendors.

The Thompson family lived in the same house, a his-

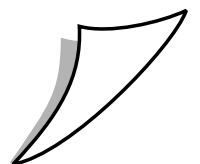
toric French provincial-style home, all these years. Carol was devoted to preserving the character of this charming house, and when the roof needed to be replaced, she took care that its wood shingles were applied in the wavy artistic style.

A memorial gathering hosted by her sons, Gary, Craig and Todd and their spouses and children, was held January 26, at her home. As family and friends gathered, they all

(Continued on page 3)

DUES, DUES, DUES

It may be time to renew your SLCA membership. Check the date on your mailing label. That's the date your membership expires. Please clip the coupon on the back page and mail it with your check in the enclosed envelope to SLCA, P.O. Box 9668, South Laguna, CA 92652-9639. ☀





The Planned Redevelopment of Aliso Creek Inn & Lots



Photos of Aliso Canyon courtesy of Village Laguna

As virtually everyone knows, the Athens Group is planning to redevelop Ben Browns (oh yes, we know it is now called Aliso Creek Inn, but still ...) as well as the lots above Driftwood and Marilyn. The SLCA board spent considerable time analyzing the preliminary proposal and presented our views to the City Council at their meeting on October 23, 2007.

HERE ARE EXCERPTS OF WHAT WE TOLD THE COUNCIL:

- Aliso Canyon is the heart of South Laguna, and indeed the birthplace of Laguna Beach. As an organization, the South Laguna Civic Association is committed to seeing that any changes are compatible with the community and beneficial to the natural resources of the canyon.
- We also recommend that the Council take a leadership role in the planning process for this property. After all, we have a general plan and zoning ordinance and it is the Council's job to uphold the laws and policies of the City.

HERE ARE OUR RECOMMENDATIONS WITH RESPECT TO ALISO CREEK INN AND GOLF COURSE:

1. The development must stay within the presently existing footprint.
2. There must be no changes to the existing General Plan, LCP or zoning. The present owners had to have been aware of the General Plan and zoning when they purchased the property. Thus, they must realize what the rules are — and they must play by those rules.
3. No residential units should be allowed in the canyon.
4. The Inn's entrance area now owned by South Coast Water District must remain public property. Ideally it

should become an estuary of Aliso Creek with a scenic roadway leading to the Inn.

5. There is no real need to try to reconstruct the historic Thurston house. If that house still stood, we would welcome its preservation. But to build an ersatz "historic" house seems to have no benefit.
6. We are very concerned about the amount of grading, 176,000 cubic yards of fill. This means too much land-form alteration, too many big trucks going in and out, too many traffic problems, too much air pollution.
7. In addition, we are also concerned about what happens to Aliso Creek. The plans do not at this time show the proposed configuration of the creek. Nonetheless, we believe that the creek should, to the maximum extent possible, revert to its natural condition. Restricting the creek to a narrow, high-walled channel is inappropriate in the extreme.
8. Low-cost options for public use of the facility should be built into the plan—these include low-cost lodging/youth hostel, moderate-priced restaurants, moderately priced golfing opportunities and non-valet parking provided for people who simply wish to enjoy a nice meal at the resort.

NOW, OUR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ALISO LOTS (PREVIOUSLY CALLED DRIFTWOOD ESTATES):

1. Here again, we are very concerned about the amount of grading — cut and export some 52,000 cubic yards. That's twice as much as the previous development contemplated. It must be substantially reduced.
2. A couple of added restrictions are also necessary. One is to mandate that after the initial grading is completed, no more than minimal site grading be allowed as the individual residences are constructed as we speak. ☀

Carol Foote Thompson, continued from page 1

could truly feel her presence as manifested in the thousands of objects in her collection. Since it was the end of the holiday season, there still remained her immense display of antique Christmas ornaments, including a huge collection of Santas. “Some as big as big Teddy bears, others tiny,” Councilmember Toni Iseman recalls. “I asked her son if she had a favorite ornament. He pointed to a small tree on a



At a 1972 Civic Association meeting to strategize on the South Laguna General Plan, Carol talks with Charlie Adermatt. Geologist Fred Pratley is at left, and SLCA President Lorell Long at right

bookshelf that had a string of popcorn. She had found it when she was out junking. It had been strung in 1913.”

Toni continues, “Photos showed her as a beautiful child, bride, mother and grandmother. Her smile was not just on her face, but in her voice. She never gave up on a battle, but was never shrill. The easement that she fought to save will soon have a plaque, ‘Carol’s Way,’ if I have my way.” ☀



South Laguna Civic Association garage sale, July 1972, at Carol and Rock’s Third Hand Shop. Jane Estep photos courtesy of Jane Janz, Laguna Beach Historical Society

Local Organic Farm Delivers Produce to South Laguna

By Lisa Marks

South Coast Farms of San Juan Capistrano delivers baskets of seasonal organic produce every two weeks to the front drive of a home on West Street in a program called “Community Supported Agriculture.” Three months worth of baskets, in two sizes, can be purchased in advance for \$30 and \$37 each. I got my first basket last week and was impressed at the freshness, variety and color. In addition to the lettuces, apples, oranges, lemons, carrots, potatoes and radishes, there were interesting greens, such as Tasoï (Japanese spinach) and purple kohlrabi, neither of which I had tried before. The napa cabbage was gorgeous and one could see the richness of the soil still attached at the base. I didn’t know that broccoli could be so fragrant, and the oregano was delicate and delicious. The farm gave us the best they had to offer.

Rebecca Noble, who co-manages the CSA program,



said: “Produce travels on average 1,500 miles and two weeks before it is put in the store. It loses a lot of nutrients in that time. And often it is picked green so that it can withstand shipping.” Rebecca said that what we buy at the pro-

duce stand at South Coast Farms or pick up in our biweekly baskets comes “straight from our dirt into your kitchen.” This helps us to reduce our carbon footprint. Organic farms, she said, “put no pesticides into the air or soil, and no runoff into the ocean.” And buying from local farms increases our food security.

I was concerned that I would not be able to eat the large quantity of fruits and veggies, but with some help from my friends, it’s almost gone. It was an adventure, and I

look forward to the next basket. If you are interested, contact South Coast Farms at 949-661-9381 or come and check out the baskets lined up on West St. If you’re in north or central Laguna, there is another drop-off site at Anneliese’s School with weekly and biweekly deliveries. ☀



South Coast Medical Center Plans in Progress

By Ann Christoph

By all accounts, our local hospital, South Coast Medical Center, is in crisis. This is due mainly to the looming cost of state-mandated earthquake preparedness upgrades to the structures, but also to the inherent problems of its location — convenient to Laguna Beach, but much less convenient to other potential customers in South County.

In recent years there were plans to close or relocate the facility, but thanks to an intense effort by the City and advocates in the community, the new administrator, Bruce Christian, is exploring options to keep the hospital viable and comply with the latest regulations.

Now the hospital is considering building a new acute-care facility between the tower and the existing entrance lobby and funding it by building a senior living center on the hillside land they own above Sunset.

Building above Sunset would cause the neighborhood to experience loss of open space, view impairment and increased traffic. Each of the already built expansion projects has already caused increased impact in the neighborhood and pitted the adjacent neighbors against supporters of hospital plans. Those who live close hear the constant noise of

the ventilation system, the generators and the traffic. They have experienced the loss of views and of open space.

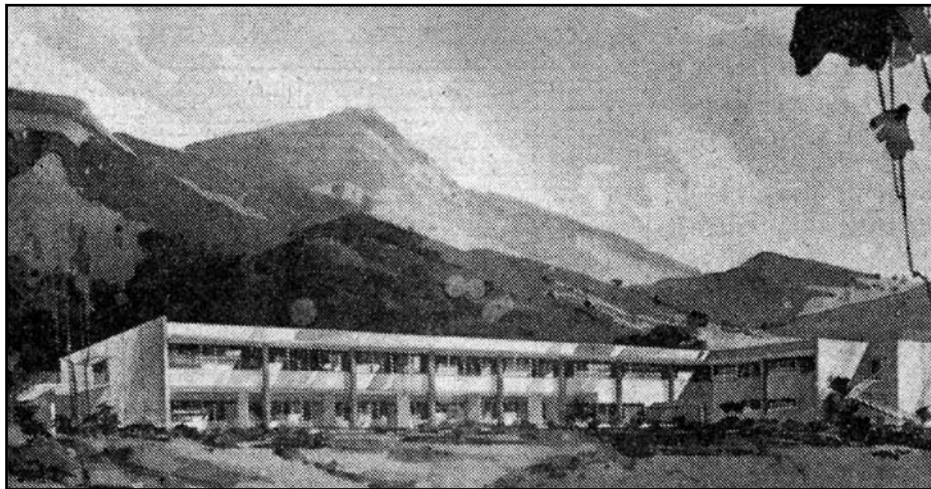
Since the City's survey revealed that 83% of our residents support keeping our hospital, a possibility is that community-wide funding could provide for all to participate in covering the costs such that the project actually improves how the hospital fits in the neighborhood while making it financially viable. Rather than pitting neighbors against hospital advocates, a united approach is needed to solve the hospital crisis. It's time to re-build better, not more.

In addition to donations, a hospital/community services district could be explored that would provide funding on a regular basis similar to a water district's budget. Or perhaps there could be a bond issue that would provide partial funding for the earthquake retrofitting in return for preservation

of the remaining hospital-owned open space above Sunset Avenue.

Our community has been creative and generous before. It can be done again.

(Excerpts from an article that originally appeared in the *Laguna Independent*) ☀



Artist's rendering from 1958 of what the original hospital was going to look like

SOUTH LAGUNA CIVIC ASSOCIATION DUES

- Individual \$15
- Family/Business \$25
- Supporting \$50
- Sponsor \$100
- Contribution for historical research \$ _____

Additional contributions are welcome!

Name _____

Phone (Day) _____ (Evening) _____

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City _____

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The SLCA is a non-profit organization; however, your contributions are not tax deductible.

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