

# *The La Honda Voice*

---



Friday, November 26, 2004

## **Meet the Candidates Night**

Since some of the candidates for the Cuesta La Honda Board of Directors could not make the "Meet the Candidates" potluck on December 5, organizer Carl Bralts has moved it to **December 6 at 7 PM** at the LHE School multi-purpose room. Come with your questions and suggestions for the candidates. Nine candidates are running for four positions - this many candidates may be a first in La Honda history.

## **La Honda History - Part 1**

...speaking of La Honda history, two weeks ago I provided some excerpts from an early history of La Honda provided by Charlie Catania. The original was typewritten in 1941 with handwritten corrections. It needed to be transcribed before it could be posted to the lahonda.com website. It is now here: <http://www.lahonda.com/history.htm>

## **La Honda Volunteer Fire Dept.**

### **Responds to Wind Storm on Nov. 20**

"This weekend's windstorm kept Southcoast firefighters very busy. Starting Saturday evening, Firefighters from CDF, Half Moon Bay, La Honda and Kings Mountain Fire Depts. responded to multiple wind related calls,

four involving fires. The first fire at Bean Hollow Rd at Hwy. One was reported at 9 pm. Once there, firefighters discovered an approximately 30 foot spot burning in roadside vegetation. It was as a result of downed power lines. The second fire was reported 9 minutes later and located at 210 Pigeon Point Rd. This fire resulted in damage to a storage barn as well as burning an apx. 40 ft. spot of the surrounding vegetation, it's cause is under investigation. At 5:49 Sunday Morning, a Structure Fire was reported at 901 Bean Hollow Rd with a second report of a structure fire in the area of the Cascade Ranch several miles to the south. Firefighters were sent to both locations, however only one fire was discovered at the Bay City Flower facility on Bean Hollow Rd. This fire was also the result of downed power lines that burned stored PVC pipe, plastic sheeting, agricultural equipment and approximately 1/4 of an acre vegetation. No structures were involved in this incident. Separately, State Hwy. 84 in La Honda was closed for over 20 hrs. as a result of downed power and communication lines." From Larry Whitney, Chief La Honda Volunteer Fire Dept (message 5205)

## **La Honda Creek Open Space Field Trip Report**

"On Saturday Nov. 20th, MROSD hosted a tour of their La Honda Open Space Preserve. The tour started at the Red Barn. After a short orientation at the barn itself, the group proceeded on an approximate 3 mile walk on one of the original ranch roads which ended up back at La Honda Road a couple of miles down from the Red Barn. Over all, the ranch road was in excellent shape and was a width of approximately 12 to 15 feet with gradual inclines and declines. It traversed through a variety of landscapes, two creek crossings, grasslands, hardwood forest, and redwood forest. There were many view openings on the road, some which were quite beautiful. The vegetation along the road sides was in excellent shape with little sign of degradation, with the exception of remnants of Redwood logging from long ago. Two points of interest off the road were noted. First was a grove of redwoods which had suckers which were white, AKA Albino Redwoods, the other was an acorn grinding site which local Indians may have used at one time. On the lower end of the road was a connection to a Driscoll Ranch farm road. Driscoll Ranch, as you know is located up Sears Ranch Road just beyond the elementary school and is contiguous with the La Honda creek reserve. Having access to this piece of property would be of great benefit to those in the community who like the outdoors. At some time in the future the Driscoll ranch will be connected to the La Honda Preserve. Those interested in using open space areas should take note that a planning process is underway to determine the use of this preserve which is walking distance from the La Honda Community. **The next meeting open to**

**public comment is to be held on December 6, 2004** between 7:00 PM and 9:30 PM at La Honda Elementary school gym. My understanding is that the first meeting which was held in early Nov. and the December meeting are the only two scheduled. People From La Honda please attend if you want to be part of the planning process." From Charlie Catania (message #5231)

"I'll add that in addition to or instead of attending the workshop, people can provide input via email (which also allows people who want to be anonymous to use a non-identifying email address) or letter. Also, if there is something(s) that people in La Honda want in particular...I strongly suggest getting together a letter for circulation or encouraging everyone to write in, especially if they're not going to attend the workshop." From Georgia (message #5244)

## **Cuesta Independent Action Coalition (CIAC) News Release 2**

"CIAC has nominated four Cuesta La Honda candidates to fill the four open positions on the Cuesta La Honda Board of Directors (BOD) in the upcoming December election. They are Mr. Grant Kern, Mr. Scott Hayes, Mr. Robert Dougherty and Mr. Bob Meehan. All four agree that they must run as a slate in order to be effective on the BOD... As the "true" budget begins to unfold, there are clearly ways to reduce expenses. This would directly be reflected in lower monthly assessments. Also, all four candidates would work towards finding alternative funding for large capitol projects; including low interest government loans, grants and

fundraisers. Lastly and most importantly, they all agree that there needs to be a friendlier attitude from the BOD to the membership. This includes frequent and clear communication from the BOD and the acceptance of suggestions to the BOD. They believe the Board needs to re-energize Committees with general membership involvement. We are arranging to have a "Meet the Candidates" pot luck before the election. Stay tuned for time and date. All candidates and all the membership will be invited and welcome to join in the fun. For more information please contact any of the following CIAC members or visit the [Cuesta-CIAC@yahoo.com](mailto:Cuesta-CIAC@yahoo.com) news group. Another informational news group is [lahonda@yahoo.com](mailto:lahonda@yahoo.com). Carl Bralts 747-0942...Robert Dougherty 747-0102...Grant Kern 747-9231...Scott Hayes 747-0857...Bob Meehan 747-0347" From the Cuesta Independent Action Coalition (message #5213)

### **Integrated Calendar**

The Voice has included an integrated calendar, including selected events at Apple Jacks, The La Honda House, the Fire Brigade the Cuesta Board, and Community Events. Let me know what other ideas you have. See the last page of this edition of *The Voice*.

### **See's Candy Sale for La Honda Educational Foundation**

"See's candy is on sale now at the Post Office in La Honda, at the market in Skylonda and at Woodside Pharmacy. We are selling the small holiday gift boxes (peanut brittle, chocolate santa gift pack, mini fancy candies, and assorted

chocolates) for \$4 each. All proceeds go to the La Honda Educational Foundation for teacher salaries, music and educational enrichment." From Paula Womack (message #5196)

### **Who owns the Roads around Cuesta & Related History Lesson**

"The guild maintains Ventura, Roquena, the far end of Woodland Vista. Maybe also Sueno Camino. And the part of Entrada that passes the playground. What most of these roads have in common is that they are on the periphery of La Honda. Way back in the mists of time when the other roads were given to the county, the Guild decided to hold onto these peripheral roads so that they could control access to land beyond Cuesta's boundaries. That's why you see signs that say, "Permission to pass is subject to control etc." In actual practice, the policy has failed to control anything and has been a huge expense for the Guild. We tried to hand these peripheral roads back to the county in the 1980's. I had a meeting with the county public works guy and with Anna Eshoo, who was on the San Mateo Board of Supes at the time. The answer then was the same as it is now. "County standards" are impossible to meet, as most county roads out here don't meet county standards, either. No amount of salting away money will ever enable us to bring these roads up to "county standards." We're stuck with them, and we might as well make the best of it. Entrada, by the way, is a special case. The section of road between the playground and the duck pond does not officially exist. It was not drawn on the original subdivision map - or at least so I am told. Every five years or so, a new wave of people get the idea that we should give the roads back to the county. Every five years of so, the new

wave of people run into the same brick wall." By Paul Fourt (message #5217)

### **Common Goals and Community Participation**

"We all care about this community. If we didn't care we wouldn't bother posting to this group, serving on the board (guild or school), building a playground, coaching soccer, helping out on fourth of July, organizing movie night, working on the fire brigade, participating in a guild committee, coaching baseball, helping out neighbors in need, organizing the La Honda Fair and the list goes on. We all share a common interest of doing what is right for the community. It's the people who care enough to volunteer and get involved that make this place so special. Lets not lose focus on that fact. With that said, it is ok to disagree and we all make mistakes. Hopefully out of disagreements comes compromise and from mistakes we gain knowledge. We need to embrace the diversity in the community and develop creative solutions to the difficult decisions we face. I don't have the answers. I, as do many others, have ideas. Some ideas may work others may not. What I do know from experience is that there is more than one way to achieve a common goal." From Grant Kern

Response to Grant from Jim Adams:  
"Thanks, Grant, With the misinformation about the BOD and its practices going around and some wild and simplistic solutions to actually complex problems being suggested, it's nice to hear a call for rationality. One good thing I'm seeing is participation in this group by folks who weren't heard from previously. As has been said before, more voices need to be heard

here in order to get a consensus. If one really original and usable idea comes from this and solves a problem, great! Simple, easy solutions to hard problems have been discussed at meetings and dismissed for rather good reasons. All the problems which remain to be solved are still there because, well, the solutions are difficult! I'd like to join you in encouraging members of our greater community to help in whatever ways they can. Paying dues to the fire department and going to the local fairs is a good start; recycling at the school and donating to local causes are ways to be a part of this town. There are many demands on our time and energy, and it can be intimidating to think about being more conspicuous by volunteering. But there is a wonderful payoff in fellowship...I suggest a New Year's resolution for anyone who's thought about getting involved locally: seek out a way to help in person. You will be welcomed!" From James Adams (message #5241)

### **The On-going Guild Budget and Assessment Question**

[The Voice has received an official response about the assessment/budget from Carol Prentice, the BOD President. She said it could be printed, as long as it remained in its entirety, which we have agreed to do. Also see John Bachelor's detailed response to a similar question in message #5246 on the La Honda Message Board. Part of the question to Carol was, "...what would have happened if the membership voted down the current budget - if nothing, I guess the next question is what were we voting on? The membership was told that the budget would revert back to last years with the special assessments..."]

**Answer from Carol Prentice:**

" Hi Bob - I realize that this issue is confusing, and I had hoped that our many explanations at the meeting would have made things clearer. The membership does NOT vote on the assessment - this is the state law according to the Davis-Stirling Act, which gives the Board both the authority and the responsibility to set assessments within certain specific limits. Because this is state law it supercedes our bylaws regarding assessments. This has been confirmed by the Guild's attorneys and is not a matter of interpretation - it is current state law.

The membership does not vote on the assessment unless the Board sees the need to increase the regular assessment by more than 20% and/or to levy a special assessment of more than 5% of the budget (as long as all the required materials have been sent to the membership during the stipulated time frame). Last year, because of the water treatment plant, the Board saw the need to raise the 2004 assessments beyond these limits and that is why we had a membership vote on the assessments. We had to conduct this vote by mail ballot because not enough members attended the November meeting to constitute a quorum for this type of vote as mandated by state law (more than 50% of the membership must vote). This year the Board is not contemplating setting assessments beyond the stipulated limits, so the membership did not, and will not, vote on the assessment for 2005.

The members vote on the budget, they do not vote on the assessment, and this is where I think the confusion lies. Our bylaws state that the membership must

approve the budget, and because there is no state law overriding this, we present the budget to the membership every November as directed by our bylaws. The membership votes on how the money is spent, not on how much the assessment will be. If the membership does not approve the budget, that has no bearing on what the level of the assessment will be.

When asked at the meeting what would happen if the membership did not vote to approve the budget, I clearly stated that I did not know what would happen (if I recall correctly I said that the idea made my head hurt, because it is not clear what we would have to do). Our parliamentarian stated that we would revert to last year's budget and to last year's assessment. I think the former (reverting to last year's budget) is probably correct, but I don't know for sure because there is nothing about this in our governing documents or in Davis-Stirling as far as I can see. The latter, that we would have to revert to last year's assessment, makes no sense to me, because the Board is responsible for setting the assessment, and we are not contemplating setting it at the level of last year's. Nevertheless, because this is what our parliamentarian stated, Detlef assumed she was correct and repeated this. Again, I suspect that the first part is correct and the second part is not, but I really do not know for sure.

When Carl Bralts asked us about this at the last Board meeting, my response was that because the membership DID vote to approve the budget, it would be a waste of association funds to consult our attorneys about it. I still believe that, but because of all the accusations and misinformation that is being bandied

about, we now have a request in to our attorneys for clarification. When we get it, we'll discuss it at the next Board meeting.

The Board is not trying to mislead anybody or to obfuscate anything. We are trying to deal with a complex set of state laws and an antiquated set of governing documents that don't always make sense in light of current state law. The bottom line is that we don't know what would have happened had the membership not approved the budget. I suspect that we would have reverted to last year's budget (which would have been absolutely insane, and the idea does indeed make my head hurt) and that the Board would still set the assessment at \$256. But I honestly don't know how that really would have played out. And this is what I said at the meeting. No Board member said that we would be forced to set the assessment at last year's level. I do not know on what basis our parliamentarian made that statement. But it is really all moot, because the membership did vote to approve the budget. And even if they had not, it would not affect the assessment, because setting the assessment is the responsibility of the Board. This was clearly stated multiple times at the meeting.

I hope this makes things clear. If you still have questions, please feel free to call me (747-0332) or send another e-mail. If you wish to print this response in the La Honda Voice, you have my permission to do so, as long as you print it in its entirety. If you plan to paraphrase it, please, please send what you write by me or another Board member first to check for factual accuracy. There is a lot of

misinformation being spread about the community regarding this issue, and I think I understand your intentions well enough to know that you would not want to contribute to that. Carol"

If you are interested in placing an article in The Voice or have other comments or suggestions, send them to [TheVoice@lahonda.com](mailto:TheVoice@lahonda.com). I usually put out this newsletter Friday morning, and am willing to accept articles as late as Thursday morning.

[The Voice@lahonda.com](mailto:TheVoice@lahonda.com)

Bob Dougherty - PO Box 132,  
La Honda - 650-747-0102

# The La Honda Voice Calendar

# November 2004

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
		<b>Election Day</b>					<b>Jay Walkin'</b> (6-8 PM La Honda House)
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	<b>La Honda Guild</b> General Membership Meeting <b>Chat &amp; Chew</b> with Jamie Cassady *
<b>Coyote Moon</b> (6 - 8 PM La Honda House)			<b>Veterans Day</b>				
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
					<b>Open Space's La Honda Creek Field Trip</b> (11/19 newsletter)		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
	<b>LHE Greenways group</b> (11/19 newsletter)		<b>***Thanksgiving***</b> Special Holiday <b>Dinner</b> at the La Honda House	<b>Swamp Soul</b> (9:30PM - 1:30 at Apple Jacks)	<b>Coastal Christmas Craft Fair</b> (11/19 newsletter) <b>Bundy Brown</b> (9:30PM - 1:30 at Apple Jacks)	<b>Lighthouse</b> (4PM - 8 PM at Apple Jacks)	
29	30	Notes: Contact TheVoice@lahonda.com to add events to calendar *Jamie Cassady, her sister Cathy, and Neal's former partner Ann Marie will talk about g living with Neal Cassady (cohort of Ken Kesey and Jack Kerouac)					



