

The



BASS LAKE BULLETIN

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The Voice of the Bass Lake Community

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Woodridge LLAD neighborhood entry wall and monument sign

CSD CONCEDES OAK KNOLL PARK ISSUE

In response to inquiries by Bass Lake Action Committee (BLAC), the Board of Directors of the El Dorado Hills Community Services District (CSD) has directed its staff to prepare assessment refunds totaling \$366,539.00 for the 294 residences of Woodridge, part of the Bass Lake Village Landscape and Lighting Assessment District (LLAD). In effect, the CSD conceded that the residents had been over-assessed since 2003.

Commenting on the CSD's action, BLAC President John Thomson said, "We are pleased that the CSD responded to our concerns so quickly. They handled the whole thing in a very professional manner."

BLAC had questioned whether the upkeep of Oak Knoll Park should be funded by the Bass Lake Village LLAD, asserting that the upkeep of the park was the responsibility of the CSD.

Readers will recall that the CSD manages the landscape and lighting assessment districts in El Dorado Hills. That is, it collects annual assessments and spends those collected funds to maintain the properties of the

various landscape and lighting districts.

Bass Lake Village LLAD is made up of two zones: Zone A and Zone B. Zone A includes 278 residential parcels in the Hills of El Dorado neighborhood on Bass Lake Road. Zone B includes 294 residential parcels in the Woodridge neighborhood on Bass Lake Road. BLAC believed that the CSD had incorrectly assessed parcels in Zone B of the LLAD.

Zone A was formed in 1995 to maintain about an acre of entry landscaping in front of the Hill of El Dorado at the intersection of Bass Lake Road and Magnolia Hills Drive, plus fifteen neighborhood streetlights. Zone A parcels have always been assessed at \$99.00 a year.

Zone B was formed in 1999, when Woodridge was annexed to the LLAD to maintain the entry landscaping on about an acre of land on the road right-of-way at the intersection of Madera Drive and Bass Lake Road, a park that was never built, and eleven street lights in Woodridge. Annual assessments of \$274.84 were collected until 2008-09 when

they were increased to \$299.00 a year.

BLAC became concerned about the LLAD when the CSD increased the Woodridge assessments to \$299.00 in spite of what appeared to be a \$225,000.00 surplus in the Zone B LLAD operating fund.

After a thorough examination of the documents surrounding the establishment and ongoing management of Zone B of the Bass Lake Village LLAD, BLAC notified the CSD that it believed that the CSD had over-assessed the Bass Lake Village LLAD in order to maintain the CSD's Oak Knoll Park, which BLAC contended had never been a part of the Bass Lake Village LLAD.

In January, BLAC President John Thomson sent a letter to CSD General Manager Wayne Lowery, setting forth BLAC's position and requesting that the CSD cease spending any LLAD money on the park. The letter also requested that a new engineering report be performed which included only the Woodridge entry landscaping and street lights, and asked for a refund of any over-assessment connected with LLAD money erroneously spent on Oak Knoll Park.

The decision to refund the over-assessments was made at a special CSD Board of Directors meeting on Thursday, January 29, 2009. A CSD press release on the following day set forth the amount of the refund and announced that a neighborhood meeting will be held to explain the refunds to the Woodridge residents. (See related story on page 2.) ~

Happy
Valentine's
Day



WOODRIDGE LLAD REFUND MEETING

The El Dorado Hills Community Services District (CSD) will hold a public meeting for the Bass Lake Village Landscape and Lighting Assessment District (LLAD) Zone B, that is, Woodridge, residents at 6:30 PM on Wednesday, February 11, 2008, at the Rescue Union School District board meeting room at the Green Valley School on Bass Lake Road.

The purpose of the meeting is to explain the correction to the LLAD Zone B assessments and the associated refunds to be paid to the Woodridge residents.

At the meeting CSD staff will answer questions about the refund, and will explain the refund process. BLAC understands that a refund claim form will be mailed to each Woodridge residence that, when properly completed and returned to the CSD for processing, will result in a refund check being mailed to the resident.

The amount of the refund will depend on how long a resident has owned their residence and how many years the assessment was paid.

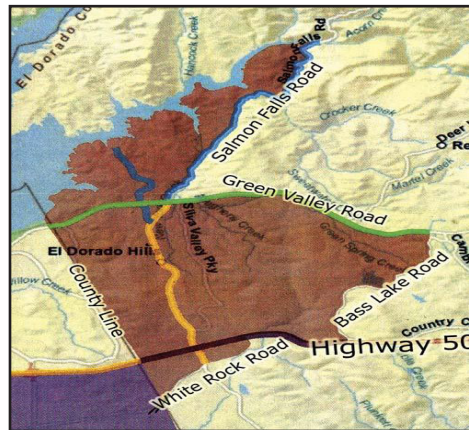
All Woodridge residents are urged to attend the meeting. Additional information is available by calling the CSD at (916) 933-6624. ~



CHP COVERAGE INCREASED FOR EDH, NOT FOR BASS LAKE?

The service area covered by the Rancho Cordova field office of California Highway Patrol has been expanded to generally include downtown El Dorado Hills and Serrano, but the change leaves Bass Lake, Four Seasons, and the Business Park in the area served by the Placerville CHP office (see map). The CHP has promised an increased CHP presence on El Dorado Hills Boulevard, Silva Valley Parkway, Green Valley Road and Salmon Falls Road.

The new Rancho Cordova field office was created to serve Rancho Cordova, Folsom and especially El Dorado Hills. It was part of a proposal to increase traffic safety and reduce drunk driving in the region. The plan was approved and went into effect on Jan. 5. The new office is currently housed with the Valley Division's headquarters in Rancho Cordova.



EDH new CHP coverage map

Residents of Four Seasons and Bass Lake are wondering why they were left out of the reorganization. What would be reasonable for citizens of those areas to expect from traffic patrols?

By statute the California Highway Patrol is given sole authority for traffic patrol, but in practice the Placerville CHP does not have resources for local traffic patrol. The Placerville CHP office operates almost exclusively in response to emergency calls, due to the large rural area they must cover, and at times has as little as one patrol car available for western El Dorado County.

Visible traffic patrol was virtually nonexistent in the past in Bass Lake. Residents are asking what will happen now? According to the CHP, jurisdiction lines are not a factor for emergency response, but what about routine traffic patrol to deter speeders?

BLAC vice president Kathy Prevost intends to ask CHP representatives from both Placerville and Rancho Cordova offices to meet with BLAC and learn what the change means to the folks that live along Bass Lake Road. ~



New end-of-sidewalk barrier

BASS LAKE VILLAGE LLAD SAFETY BARRIER QUICKLY REPLACED

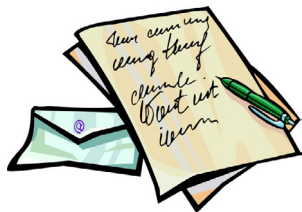
Acting on a recommendation from Bass Lake Action Committee, the El Dorado Hills Community Services District was prompt in erecting a new safety barrier at the western end of a sidewalk along Bass Lake Road. The sidewalk is part of the entry landscaping of the Hills of El Dorado neighborhood, around the intersection of Bass Lake Road and Magnolia Hills Drive. The entry landscaping is part of the Bass Lake Village Landscape and Lighting Assessment District.

Evidently the old barrier had rotted away, leaving the end of the sidewalk dangerously unmarked. The new barrier, painted white with red reflectors, is a definite improvement to pedestrian safety.

BLAC understands that the CSD is also in the process of accepting bids for the repair of another portion of the same sidewalk where it was previously damaged by construction work. ~



THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Hello Everyone,

I would like to acknowledge all of the kind emails and phone calls that I received lately congratulating BLAC on its success in obtaining the assessment refunds for Woodridge residents. To all our members and supporters I say, "it couldn't have been done without you."

I also want to commend the CSD Board of Directors for doing the right thing, and responding to our concerns in such a timely manner.

We are now in our seventh year of serving the folks that live up and down Bass Lake Road. While we may not always agree in the short run, I know that in the long run we all have the best interests of our particular slice of El Dorado Hills in mind.

Membership renewals will be going out to our members this month, and I encourage all of our members to sign up for another year. I would also like to take this time to thank our many supporters, and to let them know that their donations are always gratefully accepted.

The question of traffic patrol has again come to the fore with the redrawing of traffic patrol boundaries. BLAC is working diligently to find out how this will affect our part of El Dorado Hills. Hopefully we can provide you with some answers soon.

I had the opportunity to meet with our new Assemblymember, Alyson Huber, last month. I was encouraged by our exchange, and I look forward to working with Alyson, and our new county supervisors, John and Ray, on an ongoing basis.

Again, thank you all for your support and encouragement. Together we will try and make our community a little better each day.

John E. Thomson

President



WHAT IS NORMAL CALIFORNIA WEATHER?

California's climate is often described as a Mediterranean climate, one that resembles the climate of the lands in the Mediterranean Basin. In addition to the areas surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, this climate type prevails in much of California, in parts of Western and South Australia, in southwestern South Africa and in parts of central Chile.

The California climate is characterized by hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters. Scientists tell us that these year-to-year variations are partially tied to the variable Pacific Ocean current cycles. El Niño and La Niña are opposite phases of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) cycle, with La Niña sometimes referred to as the cold phase of ENSO and El Niño as the warm phase of ENSO. The position of these ocean currents relative to California's coast has an affect on our weather: how hot our summers are and how wet our winters are.

Novelist John Steinbeck commented on the climate of his native California in his novel *East of Eden*: "And it never failed that during the dry years the people forgot about the rich years, and during the wet years they lost all memory of the dry years. It was always that way."

Even those of us who are native Californians sometimes forget that the normal climate of California includes both droughts and years that are particularly wet. Very rarely does California weather actually match the long-term average. For example, our state's "average" annual water runoff is 71 million acre-feet (MAF), but runoff can easily range from 15 MAF in dry years like 1977 to 135 MAF in exceptionally wet years such as 1983.

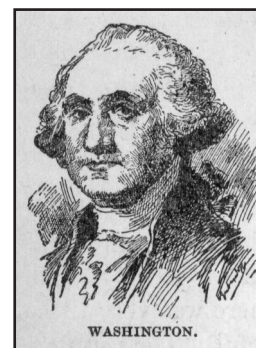
To clarify, runoff is a term used to describe the water from rain, snowmelt or irrigation that flows over the land surface and is not absorbed into the ground, instead flowing into streams or other surface waters or land

depressions. An acre-foot of water is enough water to cover an acre of land with one foot of water, which is roughly 328,000 gallons, so that three acre-feet equal about a million gallons of water.

Accurate California rainfall records go back only about 100 years, but climatologists have been able to reconstruct California's climate history by using tree rings from both long-lived pine trees and information from dead trees found preserved in lakes. You will remember that trees add a growth ring to their trunk every year, with a thin tree ring denoting a dry year, and a wide one meaning a wet year. The data indicate that there were two epic drought periods in California in the Middle Ages (500 A.D. to 1500 A.D.); one lasting 140 years, and one that lasted 100 years.

The Twentieth century was not one that can be considered "normal" when California's long term climate is examined. Even though the worst drought in 400 years lasted from 1929 to 1934, the twentieth century was actually one of the wettest centuries on record for California, which means that we are currently living in the best of times, climatologically speaking.

So when we say that the weather is "unusual" or "not normal" in California, what we really mean is that the weather is perfectly normal. ~



IT'S OFFICIALLY GEORGE WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY

Washington's Birthday is a United States federal holiday celebrated on the third Monday of February. It is commonly and mistakenly known as Presidents (or President's or Presidents') Day. The holiday is also celebrated in a number of states.

Washington's Birthday was originally established as a federal holiday in 1880 for federal government offices in the District of Columbia, and the holiday was extended to include all federal offices in 1885. It was the first federal holiday to honor an Ameri-

(continued on page 4)

WASHINGTON *(continued)*

can citizen, and the holiday was originally celebrated on Washington's actual birthday, February 22.

In 1971 Washington's Birthday was shifted by Congress to the third Monday in February by the Uniform Monday Holiday Act. The Act would have renamed the holiday as Presidents Day to honor both Washington and Lincoln, but after an outcry by the populace, the holiday was kept as Washington's Birthday.

In the late 1980s, with a push from advertisers, the erroneous term "Presidents Day" began to be used. This advertising theme has expanded the focus of the holiday to honor another president born in February, Abraham Lincoln, and often other presidents of the United States. The myth of Presidents Day sort of evolved, by word-of-mouth, abetted by advertisers, perhaps as a way to appease both the Lincoln people and the Washington people.

Although Lincoln's birthday, February 12, was never a federal holiday, a dozen or so state governments have officially renamed their Washington's Birthday observances as Presidents Day, Washington and Lincoln Day, or other such designations.

In California, both Washington's Birthday and Lincoln's Birthday are legal state holidays. In 2009, Washington's Birthday is observed on February 16, and Lincoln's Birthday on February 12. ~

*Afternoon in February*

*The day is ending,
The night is descending;
The marsh is frozen,
The river dead.*

*Through clouds like ashes
The red sun flashes
On village windows
That glimmer red.*

-- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

PHASE I OF HOV LANE PROJECT ON SCHEDULE

Phase I of the project to widen Highway 50 in the center will extend the existing east and west-bound High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes east from where they now end at El Dorado Hills Boulevard to the top of Bass Lake Grade, just before Bass Lake Road. It will be necessary to replace the three bridges at the El Dorado Hills Boulevard interchange, and widen the Clarksville Bridge (the Silva Valley Parkway underpass), to accommodate the new lanes.

The HOV project will contribute toward the planned interchange improvements at Highway 50 and El Dorado Hills Boulevard by replacing the El Dorado Hills Boulevard bridges. The current HOV project calls for widening the freeway where it crosses over El Dorado Hills Boulevard. Future interchange improvements call for widening El Dorado Hills Boulevard (and Latrobe Road) as it passes under the freeway. Completely replacing the bridges now is more cost-effective than spending the money to widen them, only to have to replace them in the near future.

Replacing those bridges will also allow the existing eastbound truck lane (the extra right lane) that starts at Bidwell to be extended through El Dorado Hills to the existing truck climbing lane for the Bass Lake Grade, eliminating a bottleneck.

The Clarksville bridge over Silva Valley Parkway will simply be widened to accommodate the additional freeway lanes, since the planned Silva Valley interchange will be built over the freeway east of the present underpass. Drivers on Silva Valley have already noticed that construction has begun on the bridge-widening process.

Phase II is expected to start right after the completion of Phase I. ~

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NEXT BLAC MEETING ON MONDAY, MARCH 2

The next meeting of the Bass Lake Action Committee will be held at 7:00 PM on March 2, 2009, at the home of Hal and Barbara Erpenbeck, 9045 Orchid Shade Drive, El Dorado Hills, 95762 (530-677-5533).

The tentative topic of discussion will be the changes in the California Highway Patrol coverage area and the effect of those changes on residents along Bass Lake Road. BLAC plans to invite representatives from both the Placerville and Rancho Cordova CHP offices.

For further information, please contact BLAC vice president Kathy Prevost at the number below. ~

A PROUD SUPPORTER OF

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