

HORSIN' AROUND IN LAKESIDE by Betty McMillen 1-25-05

Nary a word was mentioned in the other newspapers or TV news but a landmark decision was before the Board of Supervisors on January 12. They voted unamiously to approve the new County Trails Map. This will be a monumental improvement to the development of new trails and connecting old trails to create a Regional Trails System in San Diego County for equestrians, hikers and bikers.

Eighteen communities chose to be included in the voluntary process. What it means for Lakeside is that now new development will be required to provide trails around or through their projects and that Lakeside schools, libraries, parks and open space will be connected to all existing trails.

Maryann Vancio, the County Trails Program Coordinator, worked with each community's trails committee for 2 1/2 years to see what would work for them. It was a great effort by the various sponsor groups and planning groups who put in hundreds of volunteer hours to make it work in their neighborhoods. They were very dedicated. As a result nine regional trails and numerous local trails were identified.

At the Board of Supervisors meeting there were 35 speakers wishing to talk to convince the Supervisors to accept their trails proposal. Lakesider, and horsewoman, Joan Embery, was one of the speakers, she said "We desperately need these trails for the good of everybody, every year that goes by makes this issue more challenging and difficult to achieve. In these busy days people need to see and appreciate nature around them." The Blossom Valley Riders, Eucalyptus Hills Horse Owners, Lakeside Frontier Riders, Mountain Bike Association, S.D. Trails Council and Bonita Valley Horsemen were there to support their local trails advocates.

In other local news, the Lakeside Frontier Riders had their monthly meeting last week. Besides the County Trails Plan the other hot topic of discussion was the closure of the Los Caballos Horse Camp in Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. The horse camp was burned out during last year's fire storm revealing a Native American village and Indian artifacts. Now the State Parks are considering not reopening Los Caballos due to new State Preservation Regulations.

Various horse clubs are joining forces to establish the Cuyamaca Equestrian Association and have become pro active in restoring trails. They are also writing letters and signing petitions in support of reopening Los Caballos at it's former site. According to Cindi Denny, the least impact is to keep the camp where it is, but there is some discussion of moving it to a nearby meadow. It could take two to five years before the horse camp would reopen.

Another concern the equestrians discussed was the proposed rezoning of agriculture land in Moreno Valley to M58, the heaviest of industrial uses, the loss of rural community character and riding and hiking trails would be detrimental to Lakeside.

The Lakeside Frontier Riders are planning a campout at Stagecoach Camp near Borrego State Park for February 19 -22. A Poker Ride and Endurance Ride are in their future plans as well. For more information on this club and their activities call President Steve Denny at 441-9277.

Local preservationists are still working to save the Lakeside Theater/Old Town Hall. The Maine Avenue Revitalization Association is joining forces with the Broadway Players to produce the play "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown". The play will be a fundraiser for the old theater on Maine Avenue and it will take place at the Lakeside Community Center on March 11 and 13. The Friday evening performance will be a dinner theater show, while the Sunday show will be geared toward children. For more information on this project just call the Maine Avenue Revitalization Association office at 443-3038.

So what are you or your club doing this Winter? Just give me a call at 443-1133 and I will help you spread the word.