



LOCAL NEWS...

Blackwater Pulls Project

by Raymond Lutz

In a letter to the County Department of Planning and Land Use dated March 7, 2008, Brian Bonfiglio, V.P. of Blackwater Worldwide, simply stated that "After examining the capacity of our existing facilities and our business development goals, we have decided not to pursue plans for a training campus in Potrero."

Oh, the joy! But is it real? Pinch me!

I received the word on Friday at about 2 p.m. from Ann Kreuger of the Union Tribune. She said Bonfiglio said that the noise criteria would not be able

to be met, particularly along the eastern boundary of the property right behind the shooting ranges that were planned along that side of the property.

If the public had simply ignored the project, as Blackwater probably assumed would have occurred, then the County DPLU may have let the noise issue slide through without much analysis. However, with the high level of public scrutiny, the DPLU may have actually been doing the work we expect on this.

Or it could have simply have been a cover story, developed to allow BW to duck out of the project without giving any merit to the views of the public. Actually, the Harris wildfire disaster was likely the death knell of the project, and Blackwater knew it long ago, but they just needed to find a time to back out that would not link their change of heart to any activist action. That would empower the public too much and would endanger any future expansion plans in other parts of the country.

Instead, they wanted to quietly pull the project, announcing it—as is standard practice for "bad" corporate news—late on Friday afternoon so it would miss the news deadlines. Friday, March 7th was their last chance before the newly reconstituted Potrero Community Planning Group (PCPG) would meet and reconsider the Blackwater

See Local News on page 2.

East County Democratic Club

Serving El Cajon, Rancho San Diego, Jamul, Lakeside, and outlying San Diego County since 1965

OFFICERS:

President Kristy Mundt
1st Vice President Tom Lamb (Tent.)
2nd Vice President Karen Marie Otter
Treasurer Raymond Lutz
Secretary Tina Rynberg

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Membership Tina Rynberg (Tent.)
Outreach Tom & Kathy Lamb
Refreshments Bonnie Rawson
Book Club Jon Scanlon
Newsletter Madeline McDowell
Calendar Gloria Martes

CONTACT:

Telephone 619-933-1526
Email info@ecdcweb.org
Mailing Address: PO Box 252
El Cajon, CA 92022

MEETING LOCATION:

Rancho San Diego Library
11555 Via Rancho San Diego
El Cajon, CA 92019
(Unless otherwise noted!)

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL
IN PROGRESS!**

Current Events Theater presents BIG BUY BIG PHARMA

Sunday, Mar 30, 2008 2pm

Rancho San Diego Library

(Social Networking: 1:30 pm)

NOTE: 5th (not the 4th) Sunday!

This film pulls back the curtain on the multi-billion dollar pharmaceutical industry to expose the insidious ways that illness is used, manipulated, and in some instances created, for capital gain. Focusing on the industry's marketing practices, media scholars and health professionals help viewers understand the ways in which direct-to-consumer (DTC) pharmaceutical advertising glamorizes and normalizes the use of prescription medication, and works in tandem with promotion to doctors. Combined, these industry practices shape how both patients and doctors understand and relate to disease and treatment. Ultimately, Big Bucks, Big Pharma challenges us to ask important questions about the consequences of relying on a for-profit industry for our health and well-being.

Narrated by Amy Goodman, the film features interviews with Dr. Marcia Angell (Dept. of Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School; Former Editor New England Journal of Medicine), Dr. Bob Goodman (Columbia University Medical Center; Founder, No Free Lunch), Gene Carbona (Former Pharmaceutical Industry Insider and Current Executive Director of Sales, The Medical Letter).

SCHEDULE

22 Mar 2008 (Sat) 1pm
Potrero Reunited Party, See details in this issue. BOB FILNER keynotes.

25 Mar 2008 (Tues) BobFilner's
gala reception: Mission Bay!

28 Mar 2008 SANDAG hearing
on SRPL (9am) important.
Suite 800, 401 B St

28-30 Mar 2008
State Party Convention, San Jose

30 Mar 2008 (5th Sunday)
Current Events Theater (2pm)
BIG BUCKS BIG PHARMA

30 Mar 2008 (5th Sunday)
ECDC Board Meeting (4pm)

12 Apr 2008
Roosevelt Dinner – Holiday Inn on the Bay, 1355 N. Harbor Dr. BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!

13 Apr 2008 (Sun) 1:30pm
ECDC Meeting. Earlier time.

20 Apr 2008 (Sun)
Earth Fair, Balboa Park

27 Apr 2008 (5th Sunday)
Current Events Theater (1:30pm)
Crossing Arizona Earlier time.
Board Meeting (3:30pm)

LOCAL NEWS (Cont.)

project on Thursday, March 13th. Begging the new board of nine members who were in opposition to the project for their approval, despite being only advisory, was much more humility than you can expect from a company that is used to getting every possible break from the Bush administration.

With all that said, the juxtaposition of the announcement of the candidacy of Raymond Lutz just a day earlier was too good to ignore. In my announcement, Lutz threatened to take this issue to the State Assembly and work to severely limit the operation of such camps (oh, that's right, they call it a "campus" now, or perhaps an "academy" as suggested by Gordy) run by mercenary-like companies similar to Blackwater Worldwide. I can imagine the corporate staff in North Carolina reviewing the press release (which was sent out nationally) and coming to the realization that this training camp would be nothing more than a liability over time, and nothing more than a boon for troublemaker Lutz to get publicity for his campaign.

We have no way to know what actual rationale was used to come to their decision, but I don't believe their claim that the public outcry had nothing to do with it. Of course it did, and it was a huge part of their decision, but they don't want us to know about the power we have. Oh my gosh, that means we might have the guts to stick other projects up their gun barrels.

Blackwater has been desperately looking for PR cover. I noticed a video press release put out by their firm stating that they had saved 600 lives. Gee, that makes up for the massacre in Nishoor Square, doesn't it? Hardly. They were talking about potential lives saved by the blood donated during the blood drive of a few hundred employees. Erik Prince received the plaque personally. How heart warming!

At the same time, they conveniently forgot to announce the closure of the Blackwater West project. Hmmm.

This whole project was a lesson in how public pressure is one of the most powerful tools we have in our tool box.

On Thursday, March 13th, the Potrero Community Planning Group (PCPG) met and finally filled the three empty seats, seats that had remained



PCPG, with vacant seats filled. From left, Mary Hall, Janet Warren, William Crawley III, Karey Giguere, Carl Meyer (chair), Terry Stephens, Jan Hedlun, Tina Brown, Janet Goode.

vacant ever since it was discovered that the prior planning group had never requested approval by the Board of Supervisors of their appointees.

After swearing-in the new members and hearing an extensive presentation by a county official regarding the new county plan, the group considered a ceremonial resolution to deny the Blackwater approval of their project.

Resident Brenda Wise read a letter she had obtained from the county stating that the resolution would not have any function and would not amend the project file in any fashion.

Nevertheless, the board read the resolution and voted unanimously to deny the application by Blackwater Worldwide in their proposal to create a mercenary-type training camp in the Round Potrero valley. How sweet.

Good bye, Blackwater!

Potrero Party Planned

by Raymond Lutz

Celebrate, come on! Yes, we will be having a celebration party in Potrero, to encourage healing and reconciliation.

WHAT: potluck, speeches, music, poetry, etc.

WHY: celebrate the power of citizen action!

BRING: Food To Share, drinks, hats, chairs.

WHEN: Saturday, March 22nd,
Gather at Noon

Main Event 1pm-3pm

Music and conversation until 5-6pm?

KEYNOTE: **Rep. Bob Filner**

SPEAKERS:

Jan Hedlun (champ!), Carl Meyer, plus all current and former PCPG, Steve Kowit (poetry?!), Jeanette Hartman (Sierra Club), Carol Jahnkow

(Peace resource ctr), Susan Friedman (Activist San Diego), Raymond Lutz (Citizens' Oversight), PLUS: Anyone else!

WHERE: 23975 Yerba Santa Rd., (Same as Oct. Rally!)

DIRECTIONS: From SD, East on 94. N on Potrero Valley Rd,

L on Round Potrero Rd. to 23975 Yerba Santa Rd., Potrero, 91963

EVERYONE WELCOME!

just a friendly get together, share food, music, etc.

Heal any wounds! Put this difficulty behind us and look forward to the future!

FOR DISCUSSION: The future of Round Potrero Valley.

CONTACT: citizensoversight.org
raylutz@citizensoversight.org
619-820-5321

SRPL Slammed

by Raymond Lutz

SDG&E never saw it coming. I've been told that at the first meeting, they had just a dozen residents listening to their plan for the Sunrise Power link. February 25th and 26th, over 1,000 people came to four meetings with over 350 people voicing their concern about the project. Only a dozen or so "skills" spoke for the project, speaking with the same talking points each time.



Administrative Judge hears public comments from nasty crowd of about 250 in Borrego

The amazing thing about this project is the lack of justification provided by SDG&E, and the parent corporation, Semptra Energy. The scoping meetings held around the county over the past year just stated that the power line was essential and then asked which route was the best. Did we want to go through the Anza-Borrego Desert State Preserve or should it run in about a dozen other routes, some of which were much more southerly, consuming private property along the way?

When you looked at the map, you would wonder why they went to such lengths to get the route all the way up to a station near Warner Springs. They say we

need the 500 KV, 1000 MW transmission line to bring in power from geothermal plants and solar power stations in the desert. But why, you would ask, does the route go up to Warner Springs instead of going directly to San Diego?

Over time, SDG&E spilled the beans, admitting that the power line is not necessary to bring in power from renewable sources in the desert. When you pull back the facade, you find the real plan of Semptra Energy.

It turns out that their real game plan is to bring in Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from Asian sources by shipping it across the ocean, then unload it at a new LNG port just north of Ensenada. From there, the LNG is regassified and pumped through a new 30-inch pipeline to Mexicali, where the LNG powers a number of traditional power plants, located just south of the border.

A California smog agency, the South Coast Air Quality Management District, contends that the imported gas carried on the North Baja pipeline poses environmental risks and unsuccessfully asked the federal commission to consider possible environmental consequences.

The so-called "hot" gas has a different chemical composition and higher heating content than natural gas currently used in Southern California, and the air quality district contends burning it can increase emissions of nitrogen oxides, a cause of ozone and fine particulate pollution.

Why do you think they located the plants south of the border? That's easy to figure out – it's to avoid dealing with our pollution laws up here. Unfortunately, the pollutants don't respect the international border, we all breathe the same air.

Then, SDG&E admitted that the SRPL was simply to bring that "dirty" power into the US and cart it up to Warner Springs, where it would tie into a line to service LA. Guess what? This has nothing to do with San Diego after all.

With a Blackwater feather in our collective headdress, I say we meet the SRPL on the warpath. What say you?

ECDC Endorsement Meeting

by Raymond Lutz

One of the most important meetings of the year for any club is the endorsement meeting. Endorsement of candidates is only of the only official powers of the clubs, and they are smart to savor every moment.

On March 9th, the East County Democratic Club hosted a candidate forum and endorsement vote regarding the Candidates for the 52nd Congressional District. The candidates Vickie Butcher, Connie Frankowiak, Jim Hester, and Mike Lumpkin were invited to the event.

If you recall, we processed our endorsement questionnaire at the February meeting, and distributed that questionnaire to all the candidates for their replies. We received responses from the Butcher and Lumpkin campaigns. (Prior or subsequent to the event, we learned that both Hester and Frankowiak had dropped out of the race.)

The two candidates met before a full house at the Rancho San Diego Library, with every seat taken and a number of people standing in the rear and along the back wall, well over sixty people in attendance.

After five-minute introductory speeches, the two candidates accepted a slew of questions from the membership, testing their prowess on the issues and probing their true dispositions

After about an hour of such questions, the candidates and their staff were requested to leave the room so the membership could have an open discussion.

Finally, the vote, open to members who had been members for at least 30 days. The final tally was recorded as follows:

Vickie Butcher	12	21.4%
Mike Lumpkin	43	76.8%
Abstain	1	

According to club bylaws, for a candidate to receive the club's endorsement when more than one Democratic candidate is running in the same race, they must receive at least 66.6% of the vote. If no candidate receives at least that fraction, the "no endorsement" results.

THANKS to both candidates for their participation!

Please send any comments to
newsletter@ecdcweb.org.



President's Message



With the endorsement meeting now over. We have work ahead of us to help get these candidates into office. Please, take the time and contact each of the candidates and offer your time to help get the word out for each of them.

We have to know that the only way to change the country is to work for the bottom up. We have to work in our own backyards -- here.

With the Santee Democratic Club, La Mesa/ Foothills Democratic Club and East County Democratic Club all endorsing the same candidates we can all work together to make this happen.

Here are the candidates we are endorsing right now.

For County Supervisor, **Rudy Reyes**. You can reach Rudy at this web site: reyes4supervisor.com

For the 77th Assembly District, **Raymond Lutz**. You can reach Raymond at this web site LutzForAssembly.com

For the 52nd Congressional District, **Mike Lumpkin**. You can reach Mike at lumpkinforcongress.com

Now that I have taken over as President of the club, I need someone to step forward to help with the membership committee, which I was chairing prior to becoming the President. It will have to be someone who has some computer skills. Let me tell you I am not a computer wizard and I have been doing it for the last year, so if I can do it, almost anyone can do it. So if you want to help the club and can attend most of the meetings please contact me so we can see if it is something you would like to do. This is a very important position!

Kristy Mundt
President
East County Democratic Club

EAST COUNTY PROGRESSIVE

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ECDC
PO Box 252
El Cajon, CA 92022
www.ECDCweb.org

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

ECDC MEMBERSHIP FORM

(Don't miss any future issues!)

	Single	Dual/Couple
Student/Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20
General	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Sustaining	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Sponsoring	<input type="checkbox"/> \$125	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200
Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> \$750
Newsletter Only	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10 (free if member).	
<input type="checkbox"/> I am a Democrat		
<input type="checkbox"/> I am not a Democrat but wish to join as a non-voting Associate		
<input type="checkbox"/> Please send newsletter as email (PDF).		
<input type="checkbox"/> My name and address as shown on the label is incorrect, see corrections --->		
<i>if you contribute over \$100 per year:</i>		
Employer	/Occupation:	
_____	/ _____	

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MORE TID BITS

Petitions to Circulate E.C.

By Raymond Lutz

Even with people who think G. W. Bush walks on water, I generally can agree on one thing: the El Cajon City Council is a mess. With \$6.2 million in red ink, they manage to decide that now is a splendid time to rip up Main Street again. Sure, it's a different fund, we've heard that before.

But now, we've got something we can do to make a difference. Two petitions, put forth by outgoing councilmember Dick Ramos, need El Cajon volunteers to help get signatures. We should shoot for about 4500, just to make sure they are approved. If just 45 volunteers can get 100 signatures each, we can make the goal. Signature gatherers must be El Cajon residents and only El Cajon voters can sign them.

The first petition will limit campaign contributions for city council members

and the Mayor to less than \$200 per year. Right now, there are no limits at all, and last election season, we noticed contributions of fifty times that limit. Legalized bribery is what that is. It must stop!

The second petition will institute term limits, limiting the number of years a person can be the Mayor or serve on city council to no more than twelve years, and hopefully, to make that effective retroactively. That would mean that Mayor Mark Lewis and Bob McClellan would have to give us a break from their antics. PLEASE!

The deadline is May 16th to turn these in, and if sufficient signatures are valid, the campaign limits and term limits will become law.

We can carry both petitions at the same time. While we are at it, we should also attempt to register as many voters as possible. In El Cajon, there are about 95,000 residents. Of those, there are about 34,234 registered voters. With 11,101 Democrats and 14,870 Republi-

cans, we are only 3,769 from parity. If we assume that about 25% of the residents are under age, then that means we need to register only about one out of ten unregistered residents to make up this difference.

This is, without an doubt, our most important activity for residents of El Cajon and candidates who are running for office in and around El Cajon. Please, if you are an El Cajon resident, please volunteer to walk some precincts to get the petitions signed and to register voters. We can schedule you to walk with candidates who may not live in El Cajon, but would like to walk with you to meet the people as well as circulate the petitions (since they can't do the petitions themselves).

These petitions can also be offered to residents at the malls and in at the local community colleges, especially Grossmont, which resides within El Cajon City limits.

LET'S GET THIS DONE!

