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# TEMPLE HILLS

## COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

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P. O. Box 4913  
Laguna Beach  
California 92652

### In Appreciation of Verna Rollinger



Verna Rollinger

Verna Rollinger – friend, neighbor, and long-time THCA member – has just retired as the City Clerk of Laguna Beach. She put in 29 years at her elected post.

Somehow, while Verna was on duty, we just knew things were being honestly observed and documented.

We took satisfaction in knowing, regardless of our own political views or the machinations at City Hall, that she was there to observe and protect all of us, to be honest and ethical, to do the right thing, and to provide a check and needed balance. We could trust her.

Democracy only functions if the people are in charge and the majority of citizens are concerned enough to be active and well informed. They can then take action based on informed opinion. Verna has made sure the facts are available. These facts have proved, again and again, crucial to our town. We must all thank Verna for keeping us honest. We just always knew she would be professional and ethical, and we knew her work would be above reproach (confirmed the few times she was falsely challenged).

Many articles have been written about her as she retires, and they were all favorable. And why not? She deserved no less. What more can we add? THCA can only say, "Thank You Verna." Thank you for your tireless professionalism for open and honest government. Your successors will have a huge task, but you have set the standard. The systems you put in place assure the City records will always be open and accessible. You have done your part. The rest is up to us.

We will miss her smiling face, her citizen-friendly attitude and her presence in City Hall. Don't you know the City staff will, too? Verna deserves a great retirement. I am certain she will tackle her new leisure with the same vigor and enthusiasm as she did her work. May she enjoy her days in the sun! — Jim Hall ☺

### School Issues for Temple Hills



Dr. Theresa Daem

At the request of School Superintendent Theresa Daem and on behalf of THCA, I reviewed issues impacting Temple Hills over the past three years. Following is a brief summary of our discussion.

#### 2002

Light intensity in District parking lot, lighted credit machine by front door, lighted event's sign at corner of Park. Concern over commercial advertising at high school and El Morro. The superintendent apologized for the backlit sign at Park Avenue (the only such sign in town due to the District not consulting with the City). Efforts were being made to ban or constrain commercial advertising, but there has not been satisfactory resolution of this issue.

#### 2003-2004

Thurston Gym breaking skyline and height limits of community. Light intensity impacted a couple hundred homes above Park Avenue. Screening of windows has reduced lighting at night and landscaping is planned to mitigate the building bulk.

#### 2004

High school. Demolition of school facility. Turning field toward St. Ann's. View blockage. Light intensity toward hill. Community desires telescoping poles and insists on design review of projects because the School District is unable to effectively involve the community. She indicated every effort was being made to resolve this issue.

I suggested that the School District work more closely with the City and through the Design Review process to avoid future tensions. I made clear that St. Ann's residents could only be satisfied if telescoping poles were installed and if District policy were changed to take projects through Design Review and ensure adequate community involvement in decisions.

— Ron Chilcote ☺



### Calendar of Events

City Council Hearing  
Tues., January 4, 2005

Complaints regarding baseball field poles and net. All residents of St. Ann's and above on the hill are encouraged to attend

Coordinating Committee for Planning Events

Wed., January 5, 2005, 7 p.m.  
1940 San Remo Dr.

### THCA Candidates Forum

A sparsely attended but lively forum took place on Monday, October 18, at City Hall. Sponsored by THCA and the Top of the World Neighborhood Association. The forum reflected our association's desire to allow neighbors to question candidates on local and city issues. The forum followed in the tradition of such meetings sponsored by THCA since the early 1970s.

The first hour was devoted to candidates for City Council with questions focused on open space, pathways, miniparks and the village entrance project. School Board candidates appeared at the second hour with intense questioning on problems impacting Temple Hills (see related stories), and most discussion was devoted to successful school programs and problems with bus transportation.

# ***Issues and Concerns of Temple Hills Residents***

## **Laguna Beach High School Athletic Fields**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Laguna Beach High School baseball field is nearly finished. The sod has been laid and the 30-foot-high fence around the field has been completed. This, however, is not the end of the story — at least not for the residents who live in the hundreds of homes that surround and overlook the field.

### **SAFETY ISSUES**

The problems began with an ill-advised plan. This involved moving home plate from the southwest corner to the northwest corner of the baseball field. Already a small field to begin with, this reorientation made safety matters a top priority. From home plate to the left-field foul pole, left field was shortened from 340 feet to only 285 feet. From home plate to deep center field, the distance was shortened from 320 feet to 317 feet. Eighty percent of batters are right-handed, so theoretically 80% of the balls will be hit to center field and left field. Left field to center field is considered the “power alley.” From home plate to right field, the distance was increased from 220 feet to 263 feet. However, theoretically only 20% of the hits will go toward right field.

Apparently, the reorientation of the field was done so that the planned restrooms and snack bar could be built between the baseball and football fields. It was also done to protect those walking to the bleachers and running on the track.

To protect people on the track, fencing was already in place between the fields. Had the School Board and City Council considered restoring the historic steps that approached the field from Wilson Street, this issue could have been alleviated.

Instead of balls being hit toward the track, they will now be fired toward our streets, sidewalks, homes and Nita Carman Park. Making the safety issue worse, the City will be designing and installing a sidewalk around the field on Wilson Street and St. Ann’s Drive this spring, approximately 15 feet from the fence. Protecting all of the people in these locations is of the utmost importance.

Because of the shortening of the field, a 30-foot-high fence was planned to (hopefully) compensate for the shorter left field. It is our understanding that the 30-foot height is an arbitrary number, as there are no standards for this shallow of an outfield. The fence may not be high enough to prevent fly and foul balls from clearing the fence. We can only hope that on Wilson Street and St. Ann’s Drive, pedestrians, motorists, students waiting for their ride, children playing in Nita Carman Park and residents in nearby homes will not be injured or killed when baseball season starts and balls potentially fly over the fence.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS**

Environmental concerns regarding the athletic fields might include drainage improvements, synthetic surface on the track and football field and extensive grading.

Were studies performed to understand the long-term impact of these issues, given the design?

Another concern is the impact of the project on the neighborhood and community.

The previous ball-field design was less intrusive and was already an inclusive part of the neighborhood environment. The new design encroaches on residents, those driving to or by the school, and those who previously had placid views. The massive poles are overkill, leaving much to be desired in the way of viewing aesthetics. The new design is an intrusion on our views and open space that we as Lagunans respect and appreciate. Should we not have a common goal of preserving our open space and environment?

### **VIEW ISSUES**

In addition to the safety and environmental concerns is the issue of the view corridor of hundreds of homes. The athletic fields can be seen from at least 25 streets, most within the THCA area, as high up the hill as Canyon View.

With its 30-foot-high fence and eight-inch-diameter poles, the baseball field has been described as a missile site, Area 51, a factory and a prison. Have you ever felt penned in? Come on over and sit out on our deck and experience the penned-in feeling for yourselves!

Because of Laguna Beach’s hillside topography, every home is situated differently and is impacted uniquely by the athletic fields. Residents on St. Ann’s Drive, for example, used to have an unobstructed ocean and tree view because of the previous eight-foot-high fence over which we could look. Now we look through a 10-foot-high chain-link fence with 20 feet of netting above that surrounding the field. We also now have a 30-foot-high backstop, batting cages, and planned bleachers, restrooms and snack bar between our neighborhoods and the ocean. Sunset through the back-

stop — what a lovely sight to behold! The many tiers of homes on the hills above the school, unfortunately, now have similar views. Losing these views is costing us dearly. Some estimates of property value loss are 20%. This is a minimum of \$200,000 per home. All homeowners desire to preserve their investment.

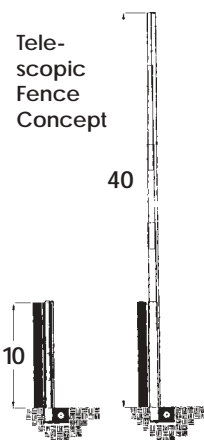
### **THERE GOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

In early August, residents were horrified to see the 30-foot poles suddenly spring up on the baseball field. We immediately contacted the School District. A series of meetings was held on the construction site with residents, Boosters, School Board members El Hathaway and Robert Whalen and School Superintendent Theresa Daem.

Residents expressed outrage at the “design.” School Board President El Hathaway expressed “shock” at the appearance of the poles. He stated that the Board would work with the neighbors to reach an acceptable solution. As the meetings progressed, the District’s architects and engineers presented some options in one breath and dismissed them as unworkable in the next. Attention was then shifted from the fence height to the color. We were given the option of having the poles and fence painted green or black, or left silver.

### **TELESCOPING POLES**

At the Board’s suggestion, a small committee of neighbors was formed to meet with El Hathaway and Robert Whalen behind closed doors. The neighbors of the steering committee researched various solutions to the problem. On September 28th, our steering committee presented a workable proposal to the School Board and the public. It is a system of telescoping poles with retractable netting. This would be attached to the existing eight-inch-diameter poles, cut off at the 10-foot-high chain-link fence. It would provide a 30-foot or higher fence for safety during games. After play, the poles would telescope back down to the 10-foot height, with the netting attached.



The School Board meeting on October 5<sup>th</sup> had a very large attendance of concerned residents, including THCA members. In a poll on the THCA website, Richard Holmes announced that 163 people favored lower fencing with retractable netting, while only four people opposed it. When queried, four of the five School Board members stated that the 30-foot fencing was “unattractive, or not visually attractive.” Upon seeing the poles for the first time, one Board member’s reaction was, “Oh, dear!”

In spite of the negative opinions expressed, the Board stated that there would be baseball on the field, and they voted unanimously to continue erecting the fence as



Laguna Beach High School baseball field



## Steering Committee 2004

### The Coordinating Committee

May meet on an emergency basis & comprises:

- Ron Chilcote**
- Fran Chilcote**
- Carol Olson**
- Jennifer Radisay**
- Nicolas Radisay**
- Ben Teschner**
- Dorothea Yellott**

- Joe Baker ..... Neighborhood Watch
- Fran Chilcote ..... Corresponding Secretary
- Ron Chilcote ..... Newsletter
- Jamie Crawford ..... City-School Issues
- Stephen Crawford ..... City-School Issues
- Anne Frank ..... Archive & Historian
- Jan Hall ..... Social
- Jim Hall ..... At Large
- Richard Holmes ..... Web Site
- Doug Kinn ..... Neighborhood Liaison
- Rhonda Kinn ..... Block Socials
- Carol Olson ..... Walkway
- Bill Parrish ..... Honorary
- Jennifer Radisay ..... Party Chair
- Nicolas Radisay ..... Treasurer
- Barbara Rathbun ..... Telephone List
- Chris Rickets ..... Planning
- Verna Rollinger ..... At Large
- Michele Samson ..... Thalia Undergrounding
- Tracy Spencer ..... Minutes
- Betty Swenson ..... Honorary
- Ben Teschner ..... At Large
- Mary Lou Teschner ..... Party Committee
- Dave Walker ..... Undergrounding
- Estelle Warner ..... Honorary
- Grant Wetzel ..... Open Space
- Marian Whitney ..... Distribution
- Caroline Wright ..... Pathways
- Dorothea Yellott ..... Pathways

### Neighborhood Groups

Temple Hills is broken into six geographical areas. Leaders focus on issues and problems if and when they occur.

#### Neighborhood Group Leaders

- Bo Powell ..... Group 1 Chair
- Marjorie LeGaye ..... Group 2 Chair
- Kurt Topik ..... Group 3 Chair
- Joe Baker ..... Group 4 Chair
- Paul Zehner ..... Group 5 Chair
- Marilyn Johnson ..... Group 6 Chair

#### Liaison

- Linda Brown ..... League of Women's Voters
- Jeannette Merrilees

planned. The Board cited pressure from the Boosters to have the field ready for February as the main reason to continue fence construction. The Board asked us to trust them to solve the neighbors' concerns.

### PROMISES

Painting the poles and fence green has made them slightly less conspicuous. At night, however, they still glow eerily in the light of the football field. The backs of the scoreboards were left unpainted. El Hathaway has promised to have the backs of both scoreboards painted to alleviate the glare.

The Board has declared that there will be no lights installed at the baseball field. However, a future School Board could reverse this and install lights. The current lighting of the football field affects many residents. We would like to hear how it looks from your vantage points.

The likelihood of banners being installed on the fencing is a concern to the neighbors. We understand this is a method for fundraising. The height of the banners was originally stated as being four feet above the ground and then changed to six feet.

### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The same night that the School Board voted to continue fence construction, the City Council instructed the City attorney, Phil Kohn, to investigate the role of the School District in regard to the design review process. The School Board "opted out" of this process, on the advice of their attorneys, in late October. The City has the authority to accept or reject this resolution. After some investigation, the Council, on the advice of Councilman Steve Dicterow and City Manager Ken Frank, has decided to table any intervening actions until the steering committee and the Board representatives have had more of an opportunity to resolve the mitigating issues.

Our steering committee is continuing to meet with School Board members. Our neighborhood representatives will be presenting a proposal and a quote from a fabricator of telescoping poles at the next closed-door session.

### COASTAL COMMISSION

The Coastal Commission is responsible for enacting the California Coastal Act of 1976. This Act protects the environment from inordinate development along the coast of California. Laguna Beach and the high school field project fall within this coastal zone of protection. Our City has a certified local coastal program from the Coastal Commission. It empowers our City Council with jurisdiction over local coastal development permits. According to Public Resources Section 30106, development means "construction, demolition or alteration of the size of any structure." It further states that Coastal Commission's approval is *not* required for "repair or maintenance activities that *do not result in* an addition to, or enlargement or expansion of, the object of those repair or maintenance activities." On the contrary, it is clear that the baseball field has resulted in an "addition to, or enlargement or expansion of, the object of those repair or maintenance activities," thus requiring Coastal Commission approval. The old fence was removed and replaced with a much higher fence with larger and higher poles. The field was reoriented, causing a potential safety issue.

We believe now, as we have from the beginning, that the athletic field projects should be under the jurisdiction of our Design Review Board. It appears that our City Council can make that happen. We think that our elected officials on the City Council and School Board should represent and protect all of their constituents. We residents should not be in the position in which we find ourselves.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

The best way for both the City Council and School Board to know of our continued dissatisfaction with the process is to attend the Council and Board meetings, whenever possible. Writing letters to the editors and writing articles for local newspapers will help reach our common goal.

Stand up and be heard! — Stephen and Jamie Crawford  
*[The Crawfords have just joined the Steering Committee and will represent the association through our Group VI at the bottom of the hill and over to St. Ann's Drive.]* ♡

## THCA 2005 MEMBERSHIP COUPON

**Membership in the Temple Hills Community Association is Laguna's best bargain! Annual dues are \$20 per household (any lesser or greater amount is appreciated). Newsletters are mailed to every THCA home.**

**NAME (Please print)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail this coupon with your check for \$20 to  
 THCA, P. O. Box 4913, Laguna Beach, CA 92652**

**We need volunteers! Please call 497-2218 if you can help.**



# Annual Party a Huge Success

Once again, The Temple Hills Annual Party & Meeting was a huge success!! Neighbors and their guests sipped cocktails and enjoyed delicious food catered by "As You Wish Catering," while watching a beautiful sunset over our town. How lucky we are! We must again thank Shirley Endresen for allowing us to use her beautiful home for our annual party!

Along with our annual business meeting, Mayor Cheryl Kinsman spoke to us about current events in the City. We'd like to thank her for taking time out of her busy schedule to participate in our event.

THCA would also like to thank all the people who helped make this event so successful — The Altieri Family, Jon and Dayva Stewart, Doug and Rhonda Kinn, Susan O'Toole, The Glenn Family, Anna Jablon, Susan & Rick Petersen, Chris & Tracy Ricketts, Chef Dave Martin — and everyone who volunteers for the association. Without you it wouldn't have been possible!

If you'd like to volunteer your home for the annual party next year or just be involved in the planning, please call Jenny at 715-2051.

The THCA is a great way to meet your neighbors and be involved with your community. You can donate as much or as little time as you wish, and in return you will be rewarded with great friends and a sense of accomplishment!

We look forward to seeing you next year!

— Jennifer Radisay for The Temple Hills Party Planning Committee ♻️



Rhonda Kinn, Kirsten Warner, Jenny Radisay, Shirley Endresen, Anna Jablon, Amy Altieri, Carey Glenn

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Doug Kinn, Nicolas Radisay



Kirsten & Ben Warner, Rhonda Kinn

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