

BLAC MEETS WITH SUPERVISOR CANDIDATES

CANDIDATES FOR BOS DISTRICTS 1 AND 2 SET FORTH THEIR POSITIONS

By Fran Thomson

On Monday, September 8, 2008, members of the Bass Lake Action Committee held an informal discussion about campaign issues with the candidates for El Dorado County District 1 Supervisor, John Knight and Harry Norris; and District 2 candidates, Ray Nutting and Barbara Smiley.

BLAC President John Thomson welcomed the candidates and moderated the discussion.

John first asked each candidate to make an opening statement.



Barbara Smiley said that she is from Northern California, a third generation San Franciscan, who moved to EDH from Sacramento because of the quality of life. She went to work for Marshal Medical as Manager of their Community Volunteer Program. Since moving to EDH she has been involved with a number of volunteer organizations including Safe at Home Group, which sends volunteers to residents' homes to build handicap ramps and install safety rails and clean up their yards, and Hands on El Dorado. She also organized Make a Difference Coalition, a volunteer network of all nonprofits that use volunteers in El Dorado County.

Barbara realized that the Board of Supervisors is not representing the community, so she decided to run for District 2 County

Supervisor. She likes to get people together, connect, and get things done. With this election the people have a chance to elect someone who will represent the people in their districts.

She thinks that the supervisors should be meeting with people in their districts and getting a long-term vision for the county. She feels that the county needs to grow business and homes up the hill, not more in the lower slopes. She thinks the lower slopes communities need work on their infrastructures. She would like to see more affordable housing created up the hill, agritourism improved by more lodging, restaurants, and shops.



Ray Nutting said that he is a fourth generation El Dorado County resident who lives on Happy Valley Ranch in Somerset with his wife and four sons. The ranch has been in the family since 1906. He assumed the responsibility for running it upon the death of his parents in a car crash when he was in his twenties. He is a private-sector businessman who plans to remain living in the county, and thus will have to live with the results of decisions he will make if elected to the Board of Supervisors.

Ray has a natural resource background and clearly understands the county's issues. The county consists of large areas of federally owned national forest, large agriculture acreage, wineries, open space, and more densely populated areas down slope. Each area is important to the functioning of the county,

and each presents its own challenges.

While on the Board of Supervisors Ray supported regulations that limit development at the snow line because he feels that animals need an area where they can come out of the snow and timber. He also helped set up 50,000 plus acres into agricultural districts of 20 acres minimum, which cannot be subdivided.

Ray sees El Dorado Hills as the gateway to El Dorado County but sees growth pressures along Highway 50 that will have to be addressed by the county. He believes EDH should be a planned growth community.



John Knight said that his story hasn't changed since he addressed BLAC five months ago. He has been a volunteer fire fighter for 19 years, and two years ago he was elected to the EDH Fire Board. He was also appointed to the County Planning Commission by Supervisor Rusty Dupray. Since joining the Fire Board, he has focused on fiscal responsibility and accountability. He helped keep development fees in check and scaled back by 70% the costs for a proposed training facility proposed at \$30MM, which did not have adequate financial justification.

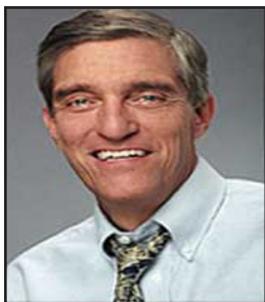
John is concerned about the financial health of El Dorado County and feel that his experience would be valuable to the county. The EDH Fire Board, on the other hand, has set up best and worst case financial scenarios with contingency plans for each. John asked for a 5% increase in the Fire Board

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CANDIDATES *(continued)*

budget, and it turned out that it was 4%.

As a real estate advisor John brought businesses to El Dorado County. He understands the Bass Lake Specific Plan, and he said that even though our area of Bass Lake Road is not part of that plan, we will be affected by it. The proposed Home Depot store in Cameron Park concerns him. He wants to see uncongested roads and environmentally responsible, managed growth in the area and in the county.



Harry Norris said that he has been an El Dorado Hills resident since 1984. He owns the 76 Gas Station at El Dorado Hills Boulevard and Highway 50, where he employs 19 people. He has experienced first-hand the paperwork and inspections imposed on small businesses by the County, some of which he considers “over-the-top.”

Harry thinks that the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors is sorely lacking in executive experience and needs people on the board who have it. They are using consultants inappropriately in positions like the Director of planning, primarily because the board does not have a hiring strategy or know how to interview.

Harry thinks that the El Dorado Irrigation District Board is well run. The board needed to replace the Irrigation District General Manager. The Board interviewed 40 applicants. Twenty were qualified, and they narrowed their choice to two and made an excellent hire. The new GM is reorganizing the district departments and eliminating unnecessary positions.

This is the kind of manager needed by the County. Given the Board of Supervisors’ past hiring history, it is difficult for them to hire good people. Harry feels he can improve the way the county is run, without raising taxes, while improving customer service.

Harry also thinks that getting along with fellow board members is important. Harry worked on the School Board for 10 years. During that time it was running very

smoothly, so Harry decided to run for the El Dorado Irrigation District board. Many of the biggest contributors to his campaign for the EID board were his fellow School Board members, and all of his EID board members have endorsed him for District 1 Supervisor.

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Question One to the candidates: There is a perception in El Dorado Hills that we are not getting the level of public safety and police service that we need and deserve. While it is getting better, if elected what will you do about traffic problems, speeding, and public safety?

Barbara Smiley Answer

Barbara Smiley said that she has spoken with Sheriff Jeff Neves about the increase in crime. He wants a larger substation in El Dorado Hills with an administration office in Placerville. She feels that the Board of Supervisors has to take all the needs of the county, prioritize them, and then see what funds are available to apply to the priorities. She believes we deserve input into the process, and the Supervisors should communicate back to us what they are doing.

Barbara sees the Shingle Springs casino as increasing traffic and crime issues. She doesn’t think the Board of Supervisors figured out properly what it will take to deal with the impact on roads and public safety.

Ray Nutting Answer

Ray said that in 1983 the county had a budget deficit, and crime was going up. It was very similar to today. It is a problem for El Dorado Hills being on the edge of the county. Ray thinks that Sheriff Neves is very much aware of the problems. Ray said that his two top priorities if elected to the Board of Supervisors will be law enforcement and proper maintenance of county roads. He will vote to fund the entire budget as much as possible for the Sheriff’s substation.

Ray said that the police can’t do everything in a county as large as El Dorado County. As a community we need to be alert for our neighbors. He lives on a 10 mile road where everyone knows their neighbor and where they are. Ray was District 2 Supervisor when the STARR Program was implemented. He has dealt with Raleys and Nugget. They will be putting up cameras and security systems. Ray believes we need to fund Jeff’s deputy positions. He said, “To be honest, everyone in the county feels underserved. It’s a countywide issue. On a per capita basis, we

are not keeping up with the population and need to do better.”

John Knight Answer

John said that about a year ago he contacted Sheriff Neves about putting in a substation on Bass Lake Road near the fire station. Water had already been brought onto the vacant land before it was needed. John got support of the Fire Board to sell land to the county for the substation. They liked the idea, but inertia set in. As Supervisor, John will make it his campaign.

With the budget crunch, John brought in a private developer/contractor who will do a design/build for the substation. That contractor will built it for less per square foot and then lease it to the county for twenty years. John thinks the County can afford the cost.

Harry Norris Answer

Harry agrees that the Sheriff’s substation should be down here. He sees public safety as the number one responsibility of government. Harry said that he has been endorsed by the Sheriff’s Captain and the Deputy Sheriffs. However, Harry said that traffic violations are not handled by the Sheriff but the CHP, and the only thing we can do to increase patrols is to negotiate with the CHP. Until we are a city, that’s the best EDH can do.

Harry said that the amount of casino funds given to the county for law enforcement is inadequate; however, he would as Supervisor try to get some of the other \$90 MM given by the casino for that purpose and block any attempt to suck that \$90 MM into the general fund. Now that negotiations are over, the county doesn’t have leverage with the tribe; however, Harry has gotten to know the tribe and feels that they want to be good neighbors and perhaps will contribute more.

Question 2 to the candidates: The Grand Jury has hammered the county because they do not have a strategic plan. Why does the county not have a strategic plan?

Harry Norris Answer

Nobody has ever said what the county should look like 20-30 years from now. The General Plan sort of addresses it but in a very distorted way. A strategic vision is needed to lay a framework for General Plan implementation. Not all the county will look the same. We

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THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Hello Everyone,

This month's Bulletin is a little late, as we wanted to be sure and include the candidate's remarks from our meeting with the board of supervisor contenders. It is also a bit long, at five pages, because we did not want to pare down their remarks. Next month we will feature the positions of the three El Dorado Hills Community Service District candidates.

The BLAC Board also had an opportunity last week to meet with Kirk Bone and the folks over at of Parker Development, to review the progress of the shopping center to be built at Bass Lake Road and Serrano Parkway. The architectural design is moving forward, and it appears that Parker is endeavoring to give us a shopping center that we can all be proud of.

You may have seen in the newspapers that the El Dorado Hills CSD is moving forward in its enforcement of the Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&Rs) in Bass Lake Village (Woodridge and Hills of El Dorado). It may seem that your neighbor with the boat or RV stored in his driveway is getting away with it, but the CC&R enforcement process is eventually resolved either by homeowner compliance or by court action. Keeping the neighborhood looking good is everyone's job, and observing the CC&Rs keeps everyone's home value up.

At home, the grape crush is over, the pressing is done, and the new wine is ageing comfortably in its carboys. This year's wine looks to be better than last year. We'll see how it goes.

Soon we'll be raking the fallen leaves. Ah, Autumn!

John E. Thomson

President

CANDIDATES *(continued)*

should define what we want to be and how we want to look.

John Knight Answer

At the Fire District we do an annual five-year plan. The problem in the county is that the General Plan is a mandatory document, and after two years of writing and fighting over it, people get tired of it. There are seven mandatory elements, and it is a ten-year document. John looks at the need for a strategic plan from the financial aspect. The company needs a 5-10 year look outside the General Plan. Part of it is legally mandated, but what are the revenues and expenses? John feels that 5-7 years is the best time-frame for a strategic plan, and it would not have to go to the voters to be amended.

Ray Nutting Answer

When Ray was a Supervisor in 1993, when the county budget was only \$8 MM, all he knew to do was cut expenses. In 1996, things started getting better. By 2001, the county had a \$21 MM surplus. Then he left the board. He emphasized to his successor that money needed to be reserved for bad times. The board spent all the surplus, and while the money may have been spent on good things, no contingency funds were created. Funds went down in 2005, 2006, and 2007. The county did not address this issue.

Ray said that he is an experienced two-term Supervisor. He is a businessman. Whoever gets elected will have to work more, harder, streamline, make cuts, and try to get the support of the District 1 Supervisor to build reserves for the future.

Ray thinks that the philosophy of the General Plan is actually unfolding pretty well, the timberlands and agricultural sections especially.

Barbara Smiley Answer

A lot of people have been running the county for years without a lot of knowledge about what is going on outside of the County. The county is the laughing stock of other counties for land management and other policies. A lot of talent has moved into the county, and we should utilize some of it to run the county. We need a strategic vision with input from the people. For example, Barbara would like to see the county bring mixed-use businesses to Cameron Park and up the hill.

She said that the county needs to change from the "good old boy network" to bring

people in who can make decisions. She is the President of the Affordable Housing Coalition and has been involved with the County on the housing element of the General Plan. There were many good ideas and input from many sectors of the community, and all that went into the General Plan was "We will encourage this and that," without penalties or requirements. We need more than "hopes" and "encourage." The Board of Supervisors should state what they want and don't want for the county.

Question 3: The county government is very compartmentalized. What would you think about changing the form to a Chief Executive Officer?

John Knight Answer

The county would require a charter amendment to bring in a Chief Executive Officer. Now all heads of departments report to the Board, and the Board gets too involved in day-to-day activities, but they would have to get the right person—maybe someone to come in for a short time and clean things up.

Ray Nutting Answer

Ray said that right now, 32 departments report to the Board of Supervisors. The CAO is regularly bypassed. He believes their micromanagement needs to end. He would favor a charter amendment to implement a CEO.

Barbara Smiley Answer

Barbara said that she is not certain whether there needs to be a charter amendment to get a CEO. She thinks it's a matter of the person who is CAO, but she would support either a strong CAO or a CEO.

Harry Norris Answer

He agrees with the concept of a CEO. Harry said that some members of the board like the power. Six years ago, the voters had a chance to vote for a CEO form of administration, and the county did nothing but put it on the ballot without supporting it in any way. The ballot issue failed. If they supported such an initiative in the future, it might pass, but in the meantime, they need to give the

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CANDIDATES *(continued)*

CAO real responsibility.

Question 4: What is your opinion of cityhood for El Dorado Hills?**Barbara Smiley Answer**

Barbara supports cityhood and believes it's a matter of time before it happens. The county needs to build revenue so it is not so damaged by losing the revenue from EDH and make it a win-win situation.

Ray Nutting Answer

Ray said that he was involved with the first try for cityhood and has always promoted cityhood. When it finally went to the voters, cityhood failed. The argument that it would be revenue neutral and no burden on the taxpayers was a faulty one. If you look at other cities in the state, adding another layer of government costs money. Ray suggested that the argument of cityhood proponents should have been, "Isn't cityhood and its benefits worth 1 or 2 percent more?"

John Knight Answer

John believes strongly in local control. He believes if we had had the right City Council candidates, cityhood might have succeeded. He thinks it will come up again, and would succeed if put forth by the right people. He doesn't think the same people who are running for City Council should be running the cityhood campaign.

Harry Norris Answer

Harry thinks EDH would have been prospering today if we had cityhood. We would not be in debt like the county. The VLF rebate to cities law passed. We would have gotten the benefit of the revenue from the growth in Town Center, which were underestimated. Harry said, "How could it have been worse than it is with the county?" Unfortunately, last minute money from the developers overwhelmed the cityhood campaign.

Going forward, Harry does not think cityhood will work. The revenue neutrality requirement will be extremely difficult. Now what Bob Dorr was saying during the campaign may be true. We may have to go after big box stores. We had so much growth after the cityhood campaign that making the county whole for revenues may be impossible to do.

John Thomson then asked the candidates for closing statements.

Barbara Smiley: "This is a changing time.

Becoming Supervisor isn't something I want because of political gain or a developer offering me opportunities. I care about the county and people living here and that we have a county that we love and continue to love, that it continues to grow, and that we have a vision to make it work. I can listen to you and represent you and turn your dreams into actions and make them come true."

Harry Norris: "In 1984 my wife and I fell in love with El Dorado Hills. I still am, and I expect to continue living here."

Ray Nutting: "There are big differences between candidates in District 2. Every decision I make, I will be responsible for. My children will have to live under those policies, and I want to be able to look back and be proud of what I have done. I want to leave a legacy for them.

"I own property and pay taxes and it's a constant struggle to keep government out of my life. I am a conservative guy. I was on the Board of Supervisors when Town Center was developed, and when Blue Shield was brought in. I tried to give businesses an incentive to come into the county. I took the charge on the Business Park's mixed use.

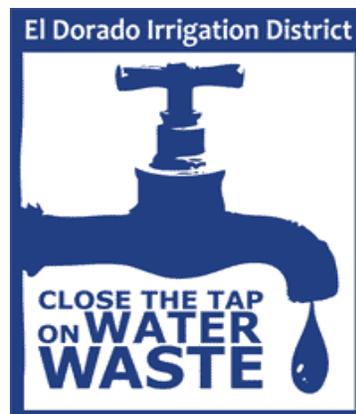
"I will not be cutting budgets in other departments first. I believe in cutting the Supervisors budget first, and you do that by reducing your salary. Lead by example.

"I think Barbara Smiley is a good person, but I believe I have more tools for the job."

John Knight did not make an additional statement.

The BLAC members who attended the meeting gave a round of applause and their thanks to the four candidates for an interesting and informative evening.

President John Thomson reminded the attendees that the October 6th BLAC meeting will be devoted to interviewing the candidates for Community Services Board. ~

**EID TOUTS WATER CONSERVATION, HOLDS MEETINGS TO TRY TO CURB WATER WASTE**

What is water waste? Is there a water waste regulation? How is the regulation enforced? How can we avoid wasteful practices and save money in the bargain? These questions framed El Dorado Irrigation District's water waste workshops held on August 19 and 26 in Placerville and El Dorado Hills.

During the 30-minute sessions, Sharon Fraser, EID's water conservation program coordinator, and Bill Cassidy, EID water efficiency specialist, gave presentations and fielded questions from attentive audiences.

"EID now has a regulation that is in effect and will be enforced to 'close the tap' on water waste," said Fraser, "and with these workshops as a starting point, we hope to continue to get the message out to our customers."

According to EID's administrative regulation (AR) 1041, water waste occurs when a user causes or permits water to discharge, flow, or run to waste; allows water fixtures to leak or discharge; and maintains bodies of water without recirculation devices. Other water waste practices include operating an irrigation system that is in disrepair or one that applies water to an impervious surface—don't saturate the lawn and don't water the pavement! Using a hose without a control nozzle can also waste water as can irrigating a landscape when it's raining or overfilling any pond, pool, or fountain.

Exceptions to the regulation include flow resulting from temporary water fixtures or devices that lasts 48 hours or less; flow resulting from firefighting, testing of hydrants, or training in firefighting techniques; water applied to abate spills of flammable or hazardous materials; and water applied to prevent or abate imminent health, safety, or accident hazards.

Cassidy, who conducts many of the water surveys at the District, showed a variety of pictures depicting wasteful practices. "Often, a small irrigation adjustment can make a big difference," said Cassidy, pointing to a picture of water running over a sidewalk and into a storm drain.

These workshops are part of an ongoing effort to increase customer awareness about wasteful practices and suggest how to change those practices. These workshops are part of

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EID (continued)

EID's ongoing effort to increase customer awareness about wasteful practices and suggest how to change those practices.

To download a copy of the water waste regulation or to report a water waste violation, click on the "Close the Tap on Water Waste" icon on the EID website at www.eid.org. ~



AUTUMN SEASON BEGINS THIS MONTH

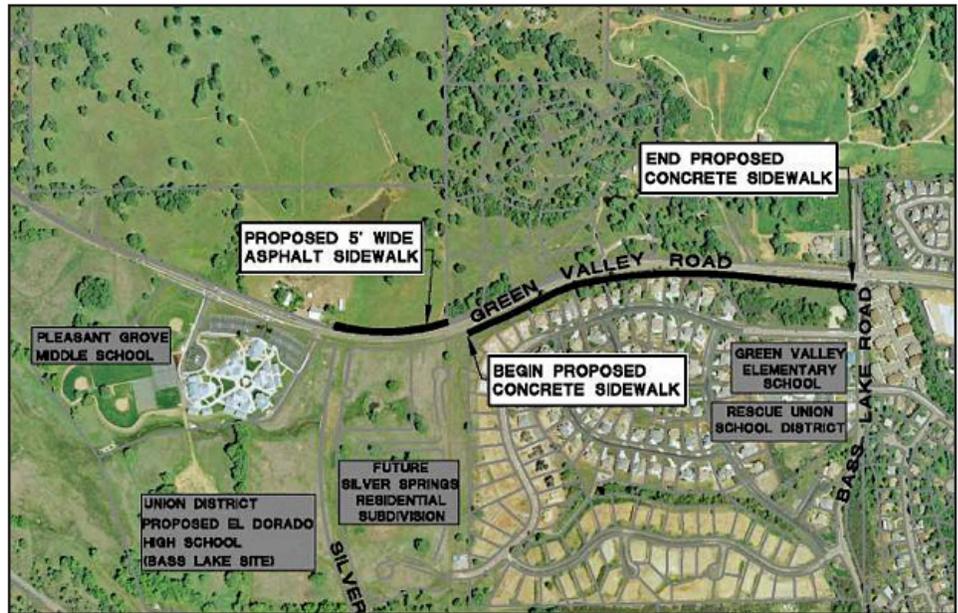
The Autumnal Equinox, considered the first day of Autumn, occurs this year on September twenty-second, and signals the end of the summer months and the beginning of winter.

Days have been shortening since the Summer Solstice some three months earlier, and the Equinox is the point where nights reach the same length as days. After the Autumnal Equinox, the Sun will shine lower and lower on the horizon until the Winter Solstice occurs in about three months' time.

Equinoxes occur because the Earth's axis of rotation isn't aligned with the plane of its orbit around the Sun: it tilts over by about twenty-three and a half degrees.

The direction of this tilt is effectively constant, relative to the stars, so that the Earth's north pole always points towards Polaris, the Pole Star, and the south pole always points at the constellation of Octans.

Each year, the Earth completes a circuit of the Sun, and for its poles to remain fixed against the stars, their direction must rotate relative to the Sun. This effect gives us the seasons, though here in California the changing of seasons are less defined because of our relatively mild climate. ~



GREEN VALLEY SIDEWALK NEARS COMPLETION

A potentially dangerous path for schoolchildren will become a thing of the past, with the completion of the new sidewalk project along the south side of Green Valley Road from Pleasant Grove School to Bass Lake Road.

The project involved the construction of a five-foot wide concrete sidewalk along the south side of Green Valley Road from Pleasant Grove Middle School to Bass Lake Road. The project also included a five-foot wide asphalt concrete sidewalk on the north side of Green Valley Road from the future intersection with Silver Springs Parkway east to the existing asphalt walkway installed in front of the Travois neighborhood.

The project was funded through the Safe Routes to School Project, which is a federal program designed to encourage and enable more children to safely walk and bicycle to school.

The sidewalk project is estimated to cost \$664,231, and construction is scheduled to be completed this month. ~

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John E. Thomson, Ph.D.
President and Editor
doctorjet@basslakeaction.org
530-677-3039

For additional information
see our website
or contact
Vice President Kathy Prevost
kathyp@basslakeaction.org
530-672-6836

Bass Lake Action Committee
501 Kirkwood Court
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762