

**Sweetwater Valley Civic Association's
Annual Meeting & State of Bonita Presentation
by County Supervisor Greg Cox
July 26, 2012**

Opening – SVCA President Mike Cohen opened the meeting with a salute to the flag of our country and a moment of silence to honor service and law enforcement personnel. Mike spoke about SVCA's website and invited those present to join the Association, which will meet next on September 5th. He also encouraged people to “like” SVCA on Facebook. He provided information about the upcoming Bonitafest, emphasizing that the Sunnyside bridge will be closed during the September 29th Bonitafest parade. Finally, Cohen invited the audience to attend a reception at the Bonita Museum immediately following this meeting.

SVCA Annual Election – These officers were elected: President: Mike Cohen, Vice-President: Mike Seiler, Secretary: Liz Stonehouse and Treasurer: Steve Stonehouse. These members of the Board were elected: Carol Freno, Tom Pocklington, Mike Seiler, Steve Stonehouse and Jim Woodford.

Tom Pocklington's Address – Pocklington explained that he heads the Bonita Fire Department's Board. He encouraged interested parties to apply for an open position on this board; the application deadline is August 13. Pocklington announced that Scott Walker retired as of July 1st, and now Tim Isbell is the new fire chief. Mr. Isbell was introduced and welcomed. He mentioned that the fire department will be getting a new fire truck, which will be in use in three weeks.

“State of Bonita” Presentation – Supervisor Cox's Power Point presentation was very detailed and covered a large number of topics. Below is a list of topics, along with some of the points the Supervisor made:

San Diego County Budget – The budget is balanced. There is a workforce of 16,000 employees in the County. Its budget for 2012-13 is 4.80 billion dollars.

Recognition – County Parks & Recreation, the County Library have won awards. Also, San Diego County won an award from the Taxpayers' Association.

Funding for Bonita – The County has provided some funding for the Historical Society, the Optimist Club and the Bonita Business & Professional Association.

Realignment of Public Safety - A current challenge is the County's responsibility for certain prisoners who were formerly incarcerated in state facilities. One result of this will be a need for the County to spend more time and money on prisoners' alcohol and drug rehabilitation.

Wellness Program, 5-2-1-0 – Those who devised this program recommend 5 fruits/vegetables, 2 hours' maximum watching TV or other monitors, 1 hour of physical activity and 0 sugary drinks per day, so that County residents will be healthier.

Coast2CoastRX Card – Many pharmacies accept this discount card, which can be used for medications for people and sometimes even for pets. See www.coast2coastrx.com.

211 – The 211 phone number will lead to information about health and human services. Operators can provide other contact information for County agencies.

Graffiti Tracker – Law enforcement is studying graffiti in a sophisticated manner that results in more arrests, more restitution.

S.A.D.L.E. Up – These initials refer to the use of intelligence-led policing strategies to attack hot spots of crime.

Fire Season Preparation – www.readysandiego.org gives details.

Bonita-Sunnyside Library – The County matches funds given to Friends of the Library. Cox praised Bonita's library management for service to the community and for dealing with ever-increasing circulation.

Bonita-Sunnyside Museum & Cultural Center – The Supervisor listed current and upcoming exhibits.

Bonita Animal Shelter – There's a new, \$700,000 cattery, plus a new barn for keeping larger animals.

Undergrounding Utility Projects – Cox showed maps to indicate where undergrounding is taking place.

SDG&E Power Substation – Cox presented photos to show the modernization of this facility.

Sweetwater Lodge Pole Fencing Project – An illustration was provided to show this type of wooden fencing on Sweetwater Road.

Road Implementations – Cox talked about changes to the Proctor Valley and San Miguel Roads and environs.

Otay Interconnect Project – He listed some advantages to the pipeline going through the Proctor Valley area, instead of Corral Canyon Road. The project is delayed significantly.

Pothole Reporting – This can be done by calling toll-free: 1-877-684-8000.

SR125 Toll Road – Tolls are now about 40% lower, while ridership is up about 15%.

Rte. 805 Express Lanes – The southern portion runs from Palomar St. to north of rte. 94. Construction of the HOV lane should be completed during the summer of 2013.

Sweetwater Campground Parking Lot Expansion – Fifty-six parking spaces will be added. Cox commented that the park's community center building has a very nice lake view. A photovoltaic system at this location is being constructed to save energy.

QR Trail Loop – Codes at stations on the trail will feature exercises for joggers and pedestrians.

Sweetwater Loop Trail – Cox said that some sections are complete, but the goal is for the trail to go all the way around the reservoir.

Sweetwater Trail Segment III - Trail system is to be complete by late 2013.

Centennial Green Belt around Chula Vista – Illustration was presented to show the location.

Willow Street Bridge Replacement – Construction period will be from late 2012 – May 2015. This Chula Vista project will feature one northbound lane and two southbound. A trail will pass underneath the new, arched bridge.

Missing Segment of Trail Bordering the Chula Vista Municipal Golf Course – The trail is extremely narrow at the intersection of Bonita Rd. and Otay Lakes Road. A bridge is planned for the area in the summer of 2013. However, funds have not been allocated yet.

Bayshore Bikeway – The bikeway should be complete by November 2013.

Upcoming Events – 1) Coastal Clean-up Day: September 15, from 9:00 a.m. to noon; 2) Bonitafest; September 29; and 3) Prescription Take-Back Day; September 29, 10 a.m. to noon, with location TBA.

Provence House - The house can be rented for special events.

After Supervisor Cox's address, the following discussions took place:

Equestrians protested that they can no longer use a bridge that was added to a local trail recently. The bridge was built specifically to accommodate horseback riders. Now, they said, Sweetwater Authority is blocking their use of the bridge due to concerns about water quality. No one at the meeting proposed a solution to this problem.

A resident asked Supervisor Cox what influence he might have in helping the community deal with Sweetwater Authority. (Certain customers have objected the fact that the utility keeps raising rates, while it gives employees extensive, free perks; automatic cost-of-living increases; and very generous executive salaries. These are in addition to other objections customers have voiced regarding the utility's practices.) Supervisor Cox answered to the effect that he has no particular leverage in dealing with the utility, no greater influence than any other customer might have. The homeowner who brought up this issue pointed out that consumers can't blame the Metropolitan Water District for the increasing cost of water, as that authority only supplies 30% of the water here in Bonita.

There was another discussion about parking in and near Rohr Park. A resident suggested charging for parking there, because drivers often park illegally due to the large number of people using the park. Supervisor Cox indicated that he would not favor discouraging anyone from using the park, because it is a regional park.

The meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by
Susan Kopp