

It's time to be blunt about the future of Los Ranchitos. We are a community of homes built on two to three acre parcels. We've been here for over thirty years, long before the City of Temecula was even a passing thought. We are bound together loosely by our desire to live in the kind of community where we have some space to breath without annoying our neighbors and visa versa. Every property owner made a commitment to protect the rights and tranquility of his neighbor by adhering to some minimal standards concerning the use of his property. In that way we ensure our own. We might chafe a little from time to time but then again our neighbor on the right isn't running a salvage business out of his back yard and the one on the left isn't operating a dairy on his homestead. It's basic civilization; we all benefit.

But this year we face challenges so great as to determine if Los Ranchitos will continue to be a such a place. Temecula has grown up around our ears and pushes at us from all directions. Traffic congestion is an enormous concern. The edges of our community bump up against streets, that while once dirt roads, are on the way to becoming major thoroughfares. There is pressure from the city and from private interests to commercially develop properties that front these streets. In the past, we have successfully used the CC&Rs as a shield to prevent unwelcome encroachments, but the pressure mounts.

The most severe and present danger to the future of our community lies in the Rancho Community Church's plan to triple the size of its existing facility. It recently purchased three lots adjacent to the church and, you might have noticed, graded the parcels, this in direct violation of the CC&Rs and in defiance of the Architectural and Environmental Control Committee. They propose to construct over 66,000 square feet in new buildings which will give it additional inside seating for 2,100 people over that which is existing as well as a school capacity approaching 900 students. In addition to the enclosed buildings, their plans call for an amphitheatre, lighted athletic field and about 700 additional parking places.

At its present size, the church, with its nearly non stop operation and multiple Sunday services, has created a major nuisance for those living on Vallejo and an intelerable traffic problem on Sundays. It is irrational to think that the immediate neighborhood would survive if the church is allowed to proceed as planned. Inevitably the surrounding property will be converted to something other than single family, most likely it will go commercial. Those who live away from the vicinity may not adequately appreciate the problem, thinking that it doesn't effect them. Well, you might as well know that there is another church in the works over on DePortolo and the City owns a major parcel on Ynez which it wants to develop. Oh, and don't forget "Restaurant Row" and the park and ride. If and in what form these and other future developments proceed will be greatly influenced by the disposition of the Rancho Community Church matter.

The Association and the Architectural Committee are doing everything in their power to prevent the church from proceeding. As many of you know we are engaged in a legal action to that purpose. We are confident that we will prevail in the courts. Even so it is folly to imagine that we can prevail with out the active support of the property owners.

We can no longer sit back in the face of such challenges thinking that our neighbors, even though many contribute generously, can carry the load. In 1999, does a \$25 per year voluntary donation.

even if all property owners were to faithfully contribute, constitute appropriate or adequate dues. That amount might get you a couple of movie tickets and a large bucket of pop corn but it doesn't protect the value of your property or even keep up the trails for that matter.

We have discussed in several board meetings, how we might persuade more home owners to participate and pay their fair share.. It was thought that each member of the Board should submit something that might be included in a letter of encouragement. I've given it some thought and the best I can do is to be brutally honest. So her goes.

If we, the home owners, the direct beneficiaries, are not willing to pay adequate dues, then we can little expect that the community will survive as we know it. I used to drive down Jedediah Smith from Margareta and notice that there was always some vultures circling on an updraft near where Cabrillo connects. I assumed that there was something about that particular location that made for easy living vulture style, since they were always there. While this may not be a portend, it's a reality that there are those waiting to get fat picking at our bones if the CC& Rs are defeated. And, as in the present case, it is forlorn hope to think that such would have any concern about the well being of the Los Ranchitos community if we who live here are unwilling to stand together and contribute to our own defense.

Note: My wife correctly points out that I am too much stick and not enough carrot. I'll work on it some more, but I'm done for tonight. Give me your input.