



Victoria Avenue Forever



Victoria AveNews

October, 2014

Volume 22—No. 4

Initiatives helped protect Riverside's unique landscape - by Laura Densmore

In the mid 1970's, the local housing boom was going strong. People were making lots of money in the building industry, and that's a good thing. In Orange County, people could sell their homes for an amazing amount of money and come east, purchase property, and build a dream home in Riverside County. Or, in some cases, purchase large groves, tear them out, and build tracts of homes. Lots of room here for everyone, right?

But for those of us who lived here and grew up here, watching those groves, those hills and open spaces get covered with cookie-cutter homes for commuters didn't quite sit right. So, what to do? Well, it was time to roll up our sleeves, sit down with like-minded neighbors, and come up with a solution for Riverside in order to help keep some forms of agriculture, maintain our vistas, habitat, and water courses – as well as the city's distinctive features.

The result of this was the 1979 passage of Proposition R, and later in 1987 its companion, Measure C. With passage, voters expressed serious community resolve to protect the Arlington Heights Greenbelt and Rancho La Sierra areas from urbanization, and to preserve them as community treasures. These measures also served to protect natural hillsides, arroyos and other important topographical features throughout Riverside.

Riverside is characterized by the unique natural landforms that circle it and create natural divisions of land uses. On the northwest is the floodplain of the Santa Ana River. To the east, southeast and west, the uplands and low mountains include the Box Springs Mountain, Alessandro Heights, Arlington Mountain, and the La Sierra/Norco Hills. Scattered throughout are a variety of prominent natural features: Mount Rubidoux, Pachappa Hill, Sycamore Canyon, Hawarden Hills, distinctive arroyos and craggy, isolated hills.

Our initiatives, Proposition R and Measure C, have contributed to this uniqueness. Without them, our hillsides

[continued on page 4](#)

Inside this issue:

<u>President's Corner</u>	2
<u>Give BIG Riverside Co.</u>	2
<u>Contributors to VAF</u>	2
<u>VAF Board</u>	
<u>New Fountain at Mary St</u>	3
<u>Volunteer Calendar</u>	5
<u>VAF on Facebook</u>	6



Left—Many of Riverside's scenic hillsides, including the La Sierra Hills, shown here, have been protected from development by Prop. R and Measure C.

(Photo courtesy Laura Densmore)

President's Corner—Darleen DeMason

The old “Chinese curse” goes something like “May you live in interesting times.” I don’t think of this phase as a “curse” but as an energizing challenge. Victoria Avenue Forever is definitely experiencing “interesting times.” Your VAF Board had an annual retreat on Saturday, September 27th in the Los Amigos meeting room to discuss our “challenges” for the coming year. We are now poised to march into a successful year supporting Victoria Avenue. Many of our “challenges” are represented in articles in this newsletter.

Challenge 1—Protecting Prop R and Measure C for Victoria Avenue—Laura Densmore’s article (starting on the first page) reviews how Riverside’s greenbelt, and Victoria Avenue were preserved and a timeline of events that occurred from 1977 to 2014. There is no doubt that limiting growth and traffic has benefited Victoria Avenue. The only reason that Dan Hays and the Victoria Avenue Historic Restoration Project group were able to obtain historic status for the Avenue was because it had not been “modernized” by adding lanes and traffic lights, etc. Measure L is a significant challenge to this status.

Challenge 2—Participating in “Give BIG Riverside County”—This year Victoria Avenue Forever is a participant in this fundraising event (below). Please read how this event works and talk to your friends and neighbors about how Riverside can help us “protect, beautify and restore” Victoria Avenue.

Challenge 3—Using Facebook to promote VAF—We are now on Facebook (page 6). See how you can help us get our

message out using this form of social media.

Challenge 4—Workday Plantings—Our volunteer calendar is now set (page 5). With the drought looming on, we lost a record number of trees over the past year. We plan to replace **every one of them** this year during two planting workdays in January and February. This year, we received State funding from Prop 84 to help us with this challenge. I will discuss the availability of State funding for Urban Forestry in the next newsletter. We need to recruit volunteers to plant a record number of tree replacements.

Challenge 5—Funding our many special projects—Inserted in this newsletter is a donation form that you can use to help us fund a number of projects that we are planning for the future. Fall is the time that many people consider their favorite charities for tax deductions in the next tax season. We hope to be one of your favorites.

Challenge 6—Growing our Membership—Our final challenge is to increase our membership and recruit some business/corporate members or sponsors. Every Board member will set a goal for him/herself to bring in new members. Membership in VAF is our ticket to sustainability over the long haul.

Our first planting day is October 18th. So, gather your weapons (i.e. shovels, rakes, pruners, gardening gloves, and protective clothing) because we are marching into battle of planting roses and trees on Victoria Avenue for the 2014-15 growing season. Come join us!

VAF is participating in “Give BIG Riverside County” this year—by Darleen DeMason

“Give BIG Riverside County” is a 24-hour web-athon, which helps raise awareness for local charities, is organized by the Community Foundation. The honorary Chair is Mayor Rusty Bailey and the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce is the honorary business partner. Although the primary goal of this event is to raise money for participating non-profits, the organizing committee has set two additional goals: (1) to build a culture of philanthropy in Riverside, and (2) to increase the fundraising ability of Riverside non-profits by expanding their donor base, especially among young professionals. To this latter end, the organizers have provided many robust training opportunities for non-profits to help them use social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and Razoo to promote themselves and the event. Last year the event raised \$286,504 for 113 non-profits via 3321 individual donors.

This year’s “Give BIG Riverside County” event is scheduled for **November 13th** (www.givebigriverside.razoo.com/giving_events/gbr14/home). The goal is to raise \$350,000 for approximately 150 charities in 24 hours **starting at 12:00AM and ending at 11:59PM**. During this time interval you can go “on-line” and make donations to your

favorite charities. Donation “incentives” have been built in. For example, a “Golden Ticket” will be randomly selected each hour and that charity will receive an additional \$250. Further, the charities compete with one another because the top 10 earners receive additional contributions. The top earner wins \$5000 and the 10th top earner wins \$500 with other earners winning intermediate sums. Donations are by credit card only. One benefit VAF has already received is a free Facebook page constructed for us (page 6).

So, get your computer and mouse ready and **GIVE BIG** to Victoria Avenue Forever on **11.13.14** at www.givebigriversidecounty.org!!!! Thank you!



GIVEBIG

RIVERSIDE COUNTY

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Newsletter

Darleen DeMason, Editor

**Victoria Avenews is published
4 times per year
By Victoria Avenue Forever**

**The VAF Board meets at 6:30
PM
On the second Wednesday of
each
Month (except August)**

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PO Box 4152, Riverside, CA**



Contributions

August – early October 2014

Thank you to all who contributed to *Victoria Avenue Forever*. Your gifts will be used to help protect and care for Riversides’ living legacy – Victoria Avenue. We want to make sure to acknowledge every one!

General Contributions and for trees/upkeep

Leeann Bitterolf, Phil & Selina Bremenstuh, Vicki Broach, Lane & Susan Cash, Elizabeth Corison, Jim DeLorenzo, Alan & Kathy Eckard, John & Janet Gless, Cecille Graffi, Joe & Dawn Greil, Jane Lamar, Susan Marzalek, Barbara McElrath, Jo Jean Milesi, Pollyanna Miller, James Montgomery, Walter & Betty Parks, Ken & Debby Phillips, Rudolfo & Irene Ruibal, Bonnie Salazar, Carole Stadelbacher, Gloria Thomas, Edward & Leslie Vasquez, and George & Mary Weimer

Donations to Marie Hempy Memorials

Darleen DeMason

Donations to the Dammers Butterfly Garden

Elizabeth Francis

Memorial Contributions

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| William & Rosemary Bailey | In memory of Dennis Timmons |
| Barbara Brown | In memory of Cheryl N. Brown |
| Priscilla Doshier | In memory of Dub Doshier |
| Margaret Fletcher | In memory of Eva McMillan |
| William & Josephine Heeres | In memory of Evan Vail |
| Beverly Maloof | In memory of Patricia Winterton |
| Karen Ostermiller | In memory of Judge John Gabbert |
| Karen Ostermiller | In memory of Jeff Silver |
| Marion Russell | In memory of Florence Lorenz |
| Cathy Zimmer | In memory of Rex Salyer |

Contributors in memory of Lynne Preston: Pat Beals, William & Rosemary Bailey, Margaret Fletcher, Sharene Greene, Robert & Anita Kimmel, David & Barbara Moore, Basil & Barbara Pafe, Richard & Donna Perry, Betty Swoffer, Lola & Harold Taylor, and Victoria Country Club

Commemorative Tree Donations

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Sue Johnson | In memory of Sue Ann Saks |
| Donald Irving | In memory of Joan Irving and
in honor of Donald Irving |
| Doris Morton | In honor of Hazel Evenson |
| Carole Stadelbacher | In memory of Richard Stadelbacher |

New Fountain in Dammers Garden

In the last issue of *Victoria AveNews* we reported that the original, antique-style fountain in the Dammers Garden at the corner of Mary St and Victoria Avenue was vandalized. At the end of September the City replaced that fountain with a similar but more vandal-proof one. This new fountain also has three bowls: at adult, child and dog heights.

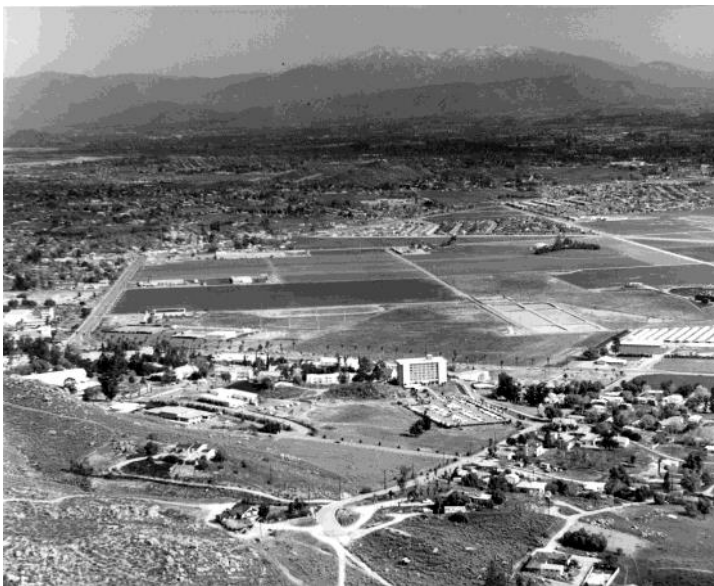
continued from page 1—Prop R and Measure C

and arroyos may very well have been graded, or filled and covered with homes. Our citrus greenbelt would likely be gone, and historic Victoria Avenue would be just another street. We even have the California Citrus State Historic Park located in Riverside because we were able to protect our greenbelt!

As open space throughout Southern California continues to be isolated or disappears, residents increasingly value and enjoy the open space areas that make Riverside unique. These resources also attract new residents and visitors to the area. As a community, Riverside has grown more interested in preserving these open spaces.



Above—View looking north on La Sierra Avenue from Pierce Street at Five Points. (Photo courtesy of Laura Densmore)



A circa 1968 view (*above, left*) from behind La Sierra College (now University) looking northeast over the school's agricultural lands. In the background is Mount San Gorgonio. Re-



cent development of the university's former agricultural lands (*above, right*) included schools, parks, residential, and commercial uses, with scenic landscaping used throughout.

(Images courtesy Glenn Edward Freeman / La Sierra University and Laura Densmore)

Timeline of growth in Riverside—by Laura Pearson Densmore

November 1977 – Proposition B, a growth control initiative, was defeated by 722 votes.

November 1979 – Proposition R, a new growth control initiative, passed with 66% approval by city voters. Prop. R. limited lot sizes in the greenbelt to a minimum of 5 acres and restricted development on hillsides to a minimum of two-to-five acres, depending on the slopes.

October 1986 – City Council approved a 320-home project in Canyon Crest in exchange for a park donation and other improvements. The project proposed a density four times greater than Prop. R outlined. A group of residents filed suit against the project.

November 1987 – Voters approved Measure C with a 52 percent approval, an initiative that took away the City Council's power to amend Prop. R. The new growth control measure also extended the restrictions to new annexations. Voters rejected the Council's alternative initiative, Measure G, with 62 percent opposition.

January 1989 – A state appellate court overturned the Riverside City Council's 1986 decision approving the Canyon Crest development. A three-judge panel of the 4th District Court of Appeal said the Council's actions "flew in the face of the electorate's intentions" in approving Prop. R.

March 1989 – Measure E, an initiative by greenbelt property owners to repeal Prop. R and Measure C, failed in a special election by a landslide, with more than 76 percent of the voters opposing it.

August 1989 – Riverside Superior Court Judge Victor Miceli ruled Prop. R and Measure C invalid because of an inadequate city General Plan. Attorney Enos Reid represented a group of private property owners.

January 1992 – California's 4th District Court of Appeal upheld the growth control measures, invalidating the 1989 Riverside Superior Court decision. Robert Buster, a leading advocate of growth restrictions, said "it demonstrates that the system works and

continued on page 5

2014-2015 Volunteer Calendar

Rose Planting between Mary and Grace Streets	Date: October 18, 2014 Location: Meet at Jane St Time: 9AM-Noon Bring: closed-toed shoes, hats, old clothes
Rose Planting in Lorraine Small Rose Garden	Date: January 10, 2015 Location: Meet at Myrtle St Time: 9AM-Noon Bring: closed-toed shoes, hats, old clothes
Tree Planting Funded by Prop 84	Date: January 24, 2015 Location: Meet at Adams St Time: 9AM-Noon Bring: closed-toed shoes, hats, old clothes
Tree Planting Funded by Prop 84	Date: February 21, 2015 Location: Meet at Adams St Time: 9AM-Noon Bring: closed-toed shoes, hats, old clothes
Great American Cleanup With KRCB	Date: May 9, 2015 Location: Meet at Jane St Time: 9AM-Noon Bring: closed-toed shoes, hats, old clothes

Continued from page 4—Timeline of growth in Riverside

the majority of Riverside residents can protect the character and heritage of this community against these powerful forces of growth.”

November 2003 – The City of Riverside attempts to delete the La Sierra Hills and Rancho La Sierra from Prop. R and Measure C by declaring them blighted under redevelopment law. Concerned citizens sue the city and win, keeping Prop. R and Measure C intact.

November 2014 – Citizens4BalancedGrowth, an out-of-town development firm from Las Vegas, is seeking passage of Measure L, which would remove 1,300 acres in La Sierra from the protections of Prop. R and Measure C. If passed, the firm plans to develop 400 acres with up to 1,950 homes (versus 164 allowed under Prop. R/Measure C). In exchange, the remaining 900 acres will be donated as “perpetual open space.” Many Prop. R and Measure C supporters fear passage of Measure L will weaken current growth control measures and possibly open up other protected areas to similar deals.

Vote on November 4th!



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Dedicated to the preservation of Victoria Avenue, Riverside, California with tax-deductible financial contributions from: Membership, Endowments and Tree Commemorations: see victoriaavenue.org for details about joining or making a contribution.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Victoria Avenue Forever is now on Facebook!!!

The “Give BIG Riverside County” organizers provided us with our very own Facebook page. **We encourage everyone on Facebook to visit our page and “Like” us and “Share” our page with their friends.** Please also log on periodically to find out what we are doing, when our next planting event is scheduled and who is posting pictures or comments on our page. Board member Adam Timura has agreed to be the page administrator and Board member Kathy Swanson will post information for volunteers on the page during the year. We are excited about our first entry into the realm of social media.



Dates to Remember:



GIVEBIG
RIVERSIDE COUNTY

11.13.14

Work Days

October 18, 2014—roses

January 10, 2015—roses

January 24, 2015—trees

February 21, 2015—trees

May 9, 2015—Great American Clean-up

See page 5 for details