

## **2007 UHRA ANNUAL MEETING - WRAP-UP**

Ashok Abhat  
UHRA Annual Meeting Chair

The Upper Hastings Ranch Association Annual Meeting was held this year at the Don Benito School Auditorium on Wednesday, November 7, 2007. This year we worked very hard to change the format and venue of the meeting. We strived to bring the meeting back into the Ranch. We appreciate the support received from Victoria Rueda, Principal of Don Benito, in this effort. We also thank the ranch residents who came in large numbers to this year's meeting; the turn-out was almost three times than in previous years.

This year, we added an Information and Social half-hour before the meeting and a Mixer after the meeting. This gave the attendees an opportunity to get informed about many current issues that are of concern to ranch residents, as well as to mingle with each other and get to know fellow ranch residents. Several groups participated in setting up Information Tables, and I thank them for coming out and participating in our meeting.

The meeting was opened by Dr. Ashok Abhat, UHRA Annual Meeting Chair. He welcomed the attendees, speakers, and Information group representatives, and introduced the meeting agenda. Mrs. Alison Carlson of Don Benito shared words of welcome and addressed school-community relations. Thereafter, UHRA President Jolean Matsumoto presented the UHRA Annual Report and the financial report.

The first presentation of the evening was a Neighborhood Watch presentation by Pasadena Police Department representatives, Cynthia Murphy, Lt. Taylor and Sgt. Lomeli. Mr. Gregory McReynolds, a local history researcher and writer, made a presentation on the Historical Preservation of East Pasadena. The Keynote Speaker for the evening was Cynthia Kurtz, City Manager. Ms. Kurtz discussed the Pasadena Open Space General Plan and Open Space Element in her talk, followed by a brief discussion on utility taxes. This was followed by Youth Scholarship Awards presentation by Board Member and Youth Awards Committee Chair, Elizabeth Makarem. Two UHRA Special Recognition Awards were presented at the meeting to Rhonda Stone, Field Representative – District 4 and Derek Stevens, Mailman. Following the award presentations, Rhonda Stone addressed current field issues in Upper Hastings Ranch and East Pasadena. Vice-Mayor and Councilman Steve Haderlein discussed the current issues in Upper Hastings Ranch and East Pasadena, and provided an update on improvements to Hastings Ranch Drive, Neighborhood Watch Signage, and Charter Communications. Mr. Haderlein's presentation was followed by a lively Q & A session. Finally, the representatives of various Information Groups briefly presented the objectives and activities of their groups.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Ashok Abhat and raffle drawings. Raffle prizes given out this year were two sets of four tickets for the Rose Parade, four sets of two tickets for the 'Opportunity to Buy' tickets for the Rose Bowl game, and the 50/50 raffle. There were quite a few happy ranch residents who won raffle prizes.

I would like to acknowledge the following groups who set up Information Tables at the annual meeting:

Emergency Care Now! - represented by Stacy Cahan: This is a Group of concerned residents that live in East Pasadena, Altadena and Sierra Madre, and is advocating for an Urgent Care Center North of the 210 freeway.

Open Space Now - represented by Christle Balvin: This group's vision is to create an "emerald horseshoe of green" stretching into the foothills and framing the city of Pasadena in open land.

Pasadena Open Space Preservation (POSP) - represented by Vatche Kelartinian and Fritz Puelicher: The Pasadena Open Space Preservation is an independent group of concerned East Pasadena area residents, whose goal is to preserve all open and green spaces in Pasadena, by collaborating with neighborhoods and government agencies.

Neighborhood Connections - represented by Jeff Chilin: Neighborhood Connections is a part of the City of Pasadena's Human Services & Recreation Department and was established in 1987 to foster better communication between residents and city government. It is a great resource for Neighborhoods and Residents.

Neighborhood & Community Services Unit of The Pasadena Police Department - represented by Cynthia Murphy and one of our own residents and Board Member, Arpi Krikorian: The Neighborhood Services Unit is primarily responsible for coordinating presentations at Neighborhood Watch meetings, Business Watch Meetings, and other community events citywide.

Additional brief presentations were made by Sierra Madre Fire Safe Council and Chui Chow, a resident on Michillinda, who expressed concerns about the Alverno School expansion plans.

Before closing, I would like to extend my thanks to many people for making this meeting a major success. Thanks to:

Alejandrina Flores, Coordinator, Neighborhood Connections for helping us with making 1,000 free copies of the Meeting Announcement Flyer, which was distributed to the ranch residents. The distribution was coordinated by ranch residents Patricia Herrera and Stacy Cahan.

All the Speakers and Groups who gave their time and joined us at the Annual Meeting, to share their thoughts and ideas with us and respond to questions.

Councilman Steve Haderlein for providing complimentary prizes for the Raffle.

To all the volunteers who helped with set up for the Meeting: To Wade Wright for preparing and putting up boards for the meeting announcement. To Board members who helped out – Arpi Krikorian, Derek Walker, Elizabeth Makarem, Kathy Gregg, Jolean Matsumoto, Maria Salazar, Mas Matsumoto and Sheri Whalen. To Patricia Herrera and Stacy Cahan for helping out with their good hearts and who gave a lot of their time, particularly with setting up the Information session and coordination of Flyers distribution. And to all those Block Captains who helped out with the Flyer distribution.

To the Don Benito School administration for supporting us in holding the Meeting at the school's Auditorium.

And last, but not the least, thanks to all of you – Ranch Residents – for coming out to your Annual Meeting in large numbers this year, for making this Meeting a lively place, and for all the valuable discussion.