

GREAT VALLEY

NEWS

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Public/Private San Joaquin Valley Partnership adopts regional approach

An executive order signed by Governor Schwarzenegger has created a first-of-its-kind task force charged with developing a concrete plan to address the economic, social and environmental challenges facing the rapidly growing eight county region stretching from Stockton to Bakersfield.

By October 31, 2006, the new California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley must make specific recommendations to the Governor to improve the well-being of the Valley and the quality of life of its residents.

The partnership was announced in July at the 2005 Central Valley Mayors Conference in Fresno and held its first meeting at the University of the Pacific in Stockton on September 16th. Chaired by Secretary of Business, Transportation and Housing Sunne Wright McPeak, a native of Livingston (Merced County), the Partnership's 26 members include eight cabinet secretaries, nine local

government officials, and nine members of the private sector.

The inaugural meeting featured presentations by the Public Policy Institute of California and state officials regarding the current state of the region.

The task force will review state policies and regulations to ensure they are fair and appropriate and determine whether alternative approaches can accomplish goals in less costly ways.

The group is divided into nine working groups charged with developing specific recommendations on Economic Development; Higher Education and Workforce Development; Air Quality and Environmental Protection; Water Quality, Supply and Reliability; K-12 Education; Transportation; Land Use, Agriculture and Housing; Health and Human Services; and Telecommunications.

The next partnership meeting is tentatively scheduled for December in Merced.



An executive order has created a 26-member task force that must develop a plan by October 2006 to improve the San Joaquin Valley's economy and quality of life. L-R: Tulare County Supervisor Connie Conway; Fresno Mayor Alan Autry, Secretary of Business, Transportation and Housing Sunne Wright McPeak, Resources Secretary Michael Chrisman, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Secretary of Agriculture A.G. Kawamura, Assemblywoman Nicole Parra. (Photo: Howard Watkins)

For more information, copies of Executive Order S-5-05, meeting agendas and updates, please visit: www.greatvalley.org/sjpartnership.

Gus & Velma's Column



Dear Gus & Velma,

Every day I read how more people are coming to the Valley. Where are we going to get enough water for everyone?

Stymied in South Dos Palos

Dear Stymied,

Velma: You're right. California's population is expected to add another 14 million people by 2030, reaching a total of 48 million. Much of it in the Valley. And you've hit a big issue: Will we be able to supply the water needed to sustain such a population?

Gus: How about just stop building houses?

Velma: Hmm. Well that seems like a solution, but that might create another problem by exacerbating the housing shortage we already have.

Gus: Well Ok. How about demanding long term planning? Maybe build in some water conservation, storage and make sure the land use people really talk to the water people way before they start building things.

Velma: Listen to you. Long-term Planning. I can't believe my ears.

Gus: No, I'm serious. The Valley seems as good a place as any place to experiment with something like that. I mean, we've got the demographic change, the environmental needs and an agricultural industry that could apply new technology. Provided we have accurate information and everyone around the table, we have a chance to create a new model for the world.

Ribbon is cut at University of California's new Merced campus

First new research university since UC Santa Cruz in 1967 gives hope for long term boost to Valley

On September 1, the long awaited University of California at Merced opened its doors to its first freshman class. Of the almost 900 entering students, approximately 30% are from the Central Valley and 47% are first generation college students.

Opening ceremonies over Labor Day weekend celebrated the start of classes for schools of Engineering, Natural Sciences and a School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts. The campus expects to add 800 new students every year with the ultimate goal of serving 25,000 students by 2035.

As early as the late 1960s, Clark Kerr, chief architect of California's higher education master plan and fresh from opening UC Santa Cruz and UC San Diego, envisioned the possible need for a UC campus in the Valley due to population projections.

Merced, a region that produced \$1.91 billion in agricultural products in 2003, was selected from an initial list of 85



By 2035, the new University of California campus in Merced will serve 25,000 students. (Architectural illustration by Frank Costantino)

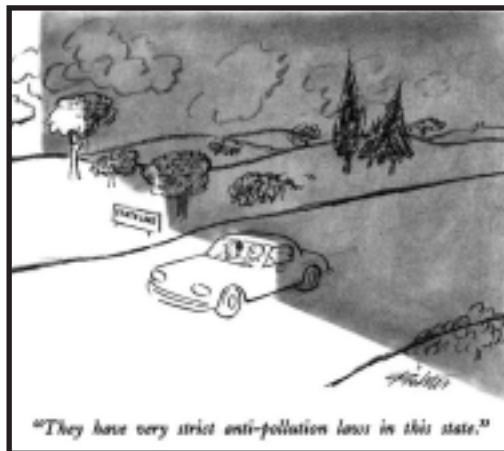
potential sites in May 1995. In 2001, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation provided an \$11 million gift that preserved 5,780 acres of vernal pool habitat next to the current campus buildings. This act made the start of construction possible.

Learn more at <http://www.ucop.edu/news/archives/2001/march20art1.htm>; and read Clark Kerr's campus planning Oral History at <http://library.ucsc.edu/reg-hist/kerr.html>

Preparing for Growth focus of Chico forum

This year's Sacramento Valley Forum gave attendees a hands-on approach to develop ways to accommodate population growth projected for the region.

Experts from around the country gathered in Chico, California on October 27th for "Solving the Growth Puzzle," this year's topic for the Great Valley Center's annual Sacramento Valley Forum. The event was held at the Sierra Nevada Brewing Company in Chico. Leading demographers, architects and community planners shared their thoughts on what is expected over the next 25 years and worked with attendees to envision how the region might adjust. A conference overview is available at www.greatvalley.org.



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SJ Valley Regional Association of California Counties commits to “Sustainable Growth” at October meeting

The San Joaquin Valley Regional Association of Counties unanimously adopted a set of principles at its October 6th meeting in Fresno establishing the basics of good planning as they apply to a nine county region from Stockton to Bakersfield.

The Association is comprised of county supervisors from Fresno, Kings, Kern, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Tulare counties. It acts as an ad hoc vehicle for the exchange of ideas and concerns across jurisdictional lines.

The document includes principles that taken together validate important principles of land use, transportation, housing and resource management. While nonbinding, the Association’s action acknowledging the regional impacts of local decisions may provide a foundation to the almost simultaneous start of the Governor’s Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley.

Growth Principles adopted by Valley Supervisors Association

In order to preserve and enhance the region’s quality of life, growth should be accommodated in ways that use the region’s agricultural, natural and financial resources efficiently, enhance the region’s economic competitiveness, and ensure more certain and adequate funding for local government.

1. New growth should be located in or adjacent to existing communities.
2. Land use planning and development solutions should be regionally coordinated to encourage compact development and more efficient land use.
3. The best locations for placement of higher densities that are most effectively integrated into region-wide transportation opportunities should be identified regionally.
4. Premature or unnecessary conversion of prime or productive agricultural land should be avoided.
5. Incentives that link funding of regional transportation improvements to land development should be provided.
6. Policies to increase housing supply and affordability should be supported with policy and action.
7. Regional strategies should be developed to assure sufficient water supply and water quality.
8. Regional infrastructure needs should be collaboratively planned and include funding strategies.
9. A process which enables regular, ongoing conversation about issues of regional significance should be established and maintained.

The SJVRACC recognizes there are local conditions that may force exceptions but believes sustainable growth within the cities and counties of the San Joaquin Valley requires a shared vision supported by common goals.

GVC Conference inspires Pixley to Foster Community Ties

The 2005 Great Valley Center Central Valley conference, “Growing a Community” attracted more than 600 people and 100 speakers from around the Valley. For about two dozen inspired high school students, senior citizens and community members at the event, two days in Sacramento talking about the future of the region inspired them to take action.

The result? They planned their own mini-conference for the town of Pixley, a community of 2,000 in Tulare.

Put together by 22 Pixley residents and held at the local elementary school, the event brought together almost 100 people on an August 6th, 2005 for four hours of learning how residents could make a difference locally.

More than 100 people in the Tulare County community of Pixley gathered for an event to encourage local involvement in decisionmaking.

In classrooms and portable buildings, attendees participated in bilingual sessions on local government, Tulare County’s general plan, health care infrastructure, citizenship, transportation and education.

According to Betty Morehead, the organizer of the event, the ultimate goal is to have the people become involved in the community.

Great Valley Books plans Spring 2006 Writers Forum

Is there more to California than movie stars and pretty bridges? A slate of new Valley-focused literature released this fall from Heyday Books asserts just that and serves as the lead in for the inaugural Central Valley Writers Forum on April 15, 2006 in Merced. The Great Valley Books event is an interactive literary effort to cultivate audiences of writers and readers in California’s fastest growing region.

Conference workshops will focus on the craft of writing fiction, poetry, journalism and screenwriting.

For Writers Forum information contact Patricia Wakida at patricia@heydaybooks.com. Full catalogue available at www.heydaybooks.com

North Valley rolls out welcome mat for agritourism effort

Butte County may join the likes of wine country destinations such as Napa County thanks to the efforts of agricultural entrepreneurs in the North Valley.

A collaborative of almost two dozen businesses is distributing 30,000 maps of the new "Sierra Oro Farm Trail", a 1,700 square mile loop of wineries, bed and breakfasts, orchards, olive oil producers and agricultural products just 90 minutes north of Sacramento. Tourists living in urban areas of the state will also be targeted. Butte County's agricultural production value totaled \$332 million in 2003 while according to the state, tourists spent an estimated \$201.9 million.

The farm trail is the expansion of an idea organizer Heather Quilici devel-



Agritourism in the North Valley has received a boost thanks to a new farm trail effort.

oped in 2002 as part of IDEAL, the Great Valley Center's emerging leaders program.

Quilici's original idea was focused on wine promotion but now includes other local activity built on the region's strength in agricultural products and tourism.

Visit www.sierraoro.org. For more information on the concept and potential, download GVC's "AgInnovators: A Guide to Business Models Working for Sacramento Valley Agriculture" from www.greatvalley.org.

12 million by 2040? Two studies renew focus on Valley's changing demographics

Two new studies project more urbanization along Highway 99 and suggest that Californians who moved to the Valley between 2000 and 2003 primarily relocated between El Dorado and Merced Counties.

The studies, "Central Valley at the Crossroads" and "Urban Development Scenarios for the San Joaquin Valley" are two thorough and complementary looks by PPIC at the projected demographic and land use changes for the Central Valley.

Using sophisticated mapping technology, the urban development scenarios enables decisionmakers to evaluate the land use impacts of decisions to build high speed rail, protect farmland or make investments in transportation in the San Joaquin Valley.

Net migration within California to the Valley between 2000-2003



"Central Valley at the Crossroads" finds that foreign migration is occurring at a greater rate in the South San Joaquin Valley. At the same time, college graduates are more likely to settle in the Sacramento Metropolitan region.

Graphic: From "Central Valley at the Crossroads" Download the reports at www.ppic.org

GVC News

Have a photo to share?

Each year, GVC staff logs thousands of miles throughout the Valley and they never forget to bring a camera. Visit the Great Valley Center's online image bank (www.greatvalley.org/resources/image_bank.aspx) to browse a searchable database of Central Valley photos you can use for reports, websites, and presentations. If you have a photo of the Valley to share, send an email to desiree@greatvalley.org

Clearing the Air

There were more questions than time during the air quality panelist breakfast moderated by the Fresno Bee's Jim Boren at the 2005 Great Valley Center conference. Questions were recorded and the panelists DeeDee D'Amato, California Air Resources Board; Wayne Natri, EPA Region IX; and Dave Crow, San Joaquin Air Pollution Control District were asked to respond. Download their responses at www.greatvalley.org/conference/keynotes.aspx#air

"The State of the Great Central Valley: The Environment" Coming November 2005

Indicators are powerful tools for measuring and tracking the overall quality of life, comparing performance and answer important questions. The latest GVC indicators report revisits indicators related to air, water, land and energy use. It will be released on November 15, 2005. Send an email to rebekah@greatvalley.org to secure your copy.

President's Message

Whenever I have the chance to talk to Valley elected officials it is virtually unanimous that the topic in most need of attention is growth. Judging by registration for this year's Sacramento Valley Forum in Chico, our decision to focus on the growth between Redding and Yuba City has resonated with lots of folks. The question will be whether the northernmost part of the Valley sees collaboration as the answer.

In the Sacramento Region, they would likely say yes. There, regional collaboration and participation through the Blueprint Transportation Process has moved the region forward. Next steps for economic development and housing can be built on the foundation created by a combination of local governments and the Sacramento Association of Regional Governments and civic support from a growing network of organizations in the region.

In the San Joaquin Valley, supervisors have endorsed principles to guide growth that would have been hard to imagine a decade ago. This bodes well for the future as opportunities such as the Governor's Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley present themselves.



Carol Whiteside

As never before, we have a chance to think carefully and strategically about the Valley's future. Each of these opportunities is fraught with risk. Building consensus will mean trade offs and compromises will have to be made. It will call on our leaders to exercise leadership under challenging circumstances. It is also a chance to craft a future better than the past, one that respects human needs and provides balance between the environment and the economy. It is our chance to ensure we leave a positive legacy for the future.

Yolo and Central Valley Farmland Trusts make progress on easements

A transaction this summer from the newly created Central Valley Farmland Trust and demand in Yolo County is bringing new attention to voluntary agricultural easements.

Under the typical terms of an easement, a landowner agrees to limit the amount and type of development on a piece of property in exchange for financial compensation from the land trust.

In June 2005 an easement for 238 acres of land in Delhi (Merced County) was among the first easements secured by the Central Valley Land Trust since GVC helped three local land trusts merge in 2004.

Over the past year, the Yolo Land Trust has also experienced growth. A 1998 grant from the Great Valley Center enabled the Yolo Land Trust to move from a 10 year volunteer organization to a staffed organization with the hiring of their first executive director. The trust was well positioned to take



The Great Valley Center and the California Farmland Conservancy Program with the Central Valley Farmland trust to secure an easement on 238 acres of farmland in Delhi (Merced County) this summer.

advantage of changes in local law that required development in Yolo County to be mitigated. Today, the trust manages permanent conservation easements on 5,300 acres.

There are currently 23 land trusts operating to protect Valley wildlife, farmland, habitat and native vegetation.

For more information visit www.greatvalley.org/agprograms



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Yuba-Sutter Forum: Holding Our Agricultural Ground, November 10, 2005, Yuba City and November 30, 2005 in Wilton. Valley Vision and the Great Valley Center assemble leaders from agriculture, government and nonprofits to discuss agricultural land mitigation and agricultural viability in the Sacramento Valley.

"At the Tipping Point" 2006 Central Valley Conference, May 10-11, 2006, Sacramento. Planning is underway for the state's largest conference focused on issues important to the future of California's Central Valley. In 2005, the conference hosted more than 600 people from throughout the Valley. Contact Heidi Arno, heidi@greatvalley.org, for sponsorship information.

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The Great Valley Center is a private nonprofit organization that supports organizations and activities that promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the Central Valley.

Generous funding for GVC is provided by the James Irvine Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

Around The Valley...

Two Lattes and a Business Park please: Creative Fresno, a Great Valley Center-facilitated effort to develop strategies to keep and attract talented professionals in the Fresno area, has morphed into something bigger. Mayor Alan Autry and Councilman Henry Perea introduced the “**Mayor’s Creative Economy Council**,” a group that will meet weekly for 90 days. A report will be issued to the City Council, with **recommendations on how to change city policies in the Valley’s largest city to draw more creative talent.** According to the Public Policy Institute of California, the San Joaquin Valley experienced a net loss of workers with college degrees between 1999 and 2003.

More information at www.creativefresno.org

Thirteen years in the making: After navigating more than a decade of fits and starts, the Calaveras foothill town of Copperopolis has a community plan. Funding for the effort was made pos-

sible by a grant from the Great Valley Center. The **new community plan, if followed, would ensure Copperopolis’ 39 square-miles accommodates up to 35,000 people and specifies where commercial, agricultural and tourism elements should be.** The plan committee said it expects more than 11,000 homes to be built in Copperopolis by 2023. The next step is a series of town meetings throughout the area.

For more information visit their website at <http://ccwstor.co.calaveras.ca.us/>

River “Reopens”: As of September 1st, public access to Sacramento Valley’s namesake waterway is getting a boost. The **Sacramento River National Wildlife Refuge** opens its 12,000 acre property for the first time to the public for wildlife viewing, photography, interpretation, and educational activities.

More information is available online at www.fws.gov/sacramentovalleyrefuges/

All Aboard? The proposal to build a \$33-37 billion **high-speed rail system** connecting the San Francisco Bay Area to Southern California **with stops within the Central Valley may be delayed.** Currently slated for the November 2006 ballot, a legislative proposal next spring may move the public vote to a later date. **A final Environmental Impact Report released in September compares how high speed rail would fare** in contrast to expanding roads and airports to accommodate 68 million travellers in 2020. **Ten criteria, ranging from cost to impact on land use, were used to compare the options.** Five Valley cities were listed as preferred station locations: Bakersfield, Fresno, Stockton, Merced, Modesto and Sacramento.

For more information and the latest Environmental Impact Report visit www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov

SAVE THE DATE: Our Place in the World 9: At the Tipping Point
Annual Central Valley Conference, May 10-11, 2006, Sacramento, California

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