

There are ponytailed men decked out in leather vests and chaps that fit the classic image, along with the women who often sit behind them. There are the tattoos, the fringed "David Crosby" jackets, spurred boots and ripped jeans.

But there are also the guys who look like upper-middle age businessmen, or the 'Rubbies' (short for Rich Urban Bikers) as they're called by some, who arrive donned in little more than jeans and casual ware shirts.

And despite a drop in notoriety, the 'outlaw fringe' of the biker scene is said to also make appearances at La Vida. Names like The Hessians and The Vagos still pop up, yet they're probably a far cry from the old Satan's Slaves and Hells Angels that dominated the San Bernardino and Oakland scenes.

Yet as Ken Beard, a 40-year-old mechanical contractor from Pomona sees it, the vast majority of bikers that have made La Vida a popular stop are not out looking for trouble, but rather just a pit stop on a scenic route.

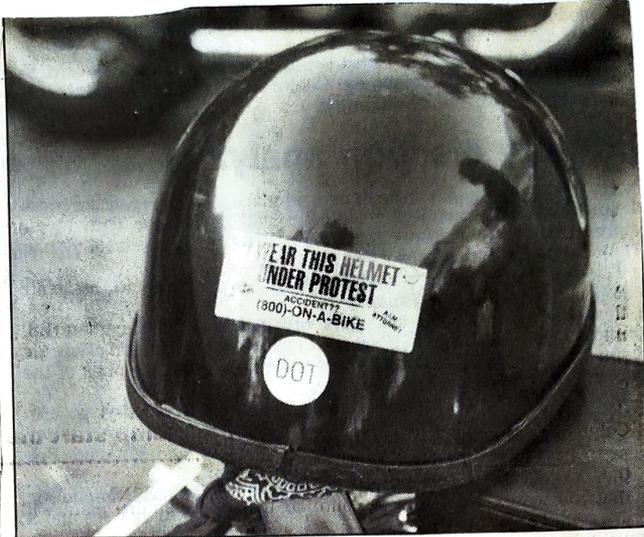
"It's like any other group," Beard said, citing the old adage about bad apples in every barrel. Looking over the a batch of new Harley's parked at La Vida, Beard notes it's not a cheap pastime or lifestyle. "There are not too many low lifes who can afford a \$15,000 bike."

Another rider nearby pipes in "I think the Angels got intimidated to the point where not too many riders claim membership anymore," referring to law enforcement's long running use of high pressure tactics on the club.

Beard and his 20-year-old daughter Keri had stopped off at La Vida following a "run" up to the Ventura County Fairgrounds, it's a stop they've been making for the past few months.

"We usually stop here after a ride, get something to eat and listen to the music. I love the blues," Keri said.

She also loves the 1992 Harley Softail her dad bought her for her birthday.



"Its name is 'Ribbon,'" she said, pointing to the purple stripe that was custom painted across the bike to resemble the ribbon on a gift.

As Santi Woodward sat watching the Blue Rockers jam, she nursed a beer and offered her perspective on the La Vida scene.

"If you think about it, movies make bikers look bad, they are always the villains. But it's not that way at all in reality. Bikers are the nicest people. I really love this place," she said, adding "Everyone can just be themselves here. You don't have to put on an act."

Don Himes has owned the restaurant and bar at La Vida for the better part of the last 10 years. He knows what society's perception is of his primary clientele. He also knows he has a steady niche market.

"We get all shapes and sizes in here," Himes said, adding "It's really a misconception when you 'bikers,' our crowd (is people) who ride motorcycles. Though it has been known as a 'biker bar' for many years."

Himes attributes La Vida's popularity with the scenic nature of Carbon Canyon and the relative seclusion of the restaurant and bar.

"No one wants to ride the free-

ways, but the canyon is a nice scenic run and we are in the middle of the canyon."

Bands churning out a variety of rock, standards ranging from the more southern-flavored Allman Brothers - Lynard Skynard style jams to 'classic' rock covers, set up on a stage in the restaurant's patio on the weekends.

Between the music, cold beer and promise of camaraderie, Himes estimates 200 or more 'Scooter Folk' turn up each Saturday and Sunday.

And despite the diverse perspectives within the crowd, they all seem to have one thing in common.

They hold the helmet law, its legislative supporters and the governor who signed it into law in open contempt, ridiculing what they say is the flawed logic that motivated the drive to force riders to wear protective head gear and chaffing under the idea that the law is now just that, a law.

"Look, I wear a helmet when I want to, but there are more uninsured motorists out there in cars than on motorcycles. If what they are trying to do is save lives, then everyone in cars ought to wear helmets," Beard said, adding "Bikers are just a crowd to pick on because we are not organized enough to put up a squawk."



LA VIDA

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JUNE 24, 1992

# Carbon Canyon Run

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## The hot springs may be defunct, but La Vida is still jumpin' with the Harley scene

*"He had golden chains  
on his leather jacket  
and on the back were written  
the names  
Mary and Mom  
and Hells Angels..."*

— From the production Hair

**By Mark Cromer**

DSP Staff Writer

**CARBON CANYON** — As Billy Gordon stood on the edge of the stage, he peered at the audience through his dark sunglasses and let a sheepish grin spread across his face.

The next number was going to be a crowd pleaser and he knew it.

"I hear they're coming out with a new law," Gordon tells them as he straps on a white crash helmet. "Musicians must wear helmets on stage."

Laughs spread across the crowd as he ambles through an Arlo Guthrie-like introduction about what was known as AB 7, the recent helmet law.

*"I went to take my bike out,*

*but I saw a new law  
you gotta have a helmet  
for everything you do...  
got to have one in the shower  
and on your cats and dogs,  
on your boat, skiing...  
or walking in the park"*

Sure enough, before Gordon and his band, the Blue Rockers, had finished whipping through a fast blues-boogie shuffle known affectionately as "Helmet Laws Suck!" the crowd was whooping, hollering, stomping and singing along when ever the chorus rolled around.

One woman in the crowd extended her arm and flipped the bird in a defiant salute as she shouted out the words.

That the lyrics touched a nerve — and a rather raw one at that — with the audience was not surprising, given the impressive line of Harley Davidson motorcycles that lined the parking lot in front of the restaurant and bar.

Welcome to La Vida.

Once a mecca for those seeking

to bathe in its natural hot springs, the small, now partially defunct resort nestled into Carbon Canyon has become a hot spot for bikers, or, if you're Politically Correct: "Motorcycle Enthusiasts."

A weekend afternoon at La Vida makes it clear the scene Peter Fonda and Dennis Hopper helped make chic in the classic film *Easy Rider* has hardly vanished.

Custom Harleys, some sporting a blinding array of chrome, roll off Carbon Canyon Road into the restaurant's parking lot.

The roar of their engines, which seem to get gunned quite a bit as the cycles move slowly by, sounds like crackling thunder and reverberates off the canyon walls in an impressive avalanche of sound that buries all competition.

The bikers themselves, though often pigeon-holed into the Sonny Barger (the notorious leader of the Oakland chapter of the Hell-Angels) category, are a divers





Sam Gangwer/North County News

A view from across the road shows the newly constructed Living Faith Church building in Carbon Canyon, an architecturally-unique structure in the area.

# Redwoods have been lucky

By John Westcott  
The Orange County Register

**W**hat's most remarkable about the redwoods of Carbon Canyon Regional Park in Brea is that they are there at all. Other than being many miles from the fog-bound Northern California coast that is their main habitat, the trees have had two near-misses from fire.

The most recent came last month, when a brush fire came within 20 feet of the 120-tree grove. In 1987, they had a much closer call: a brush fire so close it browned the leaves of 12 trees.

Fortunately, redwoods are relatively fire-resistant, and sprinklers keep the grove's undergrowth moist enough to deter blazes, said Jeff Bukshpam, senior park ranger.

The redwoods stand about 45 to 70 feet tall, no match for the 300-foot giants of Big Sur. But the Brea grove has been growing only since the early 1970s, when an anonymous donor offered them for the park.

Visitors trudge along a mile-long nature trail to reach the grove, at the southeast corner of the park.

Redwoods are not all the park offers. The 124-acre park also has tennis and volleyball courts, ball fields and a model-airplane area.



The Orange County Register  
Carbon Canyon Regional Park is in the northeast corner of Brea.

**T**he Brea grove has been growing only since the early 1970s, when an anonymous donor offered the trees.

There's also a 1.5-mile equestrian trail, a four-acre fishing lake, and a rich variety of other trees, including sycamore, eucalyptus, Canary Island pines and pepper trees.

The park is on Carbon Canyon Road in the northeast corner of Brea, near Valencia Avenue and Lambert Road. There is a \$2 entry fee per vehicle.



The Orange County Register

# Isolation has its cost



Two signs along Carbon Canyon Road reflect the views of many Sleepy Hollow residents regarding cars speeding through the canyon.

"We know we're probably going to be alone for a while in an earthquake," Schlotterbeck said. "The road is the first thing to go. They'll probably have to hike in to get us."

Not long ago, she wondered whether to leave Olinda Village, a 120-home tract built in 1964 as part of Brea. Her answer came when she saw her three children trying to save a dying deer.

"I want my children to care about living things," she said. "Hanging over my head is the fire threat, but also hanging over my head are hawks. We have silence and the wonderful smell of the chaparral."

Kelly Smith, 16, has spent half her life in Sleepy Hollow, a working-class hamlet near the border of Orange and San Bernardino counties. The creek was her wading pool; the hills her playground.

"Unlike other kids, I couldn't exactly run down to Thrifty and get some ice cream. But I know these hills like the back of my hand," Smith said. "We like the slower pace; we're less stressed out."

Smith never had to look far for a playmate.

"This is the rural childhood I never had," said her mother, Karen. "This is my fantasy place. I plan to die here — though not real soon."

Behind their Hay Drive home, charred trees rise like black claws from the scorched hillside.

Harry and Nita Shedrick lost their house to the fire, but they didn't lose their home. Like many of their neighbors, the Shedricks, both 70, are rebuilding.

"Sure, it could happen again. But you can't live your life that way. It's worth it to be back here," said Nita Shedrick, who is staying with her husband in a Brea hotel, compliments of their insurance company. Their new home probably will not be ready for six months.

Founded in 1924, Sleepy Hollow lives up to its name. Homes ranging from the rustic to the rickety line narrow streets crumbling at the edges. The winding roads are ride-the-brake steep. To drive in Sleepy Hollow — as well as to live there — you've got to shift into low gear.

Heading for the hills are college professors, construction workers and business owners — all refugees from tract housing.

"We've got a lot of people who are marching to their own beat, and you can do that here and nobody will bother you," said Ron Nadeau, a supermarket manager who moved to Sleepy Hollow in 1978.

From his patio chair beneath an

oak tree, Nadeau, 47, kicked aside the fallen acorns and watched a California thrasher peck at the dirt with a long, curved beak. A scrub jay squawked overhead.

"When I got here, I saw things I had never seen before," Nadeau said. "I can hike from my backyard to Yorba Linda and not hit another house."

Nadeau and other canyon residents are working to keep it that way. The hills are teeming with activists battling to keep development from plodding awkwardly through the wild lands. After fighting back flames with garden hoses, folks tend to get fussy about plans

for building new roads or more projects in the mostly pristine canyon.

"We live around and under the trees, not over them," said Nadeau, vice president of the Chino Hills Land Conservancy, a grass-roots group working to make developers more sensitive to nature.

In many ways, Carbon Canyon's fate is tied to the growth at opposite ends of the canyon road in Brea and west San Bernardino County.

On the Brea side, the \$65 million price tag for bringing water lines, sewers and other utilities to the canyon has kept developers at bay.

In San Bernardino County, Chino Hills has swelled to more than 40,000 people, and developers are eyeing a 14,000-acre dairy preserve that could be open to construction in seven years.

The growth would send more traffic through Carbon Canyon and require the construction of a road through nearby Soquel Canyon — a scenario that has rattled some residents.

"The hills are very personal to the people who live here," said Schlotterbeck, who helped establish the 10,000-acre Chino Hills park. "We care about the trees and the wildlife.

"And we care about each other."

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Leland Holder/The Orange County Register  
David and Hillary Miller and their son, Isaac, sit the back yard of their Sleepy Hollow home. The Millers have lived in the canyon for almost three years and say they love the area.

# Rural dwellers gladly pay high price of peace

Residents of Carbon Canyon live under constant threat of wildfire

By Tony Saavedra  
The Orange County Register

Going home to Carbon Canyon is like a healing balm for Norma Hicks.

"Once I hit the canyon, I can actually feel my shoulders drop," said Hicks, a former Brea councilwoman who works in the town's business center. "It's like I've left behind all that urban tension."

But that peace carries a high price.

Hicks and her neighbors live under the constant threat of wildfire, like the inferno that burned 17 houses and blackened 6,250 acres in June.

Such are the rigors and rewards of life in Carbon Canyon, where disaster is only an ember away.

In places such as Olinda Village and Sleepy Hollow, canyon dwellers escape from the hustle and bustle of the flatlands below. They relax under dark, starry skies, away from the neon glare of growth. Their children hunt rabbits and scoop polliwogs from Carbon Canyon Creek.

And at the first hint of heavy winds, residents climb onto rooftops and sniff for smoke.

It's a lifestyle that breeds a special kind of tenacity, like the tiny green sprouts pushing up from the base of a blackened tree.

Life goes on.

"The benefits are daily, hourly, by the minute. So



Land Holder/The Orange County Register  
Ron Nadeau, left, and Colin Campbell survey the hillside behind Nadeau's home in Sleepy Hollow. Both worry about the loose dirt exposed by a massive brush fire that blackened the canyon area in June.

NOV. 19, 1990

they care for others. "It is important for all of us, but especially teens, to learn that," she said. "We teach and preach support, and by doing this, it gives us a chance to take an active part."

For many in the group, the vigil was an opportunity to show the world that teen-agers are not as self-centered as they are sometimes if there's a disaster or near-disaster, it still doesn't compare," said Claire Schlotterbeck, a 12-year resident of Olinda Village.

"Some of my best conversations with my children have been on the canyon road," said Schlotterbeck, 44. "Perhaps it's the comfort of the canyon. You'll spot a hawk sitting on a wire or notice that a particular wildflower has bloomed."

Since 1978, five major fires have swallowed more than 42,000 acres in the Carbon Canyon area. The flames mostly ate sheds and out-buildings, although the fire June 27 devoured eight homes in Sleepy Hollow and more in Chino Hills. No houses have been lost in Olinda Village.

Nearly five months have passed since the \$4.8 million blaze and a subsequent fire in Chino Hills State Park. But Carbon Canyon still isn't out of the woods.

A heavy rain could bring down the hillsides where flames burned away the vegetation and scorched the topsoil. Residents are praying that the rainy season will begin with a light drizzle, just enough to restore the grasses without triggering mudslides.

Isolation is a key part of the canyon's charm, but it's also one of the hazards. The only way through the hills is two-lane Carbon Canyon Road — a main commuter link between Orange and San Bernardino counties.

At rush hour or during emergencies, the road gets so clogged that residents worry about the ability of rescue crews to get through.

The situation has forced neighbors to band together and prepare for the worst.

# Thousands Attend Edendale Retreat



**OUTDOOR WORSHIP** — Christian groups visiting Edendale Christian Retreat can hold outdoor worship sessions under the eaves of this open-air meeting hall. Crosses, such as the one at the head of the hall, are a common sight at Edendale. (News Tribune Photo)



**SIGN IN** — Visitors are asked to sign in at the office of Edendale Retreat. The retreat ranch is off Carbon Canyon Road in Brea. Connected to the office is a lodge where prayer meetings can be held, and the Edendale library.



**EASTER PAGEANT** — A model of the cave where Christ was buried is carved in the hillside at the Edendale Christian Retreat. Three crosses depicting Calvary are nearby. The crosses and the tomb are props for an Easter Pageant held here each year. A Christmas pageant in a barn is also presented by Christian groups.



**GREETINGS** — Mrs. Syd Sybrandy of Edendale Christian Retreat welcomes visitors to the ranch. The retreat is open to all denominations, the only prerequisite is that the visitors spend some time in prayer and Christian Education.  
(News Tribune Photo)

# Christian Retreat Began as Dream

## South African Family Builds Unique Ranch

By RICHARD McDOWELL

BREA — Nestled in the foothills of Carbon Canyon lies the dream of a Dutch architect and his South African wife. It is the 93-acre Edendale Christian Retreat.

The idea of such an establishment was born in Mr. and Mrs. Syd Sybrandy when they were walking a long a native trail in South Africa one night. Mrs. Sybrandy says this was before they, themselves, became Christians and their idea at that time was to build an orphanage or home for the aged.

Then came a visit to the U.S. When the Sybrandys returned they sold their interests in South Africa with the idea of coming to the U.S. permanently.

### MET MISSIONARY

Mrs. Sybrandy said that an American missionary was the only one who could sell them American dollars at that time. In their transactions with him they became converted

and stayed in Africa an extra nine months helping the missionary with the Africans.

The family of five then made it to the U.S. and to California. They settled temporarily in Buena Park where they became members of the Community Reform Church of Garden Grove.

### STOP ON HILL

The thought of establishing a retreat or haven for the depressed was still with them and they began looking for a place to build.

Mrs. Sybrandy says they were standing on a hill east of their present site, just above the new Olinda School, when they saw the Flying Cow Ranch and realized this was the place for them.

There was no water to the ranch so they were able to buy the property for about \$500 an acre.

Mrs. Sybrandy says the family prayed and were assured by God that water would be made available. A well was dug and shortly thereafter a Metropolitan Water District line came through the area.

After seven months of work on the ranch the family greeted its first retreat group in 1960. Since then 72 different denominations have stayed at the ranch.

The number of people that have come through since opening is reflected in the number of dinners served. It has shot up from 2,179 in 1962 to 17,629 in 1964.

### CENTERED ABOUT CHRIST

Mrs. Sybrandy says the guiding philosophy of the retreat is that the home should be centered about Christ, and thus the man is the most important member of the household and he should rule.

She says this philosophy has worked so well in keeping their family happy that she tries to pass this on to others that come through appearing despondent.

The family, consisting of the adults and Rae Ann, 21; Lynn, 20; Hank, 17, and Pam, 9, still runs the ranch. Increasing size, however, has meant that more help be hired and their employees now include a cook, a college student who serves as

handyman, and three part time helpers.

### STILL GROWING

Facilities are constantly being expanded. The family is now working on the animal farm to allow visiting children to look at the farm creatures. A wayside chapel is being built along Carbon Canyon Road.

The ranch is used for workshops, retreats, meetings, banquets, conferences, camps, hayrides and family reunions.

EXISTING California pepper (MULTI-TRUNK) to remain  
T/F indication.

EXISTING Eucalyptus  
to remain

play equipment  
play area

SOFTWOOD LOS Walls  
(Vertical & Horizontal  
Combination)



CONC. WALK

Native shrubs  
picnic tables & TOTAL

**CANYON COUNTRY PARK**  
AMERICAN NATIONAL HOUSING CORP.

Scale 1" = 20' 0"

DATE: DEC 6/77

2 1/2 granite  
pasture grass

trash containers

Vertical trees

CONC. WALK

