

April 13, 2015

Dear Santa Barbara County Supervisors,

My name is Judy Barnes and I have been a resident of the lovely town of New Cuyama for 27 years. I am the language arts teacher at Cuyama Elementary school, a parent of two children who have completed their educations at Cuyama schools, as well as a past lifeguard at the pool that Joe Centeno so graciously fought for and built.

During the summers that the pool was open, I saw many families enjoying their time at "their pool." Many of our families have strict cultural values; one of which is modesty. Many mothers and their daughters felt comfortable at the community pool whereas they would never have attended another public pool in a larger town. These mothers and daughters also learned how to swim! This was a very empowering thing to see... and be a part of. Our community pool provided a safe environment for all families. I do not think I need to tell you all the details of how this pool was an asset to our whole community: swim lessons, relief from the heat, water aerobics, PE classes from the high school, families, babies, children of all ages, teachers, students, elderly residents, firefighters, private parties, Booster Club movie night and swim... and so much more!!!

I am distressed and disgusted to hear you are considering **not** rebuilding this asset to our community. **Shame on you!!!** Yes, Cuyama is small, rural, and low-income. No, we are not a tourist destination, nor do we have high incomes, or a large voting-voice. These are the reasons *you should be fighting for the project you started*. The money has been paid, as well as the insurance that promised to fix what was broken.

Our families and the students of this valley will always remember the kindness and compassion of Joe Centeno, and how he fought for our small, under-represented, voiceless community. Since Mr. Centeno has retired, Salud Carbajal has been fighting this battle; but with little success. I implore you, Santa Barbara County Supervisors, to DO THE RIGHT THING! Fix this pool! The time that has passed has left our residents believing you have turned your backs on us. If you would like to be remembered with any positivity, you will find the compassion and the fight it takes to set an example to our residents, our students, and our children, that we have, indeed, not been forgotten.

I expect to hear good news from you or one of your representatives soon; news that will make this community happy and hopeful. If you vote on **not** fixing the pool, I invite you to come to Cuyama Elementary School, Monday through Friday, 8:15 to 11:30, to explain to my students exactly **WHY** you came to your appalling decision.

Thank you,

Judy Barnes