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Sonoma West TIMES & NEWS

108 YEARS • SINCE 1889 • VOL. 109 NO. 11

JANUARY 14 - JANUARY 20, 1998

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Jan 14 - 20 1998

Ghilotti family donates Laguna uplands site

by Barry W. Dugan
Sonoma West Editor

SEBASTOPOL — It will be a happy New Year indeed for advocates of the Laguna de Santa Rosa.

In a year-end move that is sure to delight Laguna environmentalists and conservationists, the Ghilotti family has deeded the 8.4-acre Laguna Uplands property, also known as Palm Terrace, to the Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation.

The \$337,200 donation completes the acquisition effort launched two years ago, an effort that most people had assumed had failed.

"The gift of the Laguna Uplands property gives us a quantum leap forward toward our goal of restoration and preservation of the Laguna," said Bill Haigwood, president of the Laguna de Santa Rosa

Foundation, and one of the leaders of the original effort to purchase the property.

The land was slated for an 18-unit housing development, a project steeped in a decade's worth of controversy, before the effort to buy the land was launched. "And considering the difficulties the Ghilotti family has experienced in developing their property in Sebastopol, future generations will have to see it as the most magnanimous gift of this age," he said.

Haigwood, a realtor, city hall watcher and conservative columnist for Sonoma West, teamed up with Juliana Doms two years ago to attempt to purchase the parcel of land, located north of Walker Avenue and east of Palm Drive Hospital. Doms, a well-known activist and publisher of the Environmental Impact Re-
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