

## Jack the Giant Killer – A Modern Fable

We all know the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. Little Jack plants some beans which grow into a great beanstalk. He climbs the beanstalk and finds himself in the kingdom of a great Giant. Jack steals the Giant's goose that lays the golden eggs, and with the Giant in hot pursuit, scampers down the beanstalk. Jack chops down the beanstalk with the Giant still on top, and the big old Giant crashes to the ground and dies. Jack is proclaimed a hero in his home town for slaying the Giant and bringing back the golden goose.

But why is Jack the hero of this story? Is it because he is small and poor while the Giant is big and rich, and the big, rich guy must always be the villain. A recent TV production of Jack and the Beanstalk turned this legend on its head. The Giant was benevolent, protecting the community and sharing his wealth. Jack was selfish and greedy. He was a thief and murderer. After he killed the Giant he kept the goose to himself and his community lost its protector and its source of income. It's not until Jack's descendant returns the goose to her rightful owners that the Kingdom can become whole and prosperous again.

Not all Giants are good. We know that some Giants, like Enron and Worldcom, come crashing down of their own weight and bury many people in their fall. But not all Giants are bad. San Ramon is fortunate to have a good Giant in our midst—Sunset Development.

The notion still persists that if you are big and rich, you must be out to squash the little guy. So some members of the community, in emulation of Jack, are out to squash the Giant first. If the Giant offers to build a new City Hall for the Kingdom, those plans must be squashed. Instead residents will have to spend millions of dollars to build their own Civic Center. If the Giant has friends at City Hall who make things easier for the Giant to improve the Kingdom, thereby making the whole Kingdom more prosperous, those friends must be banished. If the Giant wants to improve transportation to the Kingdom by putting in a Heliport, which would also provide emergency services for San Ramon Regional Medical Center, the Heliport must be squashed.

The new Council majority wants to make "Residents equal to business" in San Ramon. That sounds good, but tax dollars that support all the services that residents enjoy here come mainly from businesses in Bishop Ranch. Cutting the beanstalk out from under Bishop Ranch isn't helping residents at the bottom.

Mayor Tatarka says she wants to provide more help to home based business. That's great. I have a home based business. I haven't made any money from it, and I don't pay any sales taxes (no sales, no taxes), but I'd like to get more services. Let's cut services to Bishop Ranch and give them to me working nights out of my spare bedroom. How's that for a fairy tale, going from the goose with the golden eggs to just plain goose eggs.