



The Escondido History Center

With the Generous Sponsorship of

Jack Raymond



2020 ESCONDIDO LEGENDS APPLICATION

JUAN BAUTISTA ALVARADO AWARD **ESCONDIDO PIONEER AND RANCHER**

Explanation of award: The honorarium will be given to a senior student attending a high school in Escondido who has participated in a variety of school activities and has demonstrated leadership throughout his or her high school years. Volunteerism in the community is also highly important.

Additional consideration will be given for a strong interest in agricultural leadership and for participation in FFA with focus on animals. Commitment to attend the Honorarium presentation, when arranged, is required.

Applications are available at www.escondidohistory.org (click on Legends button on front page of website) or from your high school counselor.

Please complete: The Escondido Legends application information below and submit your typed responses to the Escondido History Center along with a copy of your current high school transcript no later than 4 P.M. on Tuesday, February 9, 2021.

Please include your full name on all pages and deliver:

- In person to the Escondido History Center, 321 N. Broadway or by U.S. mail, P.O. Box 263, Escondido, CA 92033 **OR**
- As an email PDF attachment to fox@escondidohistory.org .

APPLICATION INFORMATION

1. YOUR NAME
2. YOUR HIGH SCHOOL WHICH YOU ATTEND
3. SUBMIT WITH A COPY OF YOUR CURRENT HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT
4. TELL US ABOUT YOUR HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE WITH FFA
5. TELL US ABOUT YOUR LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES IN WHICH YOU PARTICIPATED
6. DESCRIBE YOUR ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNITY WORK AND SERVICE
7. TELL US ABOUT YOUR HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE
8. DESCRIBE YOUR GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS FOR THE FUTURE
9. SUBMIT YOUR PRINTED NAME AND SIGNATURE, AND INCLUDE THE SIGNATURE OF YOUR SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Juan Bautista Alvarado

The City of Escondido's beginning is largely due to the acquisition of a tract of land which was originally owned by Mexico. In 1943 Juan Bautista Alvarado received the approximate 12,635.77 acres of land known as Rancho Rincon del Diablo ("corner of the devil") from Manuel Micheltoarena, then governor of the Department of Alta and Baja California. Rincon del Diablo got its name because the central portion of its land was claimed by no mission. Its southern section was used as grazing land by Mission San Diego de Alcalá and its northwestern portion was under jurisdiction of Mission San Luis Rey de Francia. But the part which was claimed by neither, since it was not part of God's land, was considered to belong to the devil.

Before Juan Bautista Alvarado came to Rancho Rincon del Diablo, he was prominent in both Los Angeles and San Diego politics, serving as a councilman and a member of the state assembly.

Senor and Senora Alvarado built a spacious adobe house near the southeast corner of the Rancho Rincon del Diablo property. The Alvarado house was located near the intersection of present-day Bear Valley Parkway and State Route 78. It was reportedly 55 by 60 feet long and the interior was partitioned into five or six rooms. There was a patio and two small outbuildings, and the windows were of glass which was very unusual for that day.

A little stream was nearby and in wet seasons contained considerable water. Alvarado raised cattle and transported the hides to San Diego trading vessels when they were in port. The house has long since melted back into the earth from which its adobe bricks were constructed.

The Alvarados were the parents of six children who married and remained in the area. One of their daughters married Captain Joseph Snook, grantee of El Rancho San Bernardo, which adjoined the Alvarado ranch. It was near the Snook house that General Stephen Kearny and his United States troops defended Mule Hill against the California soldiers after the Battle of San Pasqual.

Senor Alvarado died on his ranch sometime prior to the time the Americans began to rule in 1848. By his will, the ranch was given to his children.

In 1855, Oliver S. Witherby, who came to San Diego in 1849 with the Mexican Boundary Commission, began buying Rancho Rincon del Diablo from the heirs of Juan Bautista Alvarado. It took him until 1862 to get them all to sign. Mr. Witherby is reputed to have lived in the old adobe at least part of the time and he used the land for grazing sheep and cattle. In 1868 he sold the ranch to the three Wolfskill brothers, John, Josiah, and Matthew and a fourth man, Edward McGear for \$8,000.

In October 1883 a group of Los Angeles and San Diego investors bought the grant from the Wolfskills for \$128,138.70, quite a profit from the purchase price of \$8,000 twenty years earlier. In 1884 these same investors transferred the Rancho to a so called Escondido Company for \$64,069.33. This is the first time the name **Escondido** appears in documents. Just two years later this company in turn deeded the grant to the Escondido Land and Town Company which had been incorporated the preceding December 15, 1885.

Today the City of Escondido stands on Rincon del Diablo which was granted to Juan Bautista Alvarado and we honor him as being a Founding Legend.