

# **TORCH AWARD ENTRY DOCUMENT**

## **PART I**

Submission Identifier Code: (from Club Number 1002) 148

Full Title for Entry: **“Successful Political Forum Presented”**

Entry Category: Speakers Bureau (Non-FJMC Programs)

Contact Person to be listed on Torch Award CD: Ron Gross

Email address to be listed on Torch Award CD: ZaydeRon@msn.com

Club number & Club name: 1002; Temple Beth Emet Men’s Club

Synagogue name, city and state: Temple Beth Emet; Anaheim, CA

Club President Name (at time of entry): Bob Oran (OBM)

Club President Name (at time of convention): Allan Koven

Person preparing entry: Ronald M. Gross

Email address of person preparing entry: ZaydeRon@msn.com

Date of entry submission: April 12, 2007

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## **PART II – Summary / Press Release:**

### **PART II a. – Summary Information**

A Political Forum, sponsored by our Men’s Club, was held at Temple Beth Emet on October 30, 2006, one week prior to the November 2006 election. The Forum featured the incumbent Congresswoman from California’s 47<sup>TH</sup> Congressional District (encompassing Santa Ana and Garden Grove), Democrat Lorreta Sanchez, and her Republican challenger Tan Nguyen. Mr. Nguyen achieved his candidacy by winning an earlier hard fought runoff election.

Thinking that this would be both a good public relations and educational opportunity for Temple Beth Emet, our Men’s Club President Bob Oran (OBM) proposed the idea of a formal Debate between the candidates. Mr. Oran then turned the idea over to his Membership VP, Ron Gross, who began the process by contacting the offices of both candidates. The format of a Forum, as opposed to a direct debate, was settled upon primarily at the behest of Congresswoman Sanchez. It was also thought that there would be less of a security risk for the Temple if the two candidates were not opposing each other on the dais at the same time. We achieved its goal and the event was a huge success in several ways, drawing an attendance of close to 200 people.

## **PART II b. – Press Release Body with Title**

### Temple Men's Club Holds Political Forum

The Temple Beth Emet Men's Club of Anaheim sponsored a Political Forum October 30, 2006, one week prior to the November 2006 election. The Forum featured the incumbent Congresswoman from California's 47<sup>TH</sup> Congressional District (encompassing Santa Ana and Garden Grove), Democrat Lorreta Sanchez, and her Republican challenger Tan Nguyen. Mr. Nguyen achieved his candidacy by winning an earlier hard fought runoff election.

Taking the opportunity to enhance the Temple's community public relations and to provide an educational opportunity for the Temple as well, Men's Club President Bob Oran (Of Blessed Memory) proposed the idea of a formal Debate/Forum between the candidates. Mr. Oran then turned the idea and responsibility over to one of his Vice Presidents, Ron Gross, to "make it happen". Mr. Gross did bring the idea to fruition, beginning the process by contacting the offices of both candidates. The Men's Club was quite satisfied that they achieved their goals and the event was a huge success in several ways, drawing an attendance of close to 200 people.

#### 1. Person writing "Press Release":

Ronald M. Gross

7691 Duquesne Place, Westminster, CA 92683

Home: (714) 379-9345 / Mobile: (714) 376-4767

ZaydeRon@msn.com

#### 2. Contact information for Temple Bulletin submission:

Ms. Shirley Glowalla

Temple Beth Emet

1770 West Cerritos Avenue; Anaheim, CA 92804

(714) 772-4720

#### 3. Contact information for Local Newspaper submission:

Editor – Local Section; David Whiting

Newspaper – Orange County Register / (714) 796-7000

Address – 625 North Grand Avenue, Santa Ana, CA 92701

## **PART III – Self Assessment of Entry**

Reviewed, evaluated, and included (where applicable) within the Entry Documentation (Part IV).

## **PART IV – Entry Documentation**

The November 2006 election featured some hotly contested races. One in particular was for California's heavily Hispanic populated 47<sup>TH</sup> Congressional District encompassing Santa Ana and Garden Grove. That contest pitted the incumbent, Democrat Lorreta Sanchez (of Hispanic descent), against Republican challenger Tan Nguyen (of Vietnamese descent). Mr. Nguyen achieved his candidacy by winning an earlier hard fought runoff election. This contest gained notoriety due to a letter allegedly mailed by Mr. Nguyen to the "Illegal Immigrant Community" warning them of the consequences they faced if they voted in the election. This was turned around to give the appearance that Mr. Nguyen was addressing this warning to all immigrants, of which he himself was one. His office was raided by law enforcement and election officials as a result, but no charges were brought. It did cause the race to take on a different image though. Another issue of interest to our Temple, and the Jewish community as a whole, was Ms. Sanchez' purported position on Israel and the Middle East.

Thinking that this would be both a good public relations and educational opportunity for Temple Beth Emet, our Men's Club President Bob Oran (Of Blessed Memory) proposed the idea of a Debate between the two candidates to be held at the Temple and sponsored by the Men's Club. To the best of our knowledge, an event of this nature and magnitude had not been attempted at our Temple in the past. Mr. Oran then turned the idea and responsibility over to his Membership VP Ron Gross to "make it happen".

Ron did bring the idea to fruition, beginning the process by first contacting the offices of both candidates. After some written communications and telephone conversations, as well as personal meetings, the Forum became a reality. The format of a Forum, as opposed to a direct Debate, was settled upon primarily at the behest of (and out of respect for) the incumbent, Ms. Sanchez. It was also thought that there would be less of a security risk for the Temple if the two candidates were not opposing each other on the dais at the same time. Regardless, local law enforcement was alerted and present, though in plain clothes, throughout the evening.

The Forum was held at Temple Beth Emet at 7:30 PM on October 30, 2006, one week prior to the election. At the behest of Congresswoman Sanchez, there was no publicity or marketing of the event by either the Men's Club or the Temple prior to the Forum. However, Mr. Nguyen's office did release the planned event to the media and it was pretty heavily covered by newspapers and TV stations. We did achieve our goals, and the event was a huge success in several ways, drawing an attendance of close to 200 people including Temple members and local citizens. The Men's Club performed a community service and further enhanced their image within the Temple and the local community. Additionally, the Jewish community had an opportunity to address questions to Congresswoman Sanchez prior to voting.

Though it didn't "just happen", it wasn't so difficult a venture that events of this nature couldn't be presented by other Clubs in the future. While Ron Gross chaired the event, it took the help of several other Club members to make it the success that it was. With a small Temple and Club such as we are, our Club Board numbers about twenty. So it's safe to say that over 30% of the Board participated, as well as several of the Club members.

Attached is the flyer that was mailed to all Temple members. As there is a church that also uses our facilities, an invitation was extended to them to attend as well. Copies of the flyer were also given to them for their distribution.



**THE MEN'S CLUB  
OF TEMPLE BETH EMET  
HOSTS A POLITICAL FORUM**



*"You're Invited"*

**7:30 PM, Monday, October 30, 2006**

Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez and Challenger Tan Nguyen will appear at Temple Beth Emeth for a non-partisan political forum to discuss issues of interest in the upcoming election. Election Day is Tuesday, November 7.

The event is open to the public and is an excellent opportunity for you to address your concerns directly to, and hear responses from, the candidates. Please remember to vote.

We look forward to seeing you. For planning purposes, an R.S.V.P. would be appreciated.

Light refreshments will be served.

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**TEMPLE BETH EMET  
1770 W. CERRITOS AVENUE, ANAHEIM, CA 92804  
(714) 772-4720**

