



MONTE NIDO VALLEY



COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



A Dark Sky Community

E-NEWSLETTER

March/April 2016

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

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Juan Bautista de Anza National Trail

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March 2016 Minutes from MNVCA Board meeting

Mountain Lion alerts



Photo courtesy Molly Hogan

MOUNTAIN LIONS NEAR YOUR HOME

(Posted by Stephanie Abronson)

There are two very active mountain lions in Topanga. P27 who has been around for ages and a younger un-collared cat who has been taking livestock on a near daily basis recently. Jeff Sikich, the biologist from NPS, is telling folks with domestic animals to build barns and to put the animals in at night. We thought you should know as this un-collared puma is active in the Topanga side of the Canyons - Saddle Peak/ Fern-wood to Old Canyon, so Monte Nido is within his/her territory. Has a preference for goats. No horses yet, but folks are taking note and he has been stalking horses.

As to Jeff Sikich's recommendation that folks build barns to protect their animals at night, we remind you to check with both County Regional Planning and Building & Safety before you begin construction on a new barn. We'd hate for someone to move forward without the proper approvals and perhaps end up having to tear something down that wasn't permitted. It is understood there could be a bit of urgency about moving equines and other livestock out of danger, but folks should not simply start building.

It is probable that Regional Planning will be willing to work with the various mountain communities to accommodate the urgency of this issue. If the equestrian community does feel this is a matter of some urgency, I'd suggest representatives meet

soon with Regional Planning to discuss your needs and concerns. We could then quickly determine what can be accommodated and how best to move forward.

Feel free to contact Gina Natoli by e-mail or telephone: 213-974-3426, gnatoli@planning.lacounty.gov, or **L.A. County Calabasas One-Stop Center at 26600 Agoura Rd., Suite 110, Calabasas. Talk with Marie Waite - 818-880-3799, mwaite@planning.lacounty.gov.** Calabasas from 7:00 to 11:00 am. ♦Office hours are limited to Wednesday and Thursday

Gina M. Natoli, MURP, AICP
Supervising Regional Planner
Los Angeles County Dept. of Regional Planning
213-974-3426

Also there was a Los Angeles Times article on this topic at

<http://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-lion-attacks-20160315-story.html>

De Anza National Trail use by Equestrians Endangered (Report sent by Stephanie Abronson)

RONDELL OASIS HOTEL

City of Calabasas, Planning Commission Special Meeting, Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2016.

Stephanie Abronson attended this Special Meeting for equestrians to express concern over the location of this hotel, at the corner of Las Virgenes Road and Rondell Street in the City of Calabasas, hiding the de Anza NATIONAL TRAIL trailhead entrance. This hotel is proposed to be 4 stories, on a net lot size of 3.87 acres, and will occupy this small lot on the north side of the Mobil Gas Station. The developer proposed 127 rooms with 151 parking spaces.

This hotel will sit in front of the Juan Bautista de Anza NATIONAL Trail, which begins at the Arizona border with Mexico, traversing through Calabasas to San Francisco. In 1776, Anza took a group of settlers from Mexico to found the City of San Francisco, and passed through this Calabasas area.

Of the 151 parking spaces, only 5 spaces are dedicated for trail users. None of these spaces will accommodate a rig (truck with horse trailer) of any size. It was claimed by the Calabasas Planning staff that the City intended in the **2007 Calabasas Trails Master Plan** that trail users would park at the western end of Calabasas Road – a dead end. At this dead end parking location there is only a curbed circle turn-around for traffic and parking. If even 1 or 2 cars are parked on the curb, there would be no room to park any horse trailer rig. The turn-around space is no greater than that on residential streets that dead end.

Of the 151 parking spaces, no mention was made for parking for employees, nor the number of employees expected to staff the hotel. The Parking Study claims that there is plenty of parking for public shared-use during the daytime. The hotel clients are expected to use the hotel for business purposes during the week but not on weekends. There is further disregard for trail users, as there will be retaining walls and concrete steps where trail users will need to take bicycles and horses, sharing the same stairs with hotel clients. Additionally, wheelchairs will use the same path. Is this a recipe for conflict and accidents? This path is the only path that will be used by the Anza Trail users. Concrete stairs are not acceptable for bicycles or horses or wheelchairs to reach and return from the trail.

The **1998 Calabasas Master Plan** at the **Rondell Street site** was to provide a **Trail Head for Public Trail use**. Horseback riders will be completely prevented from using this portion of the Anza NATIONAL Trail. The Anza Trail connects to the Calabasas Millennium Trail system, and then on to many of the other trails in the Santa Monica Mountains.

To add further congestion at this extremely busy intersection of the 101 Freeway, Las Virgenes Rd,

and Agoura Rd, is the planning for an even bigger hotel just south of the Mobil Gas Station. Story poles are currently in place to demonstrate the size of this hotel.

Local traffic is already stymied by the tremendous amount of commuter traffic through this intersection now, and these hotels will undoubtedly increase the traffic congestion.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Rondell Oasis Hotel.

Stephanie Abronson, March 3, 2016

Resident of Monte Nido

Stephanie@abronson.com

My opinion: The City of Calabasas should return to the 1998 Calabasas Master Plan for Trails, and create a park at this site on the Rondell property in front of the Anza NATIONAL Trail trailhead, including picnic tables, bathrooms and parking for all users.

Send an email or letter in your own words to:

L.A. County Supervisor, Sheila Kuehl: Email:

Sheila@bos.lacounty.gov

Third District

500 W Temple Street Suite 821lipp

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Copy to both Timothy Lippman, Senior Field

Deputy: **TLippman@bos.lacounty.gov**;

26600 Agoura Rd. Suite #100

Calabasas, CA 91302

and to Nicole Englund, Planning & Transportation

Deputy: **NEnglund@bos.lacounty.gov**

Copy to:

Kim Lamorie – Las Virgenes Homeowners

Federation: kimlamorie1@gmail.com

Peter Heumann - Calabasas Coalition:

peterh@roadrunner.com)

Ruth Gerson – Recreation & Equestrian Coalition:

ruthgerson@aol.com

Monte Nido Valley Community Association, c/o

Carrie Baltin, President: carrie@baltinassociates.com.

Updated project information and the final MND will be posted here:

cityofcalabasas.com/projects/rondell-oasis-hotel.html

Copy to: **Calabasas City Council**, Calabasas City

Hall, Council Chambers, 100 Civic Center Way,

Calabasas, 91302

Mayor James R. Bozajian jrbozajian@earthlink.net;

Mayor pro Tem maureredge@gmail.com
David J. Shapiro Dshapiro012512@gmail.com;
Alicia Weintraub aliciaweintraub@earthlink.net;
Fred Gaines fgaines@cityofcalabasas.com;
Michael Kline, Calabasas City Planner:
mklein@cityofcalabasas.com; 818.224.1710

Members of the City of Calabasas Planning Commission: Email - info@cityofcalabasas.com
John Mueller, Chair; Dennis Washburn, Vice Chair, Wendy Fassberg, Mark Sikand, Steven Roseman, Alternate Member. Maureen Tamuri, AICP, Community Development Director.

Contact the Calabasas Community Development Department for information regarding the appeal process.

Installation Dinner to Thank Incoming and Outgoing Board Members

On the evening of April 2, MNVCA sponsored a gathering and catered dinner for incoming MNVCA Board members and their spouses at the home of Judy and Dan Goldin. Thanks to Jane Cudworth and Kim Creswick for organizing this event and to the Goldins for hosting it. It was intended to recognize and thank the Board members who devote countless hours toward protecting and preserving the best of Monte Nido.

The current roster of Board members is listed below.

Carrie Baltin President

Joan Slimocosky Vice President

Judy Goldin Treasurer

Jill Reiss Secretary

Gary Wooller

Mary Helen Young

Ann Monahan

Kim Creswick
(jointly with Jane Cudworth)

Jane Cudworth
(jointly with Kim Creswick)

Ilda Jacobsen

Maria & Radu Ioan.

Sally Livingston
(jointly with Alicia Gonzalez)

Alicia Gonzalez
(jointly with Sally Livingston)

Kara Kuipers

MNVCA Membership Drive in Progress

Watch your mail for a note from our Treasurer Judy Goldin with a mail-back envelope to renew your membership in the **Monte Nido Valley Community Association**. The annual fee is only \$75 and it all goes to supporting Monte Nido neighborhood events and causes that keep our community special. The address to send your membership form to is

MNVCA at P.O. Box 8054, Calabasas
91372.

Judy Goldin, Treasurer

When you join you can get a free Monte Nido Community Directory put together recently thanks to Cathy Sieling. Email Carrie Baltin to arrange to pick up your copy at carrie@baltinassociates.com

Local Coastal Plan (LCP) and equestrian properties permitting (recent Monte Nido experiences)

Report from Stephanie Abronson)

HAPPY STORY: Jill Waldron, Topanga, just had an amazing experience at the One Stop Center. She went in and was approved for the pre-Coastal Act exemption for her horse property. She is waiting on the letter and will be writing a letter to the local Messenger that will post on NextDoor. She said they were so kind and patient and she is really relieved.

We also hear that in Monte Nido, Bob Hodgins' property was approved.

MNVCA Board of Directors Meeting March 8, 2016

The meeting was called to order by Carrie Baltin at 7:03PM, at the home of Maria and Radu Ioan.

Present from the Board: Carrie Baltin, Judy Goldin, Jane Cudworth, Maria Ioan, Mary Helen Young, Joan Slimocosky, Jill Reiss

Present from the community: Mark Mehner, Sheila Rosenthal, John Cudworth, Stephanie Abronson, Todd Stobie (Ann Monahan's son)

Guests: Sheriff's Deputy DeSantis, Sheriff's Deputy Woodard

New Business:

Deputies Woodard and DeSantis reported: There are concerns/questions from residents about our ability to return home when there are emergency road

closures. Mark Mehner showed the deputies the car stickers he had printed to identify MN residents to law enforcement. Deputy Woodard says the stickers help but the closures vary between extremes. Decisions about closures are made "above the pay grade" of the officers in the field. And, deputies often have information about the emergency that is not public knowledge. The most important consideration is our safety. In some circumstances, cars can delay fire and rescue. The deputy has been working for 26 years at this station and he gets frustrated, too, when he has to keep us out even when it looks OK, but it's because senior officials have other information. When closures are for non-residents only, the stickers can help with ID and screening for residents, but they will not be a guarantee. Sometimes they close everything off until they can be sure they can secure the area, to keep potential thieves out before everyone gets back in. Mark says sometimes law enforcement won't even let us tell them we are locals. But sheriffs sometimes find themselves in the middle of chaos and they can't let us back until the area can be secured. They have to wait for administration to give clearance.

In some cases, the Watch Commander/Watch Sergeant at the station may be able to help us if there's a road closure beyond our borders and we want to try to get home. Deputies suggest we call the Watch Commander at the station, on the business line, and ask if residents can be permitted through to avoid long detours.

The deputies were asked if a CA license that says Monte Nido instead of Calabasas is better? A: It depends on the emergency, whether it's fire or crime or something else. If there were a risk to everyone, it wouldn't matter. There's an emergency operations center both at the local station and countywide. So that's a benefit to us because huge resources from the county are available for us here, locally.

Nixle is a quick alert app for phones that is used a lot at the station – they post alerts. We should all get it on our phones for road notifications (collisions, containments to close roads etc.) On the app, sign up for Malibu Lost Hills Sheriffs and CHP

here. The deputy suggests we post a notice about the link on Nextdoor so everybody can sign up.

Other neighbors have said their biggest complaints are the racing up and down the canyon/Pioma. Sheriffs got a grant to enforce racing restrictions on all the local canyons/roads. We can “drop a cop” on Waze to scare racers away. Sheriffs have shut down racing on Stunt pretty well. But the racers communicate and tell each other where it’s safe to be.

Deputy DeSantis brought a list of Monte Nido crimes from Jan 1, 2015 to yesterday. There were a total of 2 events, a residential burglary and a vehicle theft. That’s impressive. Many crimes go unreported but we have no violent crime. We should always call them if we see something suspicious. A deputy will come out and he can clear it, and track that there was an incident. People can be reluctant to call because they don’t want to be identified, but it’s better to just call anonymously than not to call at all. The Sheriffs will keep the identity of the caller a secret. Sheriffs do want to know when something is going on. It’s not a bother to them; this station is very low key and quiet. So they are happy to respond.

Re: Dark Skies community. The Hindu temple has “upped” their lights significantly. Is it because they’ve had some incidents? Sheriffs haven’t heard of anything. Sheriffs don’t handle these kind of civil issues like lighting. They suggest we send a friendly letter to the Temple on behalf of the neighborhood asking if they are aware that we are a dark skies community and asking why they have increased the lighting.

Re: Mailboxes get broken into on Cold Canyon. A: It is a federal crime to steal mail, a very serious crime. Deputies suggest we not leave outgoing mail in mailboxes because it’s asking for theft. The mail thieves get our checks and bills, and ID theft follows. The red flags on the boxes that signal outgoing mail are a sign for thieves to come and get it. There has been a rise in this kind of crime all over. It is best is to put mail directly into blue post office collection boxes...or to have a locked mailbox. Community mailboxes are more secure than single home boxes. We should track packages so they don’t sit unattended on the doorstep. Lots of

these crimes can be deterred with security alarm systems with cameras. Costco now has doorbells that send an instant photo of the person at your door to your cell phone, and allows you to talk to them. Sheriffs will do patrol checks when we are on vacation if we request it. You should alert them, however, if anyone is expected to be there, like poolmen and gardeners etc.

Re: Why can’t we close the street anymore for July 4? A: We have to ask CHP not sheriffs. A parade permit has to go through CHP. A special event permit requires charges for deputies to be dedicated to that event. We were not charged in the past, but budget crunching has cut staffing, so they can’t spare the personnel anymore without charging for the extra expense. We can save funds if we request Reserves personnel.

Every Thursday, the sheriffs hold a “Meet and Greet” for the community at The Commons.

Sheriffs suggest posting emergency numbers on NextDoor. A landline call to 911 now goes directly to the sheriff’s station; cell phone 911 routing is not perfected yet. Don’t hesitate to call the station if we see anything that seems suspicious. Always lock cars and homes!

Deputy Woodard is publishing the monthly TIPS now. Jill should email him with our email address to receive it again, because we fell off the distribution list.

Old Business:

No agenda changes.

Minutes were previously approved online.

Treasurer’s Report: Judy Goldin reported. It’s tax season again. She contacted last year’s accountant, who needed some info from this year, and then within hours had filed a quick postcard as 501c4 to IRS and CA franchise tax board. Judy received confirmation of the filings. Also, 435 membership letters went out and over 50 have been returned with dues, which is a pretty good response. Last year, we only had about 120 paid members. A motion passed to reimburse Joan Slimocosky for postage for the membership mailing.

Directories are for members only.

No Correspondence

Federation – Joan Slimocosky and Judy Goldin went to the meeting about parks and the LCP, and what the community wants. There was very low attendance. No equestrians showed up at all. Jo Powe spoke about fees to remove trees on properties. Money is going to be allocated for parks and all LA County Supervisors are vying for a piece of that pie. Inner cities have a great need for parks money. Families from cities who come to the “country” for the day also use our local parks. Our open spaces are available for everyone. The Supervisors counted the comment cards that people submitted on the issue.

Dark Sky and Noise Pollution: We have to talk to our neighbors ourselves. If lights are wrapped around protected oaks, call Gina Natoli, anonymously if you prefer, and they will check it out because it hurts the trees. Joan Slimocosky spoke about Noise pollution from air traffic. The “fly over” routes are different now because routings are all on gps and calculated to save fuel. But our MN natural bowl shape reverberates the sound from the large airliners, every 5-7 minutes. Some LA Times articles said other communities are complaining, too. In the 1980s we contacted FAA about the same problem and flight paths were changed then. It’s a Federal issue. There was discussion about who might be our local advocate that knows something about airspace and routing? Possibly Yehuda? Or David Pevsner?

Rondell Oasis Hotel - Stephanie Abronson reported. The hotel will block the entire parking and access spaces to Juan Bautista de Anza National Trail. She passed out her notes from the Calabasas meeting about the hotel. She also posted the notes on NextDoor. This development doesn’t follow the City of Calabasas master plan. Because Calabasas is an incorporated city, the County has no authority. And, because we don’t live in the City of Calabasas, we have no clout there, either. The parking and access alternatives the hotel has proposed are inadequate for the functions. Carrie Baltin will contact Kim Lamorie to see what she suggests we

should do. Mary Helen Young will publicize the issue on NextDoor.

Dogs off leash – It’s the law that dogs must be on leash. Stephanie Abronson posted another notice on NextDoor. As a child, Carrie Baltin’s son was badly bitten by a dog, on his face. When dogs are a problem you should call Animal Control to report it.

Nextdoor Monte Nido – Is it getting negative again? One person wants to remove himself. But, the consensus is that activity has been fairly normal. The Classified section is the appropriate place to post things for sale and ads.

Installation Dinner: Sat night April 2 at Judy Goldin’ house. Jill should send another note to ask Board members to RSVP. It will be just for Board members and their spouses. Judy and Dan are graciously providing wine. Everybody else can bring a dessert.

Next meeting will be on May 10 at Joan Slimocosky’s house.

Adjourned 8:39PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jill Reiss

**The Next MNVCA Board Meeting will be on May 10 at the home of Carrie Baltin at 825 Crater Oak Drive at 7:00 PM.
Members of the Community are invited and encouraged to attend.**

How to reach us:

Send your email address to Jill Reiss, the MNVCA secretary, at mnvcanewsletter@gmail.com, to receive announcements of meetings, community activities, and the time and location of our Board meetings.

**President: Carrie Baltin 818-224-4696
Vice Pres: Joan Slimocosky 818-591-1082
Treasurer: Judy Goldin 818-983-1910
Secretary: Jill Reiss 818-222-1995**

**Contributions to the newsletter can be sent to the editor Mary Helen Young
at
youngsmh@earthlink.net**