



MONTE NIDO VALLEY



COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



A Dark Sky Community

E-NEWSLETTER

Jan/Feb 2016

WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

Jo Powe and Kim Lamorie recognized and thanked at Dec. MNVCA Board meeting and community Holiday Potluck celebration

Newly Printed Monte Nido residents Directory available from MNVCA

Recent experiences with Equestrian Properties permitting

The 2016 MNVCA Membership drive will start in February/March

Nov. and Dec. 2015 and Jan. 2016 Minutes from MNVCA Board meetings

MNVCA December Board Meeting/Community Holiday Celebration

As you will read in the Minutes of the Dec. meeting, a community Holiday celebration was combined with a big thanks to our own Jo Powe and to Kim Lamorie, president of Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation Inc., for their tireless and successful efforts to ensure local land development stays within the LCP (Local Coastal Plan) regulations. A few photos of the event are included below.



The December gathering also included a short Board meeting during which a new pair of co-board members was elected. Jane Cudworth and Kimberly Creswick, jointly, will replace Dana Chidekel who after multiple tours of duty on the Board has elected not to put her name forth this year. Thanks to Dana for her excellent service to the neighborhood and thanks to Jane and Kimberly for stepping up to serve.

It was decided in December that the Board will hold regular meetings every other month (second Tuesday of the month at 7:00PM) starting in January, rather than monthly. At upcoming meetings we will be planning community events (like the July 4th celebrations and the fall BBQ and Square dance, and Winter Dinner event). We will also be hosting local interest speakers to address our community on matters important to the neighborhood. At the January meeting, we had people from MRT (Mountain Restoration Trust) to discuss and answer questions from our local residents on the use of herbicides to remove invasive, non-native plants in the Santa Monica Mountain reserve areas. At the next meeting, we will have someone from the Sheriff's Department to talk to us about safety, emergency readiness, and access to Monte Nido during emergencies. In the past, we have had speakers from our water district and from the Fire Department. All

Monte Nido residents are invited to attend these meetings.

Thanks to Cathy Sieling for putting together the new Monte Nido community Directory

A limited number of copies of a 2015 Monte Nido Directory are available to residents. If you are a dues paying member of MNVCA, you are welcome to one free copy. Email Carrie Baltin at carrie@baltinassociates.com to arrange to pick up your copy. If you prefer an electronic copy, email Carrie and she will forward your request to the keeper of the electronic version, Gary Wooller. If you are not a dues paying MNVCA members, you are welcome to a Directory copy for a nominal cost.

While you are picking up a directory, ask for a Monte Nido resident sticker for your car to use in case of emergency closing of neighborhood roads. This sticker can sometimes get you through road blocks, as it identifies you as a resident of the neighborhood.

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

Currently, I know that I, myself, and Patty Gaunt have been notified that our requests to have horse facilities

approved under the “Zoning Conformance Review” option have made it through the LA County Regional Planning process successfully. I have also heard from Don Wallace that his request to verify the legality of his facilities has been approved.

If there are additional Monte Nido residents who have successfully submitted a horse facility permit application to LA County Regional Planning under the new LCP processes and want to share information with other potential applicants, please send a short write-up to me at youngsmh@earthlink.net

MNVCA Board encourages Monte Nido residents who have horse facilities to go through the appropriate permitting process whether or not they have horses currently. There is a two year window for completing this permitting process (Oct. 2014-Oct. 2016) for most properties in Monte Nido. Equestrian activities are part of the heritage and character of Monte Nido. Equestrian-permitted property in the Santa Monica Mountains may be in much shorter supply in years to come. Therefore getting the permits now may increase the resale value of your property in the future.

MNVCA 2016 Membership Drive will start soon

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.

Minutes of the MNVCA Board of Directors Meeting, November 10, 2015 at the home of Ilda Jacobsen

Carrie Baltin called the meeting to order at about 7:03PM

Present from the Board: Mary Helen Young, Ann Monahan, Carrie Baltin, Gary Wooller, Joan Slimocosky, Dana Chidekel, Ilda Jacobsen, and Kara Kuipers

Present from the Community: Joan Kay, Jo Powe, Kim Lamorie, Sheila Rosenthal, Wayne Pepper, Suze Randall, Stephanie Abronson, Feather (friend of Stephanie Abronson), John and Jane Cudworth, Sherry Pevsner, David Coronella, and Kim Creswick

Agenda changes: none except slight rearrangement

Before other Agenda items we received a presentation by Jeff Reinhardt, Public Affairs & Communications Manager of Las Virgenes Water District on the severe water shortage resulting from four year drought conditions and the emergency measures that have been adopted to address these conditions. He provided us with a well-organized, informative briefing. Points made include details on the record-low statistics for water reserves in the state overall, and in the areas that supply our water. The Governor has call a “state of emergency” which in this case is a slow-rolling emergency being

addressed first by going to 2X per week outdoor watering, now going to a parcel allocation system for households and if we were to have another dry winter, we would have to go to indoor only use of water. An expected El Nino wet winter would alleviate this but the District cannot count on that until we see what actually happens this winter. The water regulations are being enforced. Over 1100 “letters of warning” (the first enforcement step) have gone out to excessive water users. Further steps include fines starting at \$500 (some of which have been issued), possible installation of water regulators that reduce the water pressure, and termination of service as a final enforcement step. The requirement is for the District to reduce water use by an average of 36% through Feb. 2016 and so far good progress is being made.

Mr. Reinhardt noted that LVMWD offers rebates and incentives for new high efficiency and water saving devices and equipment. You can check out their website for details. He also noted that in addition to offering free compost, they will be offering free recycled water to customers starting next Saturday after getting a short briefing on using recycled water. Bring your container (300 gal max, but that would take a large truck to transport).

Questions to Mr. Reinhardt from the community include how to interpret the letter we all received from the Fire Department advising residents in fire danger areas to continue watering and maintaining plantings near structures. He will confer with the appropriate County Fire officials. Also, it was pointed out to him that in winter it frequently freezes in Monte Nido over night and that the allowed watering times (no watering after 10:00AM during daytime) need to be adjusted to allow temperatures to get above freezing before sprinklers turn on in order to avoid broken pipes.

Minutes: previously approved via email

Federation Report: Kim Lamorie reported –

The Federation continues to oppose large scale use of land for vineyards in the North Area just outside the Coastal LCP area. There is an important meeting on this topic Sept. 30 with Regional Planning that the Federation is preparing for. The really big meeting on this topic will be in mid-November with the Board of Supervisors. Kim

is confident that the Federation has a sound strategy to address this.

Also in connection with the Federation report, the topic of equestrian properties and the LCP was discussed with important information provided by Stephanie Abronson, and additional comments by people who had started the permitting process including Joan Kay and Mary Helen Young. There was a show of hands of those present with horse facilities that had or may take further steps toward the LCP permitting process. There was concern expressed that there was misinformation in the community on this topic and that some may miss the two year window of opportunity provided by the LCP for equestrian properties. Both the contact information for people at Regional planning handling the horse facility cases and the fact that these are very supportive and helpful people was reiterated. Kim Lamorie's recent write-up and Stephanie's information sheets have been widely distributed on Nextdoor Monte Nido and the MNVCA email blasts. This information will also be in the coming MNVCA Newsletter.

Osgood/Vintage – The Board retired to executive session to discuss this matter.

Treasurer's report: Since Judy Golden could not attend this meeting, we did not have an official treasurer's report, except that Joan Slimocosky noted that the July 4th event made more money than any previous ones. She thanked the excellent organizers and many helpers and donators. They really did a fantastic job.

Community Directory: Carrie and Joan reported that a new 2015 Monte Nido directory was finally finished in hard copy form and ready for printing. It would cost \$978 to print 500 copies. After some discussion, it was decided to find out if there is an electronic file containing this directory first and look into distributing it primarily electronically before authoring the money for printing. We will decide later whether a smaller number of copies will be printed. The intent was to provide one copy to each resident free. There may be a charge for additional copies.

Square Dance – Ilda Jacobsen reported that arrangements are tentatively set for the BBQ and Square Dance for Saturday Oct. 17. After some discussion, the Board agreed with the date. A motion was made and seconded to select the third Saturday of October as the regular date for BBQ/SQ dance unless that date falls on a holiday in which case the event will be on the second Saturday of October. The motion passed, so going forward people will be able to save that date and plan accordingly.

Ilda showed us the flyer advertising the BBQ/SQ dance, reviewed the arrangements with food caterer and other providers. The cost of the food has gone up (but also upgraded in choices) so the tickets will be \$40 per person this year. Everyone will be encouraged to bring a pie. The Board approved advancing Ilda \$2000 to front the event which is expected to cost \$3800 and is expected to at least break even from ticket sales. The event information and how to get tickets will be sent out on Nextdoor Monte Nido and in the upcoming Newsletter.

Also on this topic, Ilda noted the need for volunteers to fix the wood platform in Fleeman's Meadow used by the square dance caller. John Cudworth and Gary Wooller agreed to be volunteered. The Board approved a not to exceed \$500 for materials for the repair. Dana Chidekel offered surplus wood she has stored on her property if that is of use for this purpose.

Possible Floods and Disaster Preparedness:

Stephanie Abronson led the discussions on this topic as she had recently sent out email detailing the preparations that are needed before the El Nino rains start this winter. She brought with her a display of photographs from the floods of 1980, 1992, and 1995. They show the bridges of Monte Nido washed away, a lot of vehicles washed away, and flooding in the Monte Nido neighborhoods. Among the preparations needed are the cleaning of debris from the creek beds and water ways. For routine debris pickup purposes, it was the consensus of the group that no new permit should be needed. Neighborhoods will be encouraged to work together to prepare waterways so that they are not

obstructed. An article on this subject will be in the next Newsletter. It might be a good idea to do a MNVCA email blast devoted to this subject.

The next meeting of the MNVCA Board will be October 13, 2015 at the home of Jill Reiss.

The meeting adjourned shortly before 9:00PM with people encouraged to stay for a few minutes to look at the flood pictures and discuss disaster preparedness.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Helen Young
(substituting for Jill Reiss)

MNVCA Board Meeting Tuesday, December 8, 2015

Meeting called to order at 7:15 pm at the home of Board Member, Mary Helen Young who hosted a beautiful holiday potluck gathering prior to and following brief board meeting.

Board members present: Carries Baltin, Joan Slimocosky, Judy Goldin, Sally Livingston, Maria Ioan, Kara Kuipers, Mary Helen Young, Dana Chidekel, Ann Monahan

Introductions made of community members and guests present.

On line approval of November meeting minutes noted.

Agenda distributed and additions made
Treasurer's report was given by Judy Goldin and approval of expenses. Judy plans to mail annual membership appeal in January 2016. No correspondence reported.

Jo Powe and Kim Lamorie were presented with thank you gift certificates to Saddle Peak Lodge for their much appreciated help re community issues these past many months.

Federation report given by Kim Lamorie, President of LVHF, who was a community guest in attendance.

Included was review of recent favorable vote before Board of Supervisors re Vineyard appeal. Noted 260 plus letters in opposition to appeal sent by community.

Construction along Las Virgenes Road and City of Calabasas approval of increasing development discussed at length with updates by Kim. The current "vision" for the city (including 4 story hotels and at least 3 major developments) by today's city officials was contrasted with vision of City plan approved upon incorporation in 1994. Very disturbing consensus by those in attendance. Options for our involvement discussed.

Old business:

Elections for current year held. Current board members up for 2 year term were: Alicia Gonzalez/Sally Livingston (team), Joan Slimocosky, Maria Ioan/Ilda Jacobsen (team), Dana Chidekel, and Ann Monahan. Dana notified us she did not wish to run again. She was thanked for her service. Remaining board members agreed to continue. Jane Cudworth and new resident Kimberly Creswick agreed to serve as a team for vacant position up for election. Unanimous approval of new board.

It was agreed to request an updated list of board member contact information from secretary, Jill Reiss.

Means of distribution of new directories discussed. Directories are at home of president Carrie Baltin. Contact her to arrange pick up. Special thanks to Cathy Sieling for her hard work in preparation of directory and gift for her agreed upon.

New Business:

Installation dinner/ winter banquet discussion.

Agreed we want to revive long time tradition.

Newest board member team, Jane and Kim offered to chair. They will report back at next meeting with details.

Next meeting in January will be at home of Kara Kuipers. It was agreed that after beginning of year, we will meet on a bimonthly basis, unless pressing business requires reverting to monthly meetings.

Meeting was adjourned and all present returned to holiday celebration.

Submitted: Joan Slimocosky, acting secretary

MNVCA Board of Directors Meeting January 12, 2016

MNVCA Board of Directors Meeting January 12, 2016 at the home of Kara Kuipers was called to order at 7:12 PM by Carrie Baltin.

Present from the board: Carrie Baltin, Jane Cudworth, Joan Slimocosky, Judy Goldin, Mary Helen Young, Alicia Gonzalez, Kara Kuipers, Kim Creswick, Gary Wooller, Sally Livingston, Jill Reiss, Ilda Jacobsen, Maria Ioan

Present from the community: David Pevsner, Rodger Reiss, Brent Baltin, Deborah Low, Don Wallace, Kim Lamorie, Lynn Benjamin, Suze Randall, Jo Powe, Carol Ann Hess, Sherry and Bob DaSilva, Doug Dilg,

Guests from Mountains Restoration Trust: Debbie Sharpton, Executive Director of MRT, Heather Melton, Tom Hayduk, Leanitz (sp?) Hayduk, Kevin Gaston

Minutes from December 8 2015 meeting: Prepared by Joan Slimocosky. Distributed at this meeting...Approved by acclamation

Treasurer's Report: Judy Goldin reported. Checking balances reported. Motion to approve payments to CA Sect. Of State (annual payment), and bulk mailing fees for Post Office account, approved. Judy has not had chance yet to mail membership drive. Will do in February.

Miscellaneous: Carrie has directories for any paid members, and car stickers, if anyone wants one, here tonight.

New Business:

Mountains Restoration Trust: An extensive discussion between community members and representatives from Mountains Restoration Trust took place about the use of herbicides to remove invasive vegetation:

Debbie Sharpton introduced everyone from MRT – The organization has recently experienced a growth spurt. There are now about 29 staff including 6 docents at Stunt Ranch Reserve. Eight people work with National Park Service here and in Channel Islands on the Vegetation crew, including Manager, Tom Hayduk, and staff doing restoration work. Kevin Gaston does mapping, and delineations. An aquatic recovery crew of 6-7 people work to remove non-native wildlife from Malibu Creek watershed to

protect endangered steelhead. Heather Melton has herbicide application state licensing training background and expertise on herbicides.

Suzanne Goode, State Parks Ecologist for Angeles District was contacted for a live phone presentation because she couldn't attend tonight. She lives locally, in Cold Creek, and has worked with MRT for 25 years. Goode uses herbicides in her work. She's been working for State Parks 26 years. Aside from development, the issue of invasive plant species is the number 1 disrupter of local ecosystems. Herbicides are part of a larger toolkit to restore habitat, which also includes mowing, fire, hand-pulling weeds. Herbicides are not a poison. Most are specific to plant chemical pathways to make plants grow to exhaustion. They don't get into wildlife or water. They have a short half-life. Herbicides are widely sold at garden stores. They are often less disruptive than other methods. For ex., arundo can be cut and pulled and other great havoc can be created with mechanical methods, without success in eliminating it. Other plants would have to be dug up in archaeological sites. These chemicals are used by many other organizations. The LCP recognizes their usefulness and allows them when they're the best protective measure to eliminate invasive species without disruption to habitat. MRT has had a protective presence in Cold Creek watershed for decades. Suzanne totally trusts both MRT and the herbicides to get rid of invasive plants.

A Q & A forum with community members followed:

Q. How do non-native plants get here?

A. Unknowingly – several ways seeds get carried...up to 6 miles by birds and other species.

Q. How does that hurt the environment?

A. The plants are imported and slip past quarantines. People purchase them not realizing what the outcome will be. It's like when insects come in on crates and boats and freight, and in 5 years can dissipate forestry.

MRT is focusing on wildlands and invasives, for ex. pampas grass, arundo, eucalyptus, scotch broom and other Mediterranean plants with no enemies

here. We have to be vigilant to preserve the native wildlife.

Q. Is black locust one of these very invasive plants?

A. Yes. It grows from rhizomes. There's one old tree that has been poisoned.

Residents are concerned that the poison will spread to the creek animals and children.

Q. Is MRT a private landowner?

A: Yes. It is a public benefit, non-profit corporation, non-governmental.

Q. So MRT has to abide by LCP. So do you need a permit to apply Garlon 4 in the creek?

A. Gina Natoli met with Debbie Sharpton and Jo Powe to discuss this. MRT will get a permit for a master restoration plan to include any herbiciding activities over about 2000 acres. Jo Powe says herbicides are banned by the LCP except for restoration purposes and to eradicate invasive species, provided the use is the least dangerous choice. A separate provision talks about when/why LA County has jurisdiction to grant permits. If you come under the definition of development, County can require a permit. "Development" is very broadly defined and includes "major" removal of agriculture. So, what is "major"? A year ago, there was a similar experience with a grant to remove eucalyptus on Don Wallace's property, using herbicide. County told MRT then that because it was 40 trees, it required a coastal development permit. So "major" includes 40 trees. But 2-3 trees is not "major". Therefore, 1 tree is NOT major removal of vegetation, so MRT did not believe a permit was needed to get rid of the one black locust tree. Natoli recently confirmed that. Kim Lamorie disagrees and added that because the tree was in a creek, you need a permit so neighbors can weigh in.

Q. Bob DaSilva says he has asked to be notified anytime MRT is working in the creek, but says he did not know recently when work was performed behind his house.

A. The majority of the trail near his property is on MRT land. Only a portion is DaSilva property. Sharpton says she guarantees now that any future herbicide applications will be given prior notice. The chemical only lasts until it dries and gets absorbed.

Q. Bob DaSilva says in the past, she has promised notice and then didn't do it.

A. Powe explained that there's blue vegetable dye in the herbicide so the applicators can see where they are putting it. So the blue that remains onsite longer term is the dye, not the herbicide.

A. MRT explained that the intention was that the herbicide was to be put into the one tree. The applicator personnel were trained, should have known how to properly apply it, and should not have left the bucket of supplies unattended. They spoke to someone about the bucket before they left it, and then another hiker approached the unattended bucket. There's disagreement about whether the containers inside the bucket were open or close.

Summary: No herbiciding is planned for the immediate future. Notifications will be made by County first, as permits will be pulled beforehand. To get a permit they will have to prove that herbicides are the least environmentally dangerous method to remove the plant. The time to weigh in is at the permit hearing.

Don Wallace asserted that Suzanne Goode was disingenuous because herbicides have been very controversial in Topanga Canyon. They stopped State Parks from using herbicides in Arundal (sp?). Instead they hand picked, spread plastic, repeated, and then after two years the arundo was all gone.

MRT presented 3 slides of an overview of the area where they are applying to County for a master plan of restoration. The Cold creek watershed is 5500 acres. Monte Nido sits at southwest end. A comprehensive map with location of problem plants is expected to be completed by end of March for County, Army Corps of Engineers and others. It will be available for public comment before anything happens...but not as early as March. One big permit will be pulled for all the acreage in the plan.

Old Business:

Winter Banquet/Board installation: Jane Cudworth reported. They want to keep it in Monte Nido, in the library at Saddle Peak Lodge, to get more participation. But the minimum is \$5000 for Sat

night, which is too expensive. Fri and Thurs nights are less expensive. Week nights are \$50. Sunday brunch is \$35/person + drinks. We never had it on weekends...so weeknight would be OK. Jane will work on that.

The meeting adjourned at 8:43PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jill Reiss
Secretary

Next meeting: Should we have a meeting in February so we can hear from the Sheriff then, or wait until March? Sheriff has no specific agenda, but we want to talk about MN car stickers and whether they can facilitate our return home after fire, flood, quake and other emergencies? Sheriffs have said they won't let us back until it's safe. Powe pointed out that the stickers are to ID us as residents, since our drivers licenses say Calabasas and the authorities sometimes only let residents back in. And will the sheriff talk about the Mitrice Richardson case? Anyone who has questions that cannot wait until March (or at any time) can attend a meeting with County Sheriff, Officer Woodard every Thursday morning at 9AM at Corner Bakery in the Commons.

Next meeting: Will be March 8 at the home of Maria Ioan, unless we need an emergency meeting for El Nino in Feb.

Mountain Lion report: Don Wallace reported on an interaction with a mountain lion on Mulholland recently. Don found 2 dead sheep but the goats were ok. He reported in some graphic detail on the condition of the dead animals.

Federation Report: Kim Lamorie reported on several upcoming meetings. Sat Jan 16, 2PM at King Gillette Ranch, if you want to give input on direction of funding for Santa Monica Mountains. Re: the Wildlife corridor, there is new information that the overpass will have to extend over Agoura Road as well as the 101. There are communities surrounding the proposed construction, and there will be traffic, tourism, and parking impacts. We will need \$40million. The City of Agoura Hills has a problem because of this extension but no one has ever before approached that city about this. Caltrans is making the first presentation to Agoura Hills City Council Wed night, Jan 13, about the segment over Agoura Road. Caltrans will hold a public scoping meeting where can offer comments on this issue on Thurs night, Jan 14, at King Gillette Ranch.

**The Next MNVCA Board Meeting will be on March 8 at the home of Maria Ioan 25659 Whittemore Dr. 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**