



MONTE NIDO VALLEY



COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



A Dark Sky Community

E-NEWSLETTER

November 2009

King Gillette Ranch

From the desk of the President:

I attended a September scoping session at King Gillette Ranch sponsored by the National Park Service, California State Parks, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA), the four entities overseeing this magnificent park in the midst of our community. The request was for public input on the future of the headquarters of this urban National Park.

Because we were so instrumental in the creation and saving of this treasure, it is imperative we get involved in the next phase of its future. King Gillette Ranch deserves to be brought fully to its destiny, that of an accessible headquarters of a National Park serving an urban population numbering in the millions.

A little history of the King Gillette Ranch is in order for newcomers to Monte Nido and to refresh the memories of others. A time line follows, thanks in part to Jim Wrigley, long time resident and past president of MNVCA, to John Low, a more recent president of MNVCA and my own research. I have reread the three 3-ring binders I have saved of MNVCA newsletters and Board minutes dating from 1980 when I became involved in the association. They are an archival treasure of battles fought, some unsuccessfully, some partial wins in preserving this beautiful "Mountain Nest", some true victories. King Gillette is one of the victories. A letter to the LA Times from Mary Ann Webster, Chair, Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, Sierra Club in May, 2005 at the end of a decades' long battle, notes what we old timers know. King Gillette Ranch as National Park Headquarters would not exist without Monte Nido!

Major history of King Gillette Ranch, our neighbor at corner of Mulholland Hwy and Las Virgenes Rd.:

1928- Main house designed for razor baron, King Gillette, by architect Wallace Neff and built on 248 acres in heart of Santa Monica Mountains. Sometime later, an MGM director bought the property and held until 1952 when sold to the Claretians for seminary, known as Claretville.

1978 - Sold to Church Universal and Triumphant; site now known as Camelot. SMMNRA (Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area) established.

July 1986 - sold to SOKA for English language training of Japanese students; approximately 80 students in residence. SMM National Park Service again tried to purchase property after lost opportunity in mid 70's to add to acquisition of public open space in the

mountains, a process begun with land purchased from 20th Century, west side of Las Virgenes Road. Park Service offered \$13.6 M (appraised value); sold for \$15.5 M to SOKA.

August 1990 - SOKA announces plans to expand and build 5,500-student campus. Later announced it had purchased 332 surrounding acres. Assessed value now approximately \$47M.

June 1991 - Monte Nido increases efforts to bring attention to appropriateness of acquiring King Gillette for public. Who can forget the 200+ community picket line outside SOKA's gate that hot summer day? And the 10-foot inflatable purple kangaroo? And the press coverage?

1991 - SM Mountains Conservancy initiates suit based on eminent domain against SOKA.

1992 - SOKA counter sues.

September 1992 - SOKA announces reduction in FTE (full time equivalent) students to 2,500.

February 1995 - SOKA purchases 100-acre property in Aliso Viejo, a vacated college campus, with existing infrastructure for 2500 students. This is currently the campus of SOKA.

October 1995 - Santa Monica Conservancy, an entity created to acquire land for public use as an interim "holding place" until slower moving public agencies (state/federal) can raise funds, had been working on the announced successful condemnation suit of SOKA.

Conservancy announces that the \$19.6 M set aside for Gillette buyout has "disappeared". (An aside: I sat in stunned silence with the rest of the MNVCA Board as we were told that a joint usage brokered by the County, the Conservancy, and SOKA was a reality now and we should accept it. After this presentation by the Executive Director, the Board voted unanimously: This property belongs to and must remain open to the public. We would fight on. And we did!! As Treasurer at that time, I know what we spent over the next ten years.)

January 1996 - SOKA files \$12M suit against SMMC and LA County for failure to complete condemnation.

March 1996 - SOKA settles with SMMC and LA County for 650-student campus in lieu of condemnation.

Proposed plans show campus footprint the size of two Topanga Plazas, with removal of hundreds of oak trees.

April 1997 - MNVCA and SOS retain attorney, Frank Angel, and initiate suit against LA County and Coastal Commission for failing to meet CEQA on EIR.

November 1997 - Sierra Club joins suit against CCC and LA County.

1997-1998 - California Coastal Commission holds

hearings at which many locals testify, yours truly included; approves SOKA settlement plan.

Mid 1999 - We lost both lawsuits, against County and CCC.

July 2001- Appeals court overturns LA Co approval of SOKA

October 2001- Petition to California Supreme Court to hear case denied

Mid 2002 - We appealed both lawsuits

February 2003 - 2nd District Court of Appeal overturns development permit for SOKA based on CCC not evaluating a project alternative (i.e. Aliso Viejo campus) outside coastal zone for educational objectives against goals of protecting existing coastal zone resources. A true David and Goliath battle before the Court. Thank you, Frank!!

SOKA agrees to sell property to public for \$35M

Late 2004-March 2005 - Final push to raise \$10 M locally toward purchase price of SOKA. Many agencies cobbled together to raise funds, including some \$100,000 donated privately from the immediate communities of Monte Nido and Cold Creek. Yes, we put our money where our mouths were!

April 14, 2005 - Escrow closes with ownership distribution of King Gillette to SMMNRA, State Parks, SMMC and MRCA.

But, we, the public have worked too hard to not get involved, or stay involved, and make this National Park and its headquarters something special. There will be further public scoping sessions. See you there?

Joan Slimocosky

Wildfire Preparedness

A new column will begin running in the MNVCA Newsletter to keep residents informed about the efforts of a new consortium on wildfire protection. The column will be an update on meetings and information from the joint collaboration of the National Park Service, California Fire Safe Council, Los Angeles County Fire Department, and ForEverGreen Forestry. This alliance has created the California Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) whose mission is to mobilize Californians to protect our homes, communities and environment from wildfires.

In order to take advantage of the powerful and knowledgeable consortium, we must all work together in creating fire safe projects CWPP will approve for grants, such as reduction of our fuel load, tricks we can learn which could save a home in a wildfire, and a more rapid, efficient warning system. All things to think about, but not for too long!

To volunteer to be your Street Captain, call Joan Kay (818) 222-2977 or email her at macmcloud@sbcglobal.net.

If you missed the Las Virgenes Canyon Corridor CWPP meeting on Oct 26th, you can learn much by attending any or all of the following meetings:

(All meetings will be held at 6:30PM unless otherwise noted. Call Joan Kay at 818-222-2977 for exact locations.)

Nov 9 - Sycamore and Upper Latigo Canyons

Nov 10 - Decker/ Encinal Canyons

Please consider becoming personally involved.

Volunteers are urgently needed to keep our neighborhood safe from Wildfire!

Ding-Dong, Neighbor Calling

In the next several months, volunteers and representatives from the MNVCA Board will be ringing your doorbell to offer you a wildfire and emergency preparedness information pamphlet, and to encourage you to become a member of the MNVCA. Please enjoy the friendly visit, and register as a member if you have not previously done so. All dues are used for the numerous entertaining, informative, protective, and otherwise positive events and efforts that help maintain the Monte Nido you chose to live in.

Illegal Dumping!

Someone has been dumping construction debris and loads of rocks at a trail head off Cold Canyon road. If you are in the middle of a construction project, or have been having clearance/clean-up performed on your property, please be certain that trash is being properly hauled to a dump. And be alert. If you notice anyone dumping debris in our public spaces, please note the license plate(s) and truck model(s), and report it to the sheriff's department immediately.

2010/2011 MNVCA Board Nominations and Elections

Nominations are currently being solicited for persons interested in serving on the MNVCA Board of Directors. There are 6 positions open for the upcoming year, and at least one position requires a replacement, rather than re-election. Please consider donating your time and energy to this worthy organization! You will work with caring, dedicated neighbors, and help to maintain the quality of life we all moved here for! If you are interested in putting your own name forward, or in nominating a neighbor, please contact Joan Slimocosky at 818-591-1082, jslimocosky@charter.net.

Adopt-A-Highway Sat., December 5

Please come out and help clean up our local streets before the winter rains wash all the trash and debris to sea. Meet at Piuma and Las Virgenes, at 9AM on Sat., Dec 5. Wear work clothes, including gloves.

Please Support Our Trails

Trails are an integral part of our neighborhood. Many of us work hard on trails year after year for everyone's enjoyment. If you cannot donate time and effort to help maintain the trails, monetary donations to our local trails fund are greatly appreciated and help to pay for our hired trail clearing crew. Please support our ETI Corral 36 Trails Maintenance program and send your donation to Jeanne Wallace, 1710 N. Cold Canyon Road, Calabasas, 91302. For information call: (818) 222-2560.

All neighbors are welcome

and encouraged to attend Board meetings.

We welcome your interest and involvement!

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: Joan Slimocosky 818-591-1082

Vice Pres: John Low 818-224-8062

Treasurer: Marianne Cilluffo 818-876-3019

Secretary: Jill Reiss 818-222-1995

Contributions to the newsletter can be sent to the editor at mnvcanewsletter@gmail.com

**MONTE NIDO VALLEY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
BULLETIN BOARD**

<p align="center">NIA & YOGA CLASSES Nia's expressive movement and Yoga classes in Monte Nido Jeanne 818.224.4300</p>	<p align="center">ROGER SAVATTERI Monte Nido Resident Custom furniture and cabinetry. Unique patinas on wood and metal. www.savatteridesigns.com 310-625-2887</p>
<p align="center">ARCHITECT Custom homes and Remodels Gary Bardovi 222-0313</p>	<p align="center">PIANO LESSONS beginners and advanced Call Aukse 222-6947 or cell 310-500-5121</p>
<p align="center">CHRISTMAS BOUTIQUE IN MONTE NIDO Come do your Fall and Christmas shopping at 509 Crater Camp Drive, Monte Nido. Woman's sweaters, wraps, fur vets, scarves, fashion jewelry and more...all current styles at affordable prices. Please call Gayle on 310-294-9505 to set up an appointment.**Boutique runs until Dec. 6th .</p>	<p align="center">REAL ESTATE Specializing in Monte Nido Properties. Top Coldwell Banker Agent representing Buyers and Sellers in our community for more than 20 years. How much is your house worth? Call for a complimentary market analysis. Tracy Bunetta 222-2272 MonteNidoRealEstate.com</p>
<p align="center">ELECTRICIAN Licensed Contractor 20yr Monte Nido Resident Mike Wortham / North Bay Electric 222-3817</p>	<p align="center">REAL ESTATE Deborah Capogrosso-Roth Roth & Associates Commercial and Residential 818-222-5705</p>
<p align="center">SADDLE PEAK LODGE DINNER WED - THURS 6-9, FRI 5:30 - 10 SAT 5-10 & SUN 5-9, SUNDAY BRUNCH 10:30-2 BIG RED NOVEMBER: 50% OFF 100 RED WINES Three course neighbor menu for \$50 We look forward to having you join us in the near future. (818)222-3888 or Saddlepeaklodge.com</p>	

To place an ad contact Nicole Brown at macvoodoo@netpowered.com or 818-914-6138
Private Party Ads, \$5 per month. Business Ads, \$10 per month
Pay to: MNVCA. Mail to: PO Box 8054, Calabasas, CA 91372

Calendar of Events

MNVCA Board Meeting Election of Officers for 2010/2011

Tues, Dec 8 at 7PM
at the home of
Carrie and Brent Baltin
825 Crater Oak Drive
818 224-4696

ETI Corral

Thursday, Dec.10, 6:30 PM
Corral 36 Annual Holiday Party
at LaPaz Restaurant.

Reservations are a must.
Please call Mia Boudreau
(818) 224 3496, cell (818) 425 5338
email: Mia@malibuvalley.com.

Your reservation payment must be received by
December 1, 2009

Make checks payable to ETI Corral 36
and mail or deliver c/o
Malibu Valley Farms
26885 Mulholland Hwy.
Calabasas, CA 91302

Adopt-A-Highway Neighborhood Street Cleanup

Sat., Dec 5, 9AM
Meet at Piuma and Las Virgenes
Wear work clothes and gloves

Las Virgenes Homeowner's Federation Meeting

Thursday, Nov 19, 7:30PM
Diamond X Ranch
(Off Mulholland)

A Course in Miracles Study Group.

Tuesdays, 9:30-11:00AM
Marilyn Browning
222-6362

Zen Meditation

Thursday evenings at 7:30pm
Rosemary Taylor Alden
222-2936

Monte Nido Valley Community Association
PO Box 8054
Calabasas, CA 91372

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