



MONTE NIDO VALLEY



COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



A Dark Sky Community

E-NEWSLETTER

November 2011

2011 Monte Nido BBQ & Square Dance

Thank you to all in the community who made our annual, long-standing event successful. A VERY special thanks to Phil and Geri Fleeman for again hosting the community in their beautiful meadow. I hope this community appreciates what a generous gift they have given us for so many years – free of charge!! Thanks, also, to the Hardies for donating the electricity for lighting, sound, and food, and especially to Les for helping setup. I called upon Rob Szilagyi once again for electrical skills in providing lighting and sound and he graciously responded even though he and Lisa could not attend. That's community service! Thanks to Lois and Dick Love, and Carrie Baltin for coming forward to help set up and clean up. Brent Baltin picked up the cakes. It does take a team to pull this all together. On a personal note, I have volunteered on this autumn event since 1985. Except for a handful of years when I was out of town in October, I have done publicity, cooked, co-chaired and chaired the BBQ/Sq. Dance many times (I have the flyers and records to prove it!). It is a fun event: cool, crisp weather, smell of barbeque and sound of country music in the air, meeting new and old neighbors; many wonderful memories over the years. It is also a lot of work: making and putting up posters, scheduling services (insurance, food, seating, sanitation, and lighting), set-up, clean up, supply pick up, tabulating reservations and balancing the books. For those of you who RSVP' d in a timely manner and made my job easier, I thank you. For those who didn't or complained about something (you know who you are), well.... I do not want to see this community function die. It is time for a younger generation to come forward and volunteer or it will. I will offer seasoned advice in the future, but only that. Joan Slimocosky

Fire/Disaster Meeting at Station 67

Many thanks to Captain Malcolm Dicks for conducting such an informative community meeting on Oct. 11. We were able to meet the very State and County team members who will be protecting Monte Nido in times of disaster. Among them were Maria Grycan, Community Services Representative of L.A. County Fire Department, Officer Lui of the Sheriff's Department, and Officer Tang from CHP. These are the folks who focus much attention on Monte Nido and we owe them a debt of gratitude. Capt. Dicks, plus the teams, stressed the urgency of making a family evacuation plan and leaving when asked to do so. Maria Grycan asked us to register our phones and emails with SNAP which will make a call/email to us in time of disaster. Contact: www.ESPfocus.org Special Needs? <http://snap.lacounty.gov> Joan Kay

Trails Report

To support our Corral 36 Trails Maintenance Program please send your contribution to Jeanne Wallace, 1710 Cold Canyon Road, Calabasas, CA 91302. For information call (818) 222-2560.

July 4th Celebration

The Board of Directors extends its gratitude to Reva Smilkstein for all the time and effort she contributed to making the July 4th raffle such a success this year. There was an unfortunate oversight in the last newsletter and this acknowledgment was omitted.

Special Presentations

At the last Board of Directors Meeting, there were two special presentations: from Fire Capt. Malcolm Dicks and from Vintage Properties, which is planning to develop the empty lots on Pioma. This portion of the Board Meeting Minutes is included as a separate article here in the newsletter.

Fire preparedness: Fire Capt. Dicks made the first presentation. He stated that Monte Nido Valley is in a high fire risk area especially when we have high winds. It's in a bowl and 2 canyons converge this way. The larger picture is we're in the I-5 wind corridor. At a 1st alarm we get 32 resources assigned to fire fighting including helicopters, super scoopers, Erikson sky frame. The importance of brush clearance was stressed. Capt. Dicks invited questions:

Q – What kind of power does the fire dept have to get people to take advantage of the fire safe council to do expensive projects? A – The dept. does inspections according to rules for brush clearance, which are the most stringent rules in US. Agency jurisdiction is a checkerboard around here and the FD only has power over private lands in LA County. Other agencies protect the forest rather than homes. The FD's goal is to protect homes (but has limited powers) so there are different approaches and goals for clearance among the various agencies. Foreclosures are currently a big problem in this area. Lots of homes have old rules grandfathered in, i.e. all new homes now have to have sprinklers.

Q – Are we facing any budget cuts/restraints on materiel for fighting fires? A - In this area there are no cutbacks at all. Other areas have had huge cutbacks. We do face possible reductions here in 2013. Tax assessments we see on our bills for fire are earmarked for that and are not part of LA county general fund. Any fire that travels here from the San Fernando Valley gets a dual response. Lots of communications have changed since 9/11. Now all response agencies must communicate with each other, i.e. LA county and LA city all coordinate well.

Q - Should we have another community wide info session for new people? A – Definitely! We have lots of new city people who don't understand living in a rural interface with forest and wildlife. They also don't appreciate that as summer ends, fire season begins and runs through Jan. Residents need to know that for emergencies you need to be totally self-sufficient for at least 3 days. In a large quake we could be cut off for quite some time.

Q – Re: brush clearance; many of us live within the oak canopy. What can they do for protection? A - Get a permit to trim away from power lines. It's a hard balance because the oaks are also part of the mystique of Monte Nido.

Q – Will fire trucks come within canopy? A – Our local engines will for sure but some from elsewhere will not, especially those that come from the city and have less

experience with it. But there are other agencies that are very good with it.

Q – Where does FD make a stand with a big roaring fire going down the canyon? A – The FD can't just get in front of it. They have to direct it down the canyon in some direction (We're in great condition in comparison to Topanga Canyon) because here we have better clearance and more engaged residents. Basically the FD starts at the 101 and makes the fire as small as possible then pinches it and points it so it progresses in our favor toward firebreaks where they can make a stand. For ex. they stop it at a ridge because it heats up on the way up the ridge but then is cooler on the way down - except in a big wind/wind driven fire it just leaps. Grass/fuel driven fires are easier to put out than wind driven fires. South of Pioma is really at risk because of 20-foot tall grass.

Q - After the Station Fire do we have better air resources? A – In the Station Fire, the forest service had priority and they don't use air at night. We're not in that situation here. We do night helicopter drops and have identified helidrop spots. All helicopters have night vision goggles etc. In the Station Fire, the death of the 2 firemen was related to their pride in defending their base no matter what. So every station in LA County has been addressed and told in that a bad scenario they must abandon their base.

Q — In certain areas people are not interested in clearance and are in jeopardy on their own properties, with dead trees, and brush under eaves for ex. And that puts the whole street/area at risk. A – Bring specific addresses to Capt. Dicks and they'll make another visit to check clearance. But if it complies with rules and regs they can't enforce anything else. And with foreclosures it's many steps before they reach the responsible party and finally get clearance done. We can put community pressure on them but those are usually the people who don't come to meetings and don't respond to pressure.

The Board expressed our appreciation for our fire fighters and our desire to support them, too. Capt. Dicks thanked us for our support in the past i.e. the GPS we purchased for their engines. Dicks reported that this station is doing very well and in this economy they're not asking for any more.

Triangle Development: The second presentation was from Vintage Properties. Developer Matt Osgood wants to start a dialogue with the Monte Nido community in order for us to provide him with some input on the kind of development at the lots on Pioma that would be well received. No board discussion re: pros and cons will be held in the presence of the guest. Osgood is in escrow to purchase the Quaker property, known as Monte Nido estates. Escrow will close at the end of Sept. on 20 lots. He has previously done projects in mountains, such as

Hidden Park Estates next to Strauss Ranch, project in Oaks of Calabasas and in Westlake Village and he has 30 acres elsewhere. He wants to share Vintage Property's vision, approach and perspective, and get feedback from community. He brought the site plan. The Bank that owns the property did some testing and found that all 20 lots percolate. Osgood can't confirm that perc tests are valid. His plan is to have a harmonious relationship with the community and architectural style complementary to the size of the lots and the lay of the land. Each lot has to be evaluated individually. Bigger homes do not mean more value in this community and economy. He is not impressed with current development at the triangle. Architect Ko has experience with Cliff May designs in Rolling Hills and equestrian properties are his forte. He is sensitive to working in communities with no streetlights. He likes houses to conform to land and to use indigenous material. He is anti mc mansion himself. This is a dream project for him to design a relatively small enclave with a solution that no 2 houses are alike with ground hugging architecture. He brought pictures to share with the attendees. Single story is an important component of his design. The Cliff May formula is 38-foot maximum span for house, 9 ft plate and only 33% of total square footage is 2nd floor. The guests were asked to what extent the developer agrees with the architect? The response was they're working together because they agree philosophically. They are not promising all single stories but they are promising an approach to the land consistent with Ko's philosophy. He wants to build a timeless style so it's not possible to tell what year it was built. Osgood believes people exist who will pay for smaller houses with style not just square footage at a price point of \$1 – \$1.5 million.



Starry Starry Night

It is an unfortunate fact of today's life that most people are growing up unable to see the stars that our grandparents knew so well. The prime night sky exists largely in pictures or planetarium shows. This is true not only in cities but also in suburbs and in rural areas where street lamps and other sources of lighting have obscured our view of constellations, meteor showers, and even the planets. Many children and adults exclaim after viewing the night sky for the first time in a really dark area away from a city that "it looks just like this in the planetarium." We have lost our view of the stars, and we have affected our nighttime environment as well. Excessive lighting contributes to foraging difficulties for frogs, habitat degradation for bobcats and a proliferation of crows, which gain advantage over nocturnal owls and are linked to the disappearance of other raptors. Declines in these birds of prey can lead to increases in the numbers of rodents that make up a good part of their diet. Such a loss might be acceptable if all of this lighting was the inevitable price of progress, but it is not. Most sky glow is unnecessary. The light that obscures our view of the night sky comes mainly from inefficient lighting sources that do little to increase nighttime safety, security, or utility and diminish the rural quality that many of us moved here to enjoy.

Realizing that intensive outdoor lighting impairs the quality of life, citizens nationwide are drafting ordinances to protect their night sky. Tucson passed one that forbids residents from spilling light onto neighboring properties. And, closer to home, the City of Calabasas is working on an ordinance that would reduce the impact of outdoor lighting. The MNVCA Board has voted to encourage our residents to preserve and maintain our view of the nighttime sky. Old timers remember when the stars jumped out of the sky just like they do in the Sierra but increasing lighting from the cities to the east and north of us has had an impact on that view. Locally, within our neighborhoods, outdoor lights shine into the windows of nearby houses creating uninvited "nightlights" in nearby bedrooms. To preserve Monte Nido's darkness, begin with a frank assessment of your own outdoor lights. Take a walk or ride down the road after dark, look homeward and ask yourself: *Are my lights truly necessary for safety and security? Do they illuminate more than my driveway and walkway? Do I light my home's exterior so that the house appears as a beacon? Are my lights directed downward, or do they shine into my neighbor's windows? Does my driveway-street number light blind oncoming motorists? Can I see my lights from a distance? Is the distance measured in*

miles? Do my lights shine all night long? Do my lights shine in to the habitat of frogs, bobcats, owls and other wild creatures? There are many ways to lessen the impact of outdoor lighting that range from simply turning lights off when you don't need them to replacing fixtures that shine onto other property. Information is available at the website of the International Dark Sky Association www.darksky.org. There you'll find information about lighting fixtures, suggestions for approaching neighbors who over-illuminate your property and information on the impact of excess lighting on astronomy and the natural world. If we're successful, our kids may be able to experience a Milky Way that isn't made of chocolate.

Board of Directors Meeting

The 9/13/11 meeting of the MNVCA Board of directors, at the home of Jill Reiss, was called to order at 7:12 PM Present from the board were Les Hardie, Jill Reiss, Marianne Cilluffo, Joan Slimocosky, Joan Kay, Yehuda Netanel, Carrie Baltin, Judy Goldin. Present from the community were Suze Randall and Humphrey Knipe, Cathy Sieling, Deborah Low. Guests were Fire Capt. Dicks and from Vintage Properties, Matt Osgood, Brian Blain, David Ko, Cary Bren. Special Presentations are detailed in the previous article in this newsletter.

The formal meeting of the board ensued after the guests departed: Minutes: July 2011 Minutes approved. Treasurer's report: Bunetta has been reimbursed for July 4. Her accounting was reviewed and was accurate. The event was net profitable. Federation business: A hearing for county supervisorial redistricting was held on Sept 6. 800 people attended. A vote is to be held on 9/27. Joan Slimocosky will try to get to next hearing and will speak for MNVCA. Discussion followed in executive session. Community members are encouraged to send letters to the Board of Supervisors if they have strong opinions. Communications: none except from Osgood Old business: Square Dance/BBQ: Joan Slimocosky reported pretty much everything has been taken care of. She has a flyer for emailing around. There will be graduated fees for early reservations. Stonefire Grill or JVs will provide food including side dishes, coffee, and water. BYOB. Location to be Fleeman's Meadow. Children are welcome. Joan Slimocosky needs a big truck to transport some tables etc. Suze Randall has a truck and trailer she will lend. A suggestion was made to get servers rather than serve yourself. Carrie Baltin will

investigate expense of servers from Stonefire since JV includes them. We need to rent a small dumpster with cover to keep animals out, or Slimocosky will arrange to borrow from a neighbor.

New business: It was agreed to organize a community disaster seminar with the fire dept. the second week in October, possibly the 11th. Les Hardie will coordinate. Discussion of Vintage Properties: Assuming the presentation was in good faith – smaller homes in keeping with environment and rural style – we will not oppose the project. Hardie and Netanel will continue discussion of how to respond and email the board with their recommendations. Deborah Lowe is concerned with traffic 1) at the triangle near Saddle Peak Lodge because there are blind spots pulling in/out. She suggests we get some more big rocks to prevent parking in dangerous locations. 2) N/S on Malibu Cyn road at Piuma signal. Cars can wait for many signals before there is clearance to make the left turn. Mulholland has green arrow light for left turn from SB Las Virgenes to Mulholland. Suggestion to contact Yaroslavsky's office. Joan Slimocosky will get phone contact of person who may be able to act on this and give it to D. Lowe. Meeting adjourned at 9:46PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Jill Reiss

*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: Les Hardie 818-222-0661

Vice Pres: Carrie Baltin 818-224-4696

Treasurer: Judy Goldin 818-983-1910

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**

www.montenido.org

November 2011

<p>FOR SALE MINIATURE HORSE John Henry is a very sweet, freindly little gelding. He has been working as a companion horse and is looking for a new job. Easy keeper, not a lot of food and no farrier needed. He would be a great addition to any equine family. Please e-mail me for more information: lisaalehman@yahoo.com</p>	<p align="center">REAL ESTATE Specializing in Selling Monte Nido Properties for more than 22 years Top Awarded Coldwell Banker Agent Tracy Bunetta (818) 222-2272 MonteNidoRealEstate.com All questions welcomed. Call for a complementary market analysis.</p>
<p>MONTE NIDO ARCHITECT All residential projects large and small www.dbbarchitects.com Gary Bardovi, AIA (818) 222-0313</p>	<p align="center">Sunday brunch at SADDLE PEAK LODGE Mimosas, tasty comfort food and an elegant patio. What more could you ask for on a Sunday afternoon? 10:30am-2pm every Sunday Saddle Peak Lodge 818.222.3888 419 Cold Canyon Rd. Calabasas CA 91302 www.saddlepeaklodge.com</p>
<p align="center">  <i>Homecooked meals... delivered to your door</i> </p> <p>I have been home away from home for 12 years, and the best way I found to be close to my family is cooking my grand mother's food.. Nothing fancy, just simple, fresh ingredients. Everything is made from scratch, no shortcuts, the way I always saw it being prepared in my home in Provence..</p> <p>I live in monte nido, and this service is offered in our neighborhood only! Go online to order www.mamieshop.com</p>	<p align="center">   </p> <p align="right"> Jill Breitner Animal Behaviorist/Trainer Creating Joy, Respect and Compassion Between You and Your Dog SheWhisperer.com Jill@shewhisperer.com 310 890.7574 </p> <p><i>"Besides the parade and the square dance, this is the event of the season."</i> Longtime Monte Nido resident.</p> <p align="center">Multi-family Yard Sale Saturday & Sunday, November 12 & 13 1045 Meadows End Dr, Calabasas CA 91302 Want to sell some stuff too? You are welcome to set up in the Sieling's front yard on Friday November 11. Just bring a table and make sure your items are clearly priced and have your name on them. Mostly gotta have items like: Lamps, rugs, tables, chairs, doors, mirrors, paintings, hardware, kitchenware, lawn care, clothes, kid's stuff, and maybe even kittens.</p>
<p align="center"> MNVCA Bulletin Board is E-Published Monthly at montenido.org and via e-mail list. PROCEDURES FOR CLASSIFIED ADS Private Party Ads, \$5 per month. Business Ads, \$10 per month; Monte Nido residents only. To place an ad: 1. Send payment to: MNVCA at P.O.Box 8054, Calabasas, CA 91372. 2. Email Ad copy to mnvca@charter.net </p>	

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Calendar of Events

MNVCA Board Meeting

Tues, Dec 13, 7PM
at the home of
Joan Slimocosky
25632 Buckhorn Dr.
818-591-1082

ETI Corral

Board Meeting & Seminar
Tues, Jan 3, 7PM
At the home of
Jeanne and Don Wallace
1710 Cold Canyon Road
818-222-2560

**Las Virgenes Homeowner's Federation
Meeting**

Thursday, Dec 15, 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