



MONTE NIDO VALLEY



COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



A Dark Sky Community

E-NEWSLETTER

Sept/Oct 2013

What's in this edition:

**Presentation at Sept. MNVCA meeting by LA County Fire Dept.
representative**

Mountain Restoration Trust (MRT) Event

Fire Safe Council for Monte Nido

**The "Red" Booklet "What Do I Do In Fire, Flood, and/or
Earthquake?" is available as a PDF file on Nextdoor Monte Nido**

First of a series of Monte Nido History pieces

Plans for upcoming MNVCA meetings

LA County Fire Dept. Advice to MNVCA at Sept. Community Meeting

Jay Lopez of LA County Fire Department talked to the MNVPA group on fire safety and especially communication during fire emergencies. He recommends that Monte Nido residents keep landline phones which will continue to operate even when the power is out. Cell phones are not generally reliable in Monte Nido and those that need boosters will need power in order to operate. See the Minutes from the Sept. 10 Board Meeting below for more details from Mr. Lopez's presentation.

Mountain Restoration Trust (MRT) Event

There was a great turnout at the "Fall Equinox Celebration at Dark Canyon Ranch" from 4:00PM to dark on Saturday Sept. 28. MRT organized this gala event hosted at the wonderful ranch property of Suze Randall Knipe. The MRT volunteers did a great job. On a scale form 1-10, the food was an 11 or 12. There was live music and spectacular views of the Santa Monica Mountains all around. Thanks to Suze for the extraordinary hospitality and to the Monte Nido neighbors who helped Suze with the food and more.

From MRT's literature: Mountain Restoration Trust works to preserve, protect, and enhance the natural resources of the Santa Monica Mountains through acquisitions, restoration and education. They are a California nonprofit corporation.

FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

At the Sept. 10 meeting, Mountains Restoration Trust (MRT) Board member (and Monte Nido resident), Jo Powe, provided information on ongoing fire prevention efforts. MRT is applying for grants through CA Fire Safe Council to support fuel removal and fire safety education projects. These efforts would be boosted by joining forces with an active Monte Nido Fire Safe Council. This prompted the MNVCA Board to call for interested community members to join Les Hardie, Tracy Bunetta, Suze Randall, and others who have worked on Fire Safe Council projects over the years to re-energize the Council in concert with MRT on fire safe issues.

What Do I Do In Fire, Flood, and/or Earthquake?

A PDF file of the 2009 revision version of this local classic red booklet has been posted on Nextdoor Monte Nido under the Documents section. Secretary Jill Riess will also send out an email blast to the MNVCA mailing list and we will look for other places to archive this well written and helpful collection of information for locals to consult when they review and update their family emergency plans. The booklet was put together through the efforts of Stephanie Abronson and the Equestrian Trails Inc. Corral 36 group especially for MNVCA and the Monte Nido community.

Monte Nido Stories

Starting with this issue, we will be featuring stories that capture past times in Monte Nido. Ann Monahan starts the story telling here with her reminiscences from the late 1960's forward. If you moved to or grew up in Monte Nido in the 1950's/1960's/1970's and would like to share some memories, please send your stories to Ann Monahan at youthatre@aol.com and to Mary Helen Young at youngsmh@earthlink.net We will work our way through the 80's to the present with more stories if we have contributors.

Ann Monahan's Reminiscing about Early Monte Nido

My husband, Mike and our eight children (Tracy, Terry, Tyler, Tod Stobie and Shannon, Sean, Quinn, Brian Monahan) moved into Monte Nido in 1967. He was from Carmel, California and I was from Little Rock, Arkansas, and we both yearned for the "woods", for nature as we were definitely not city folk. One of the actors in the play we were doing at the time, Wy Hubbard, lived at the end of Kline Rd. He invited us to visit. The Wolski family inhabits that home now. We did visit him, and we literally fell in love with the natural beauty of the area. We searched for a home to rent in Monte Nido, eventually discovering Ranch Lancelyn as Lynn Rakestraw, the owner was a friend of

Wy's. He lived in an old religious retreat at 25575 Piuma Rd, and wanted to rent out the main house and move into the chapel. His asking rent was \$200.00 a month. We really had to consider if we could afford it, but took him up on it, and moved our family into the main retreat house. It was a great house with 10 acres of gorgeous mountains. Our family loved the area, loved our time at that house. Monte Nido was rather sparsely populated at that time. Many families were living in trailers on their property while building their homes. The community was very close; most of the families were artists of one kind or another. You might say that it was a Bohemian community. On September 25, 1969, a large fire, actually coming from two directions blew through Monte Nido, burning brush and several homes in its wake. Our rented home was hit as the drive up to the dwelling was ablaze and the firemen wouldn't venture up the road. We drove through the fire as well as the blaze on either side of Piuma Rd in order to escape. We stayed in the area that evening but most of Monte Nido was vacant. We were honored to put out many fires that seemed to erupt spontaneously all around us. In the next weeks and months, most of the residents moved out- so many homes were for sale. This gorgeous land, the fantastic Monte

Nido that we all loved so much resembled the face of the moon. Trees still smoldered, entire forests were denuded of their trees and foliage. Though many of the residents fled, we never lost our absolute love of Monte Nido. When the fog spills over the mountains, you can feel the magic pouring down on all of the residents. When you are awakened by the song of birds and the scramble of squirrels, you know just how honored you are to be here. We bought our present home at the corner of Live Oak Circle and Piuma in 1970 and have loved our time here and hope to for many, many years.

How has Monte Nido changed since 1967?

Our children took the bus to and from school from Saddle Peak Lodge. In 1967, they were able to open the screened-in kitchen door and buy a hamburger in a bag. Bud and Jean Siemert owned Saddle Peak Lodge, and soon thereafter opened up the dining room. All of my sons worked there in their teen years. The trout pond off of Huckleberry Drive was a popular spot for them, as they would ride their bikes there to buy a candy bar or to fish. There have been two or three very bad floods, one even taking the life of a lovely lady from Kline Rd. By the way, Kline Rd is currently called Dark Canyon. During this particular rain storm and flood we saw a guest

house and a vw bug floating down our creek in our back yard as well as tons of garden tools and trees. The rains both wonderfully light and extreme happened every winter. Unfortunately, that is not the case these days and has not been for 4 years or more. We have had several fire scares, but, thankfully, our fire department and well prepared residents have saved us from damage. It is wonderful to see Next Door Monte Nido come into being. We all share such a very special location, such a magical place...it would be nice to see the camaraderie return that was always a part of the Monte Nido we first encountered in 1967.

Thank you for listening to the ruminations of an old time Monte Nido resident. I look forward to hearing from more of you about your recollections. Maybe we should start an "old timers club"?

Minutes of Sept. 10, 2013 MNVCA Board Meeting (by Jill Reiss)

The MNVCA Board Meeting of Sept 10, 2013 was held at the home of Carrie and Brent Baltin.

Present from the Board: Dana Chidekel, Carrie Baltin, Joan Kay, Judy Goldin, Heidi Stompe, Gary Wooller, Reva Smilkstein, Jill Reiss, Yehuda Netanel

Present from the Community – Stephanie Abronson, Les Hardie, Jo Powe, Deb Lowe, Suze Randall, Tracy Bunetta, Sheila Rosenthal, Brent Baltin, Ann Monahan

Presentation: Prior to the official meeting, Jay Lopez of the LA County Fire Dept gave a short presentation about how to make the community safer.

Mr. Lopez asked how we currently communicate. – Responses included the Next Door website, a Walkie-Talkie system on Crater Oak Circle, and some people in Malibu Meadows have a phone tree and fire hoses. Lopez highly recommends that each home have a traditional phone land line that does not need power to operate in emergency. Cell phones may or may not work well in Monte Nido, but if you need a signal booster that will depend on power to operate, in an emergency you will be unable to use it. Alert LA is a reverse 911 system whereby LA County automatically sends you emergency alerts for MAJOR emergencies and updates. You can register a cell phone to receive alerts, but all hardwired land-lines are automatically included in the system. If you have a disability, you can let the County know ahead of time so responders are aware you need help in time of emergency. This system is called SNAP (Specific Needs Disaster Voluntary Registry). Another alert registry is NIXLE for “Trusted Alerts from your local police”. Lopez suggests you register in it by zip code rather than County to avoid getting a great many irrelevant alerts. One Call Now is another emergency notification system for groups to use to have one central, designated person to receive and then disseminate important community alerts that can be trusted, to all subscribers. Registration is done as a group, then every house in the group can

have up to 6 devices in the home to receive the alerts (landline, cell, email). It’s a paid service from about \$2 - \$20/household/year. It rings with a shorter burst than ordinary rings so you know it’s an alert. Universities use it to alert students to emergencies.

Redundancy is very important for phone trees etc. so people can find you in alternative places. You should have radios, phones and other means of obtaining information in emergencies when power is out and communication is difficult. CAUTION: be careful before disseminating information because you could be liable for disinformation. Don’t put out too much info and only send alerts when you are certain the source is accurate. If you send out too many false alerts, when a really important one goes out no one will take it seriously.

Use ALERT LA or Nixle as reliable sources to receive info. The Fire dept. does not post information on its website unless it’s a very big fire. But the Fire dept uses Twitter to send out alerts. You can follow on Twitter at LA COUNTY PUBLIC INFORMATION office.

The PUC (Public Utilities Commission) is warning about a phone scam about dialing *72. If you fall for the scam, you will be enabling strangers to make all kinds of expensive phone calls at your expense. If someone calls and asks you to dial *72 because there’s some kind of trouble with your child or a loved one, don’t do it.

Lopez suggests it’s also a good idea to have an emergency battery or hand crank operated radio on hand to receive info when power is out.

Most wildland fires happen during the week in the afternoon so odds are you won’t be at home when fires break out. Tuesdays and Fridays are popular days for fires.

If there is a fire, LEAVE EARLY! Don’t wait until the last minute. Shut off the gas, leave curtains open. It’s up to you if you leave the house locked or not.

Barricade or Fire Ice requires that you be home to apply it and it’s not easy to do if the winds are very strong or the water pressure is very weak. Also shelf life is only about 3 years. During the station

fire, Jay Lopez had a Farmer's Insurance policy which was supposed to dispatch workers to go to his house to spray it, but the fire dept would not let them enter the neighborhood during the fire because the risk was too high....so don't depend on that.

After Mr. Lopez's presentation, Deborah Low from the water district delivered some follow up information from last meeting's discussion about Water District "junkets/tours". LVMWD (Las Virgenes Municipal Water District) is a special district, with elected officials, a member agency of MWD of Southern Cal. LADWP is not associated with LVMWD. MWD and LVMWD are both mandated to provide public education about water conservation. Educational tours sponsored by MWD are what were mentioned at the garden class. There are two different types – one explores the CO River aqueduct and one goes up to the Hoover Dam. Our water in LVMWD comes from the Orville Dam and the Feather River in the High Sierras, from the snow melt through the Bay Delta. There's some concern and controversy about the Bay Delta – keep your eyes open for info and news. We depend on the aqueduct from South of the Bay, through levees and agricultural area, to deliver our local water. In California, 3/4 of the water falls in Northern Cal, and 3/4 of population is in So Cal. So the tours visit places where our water comes from – once a year to Hoover Dam. They are fascinating tours of structures we don't often consider as vital to our water services. CO River tour takes into account the agreements about sharing the water – and now the river is so depleted there isn't any flow in places where there used to be lots of water. Tours start very early in the AM on Fri, and run through the weekend. Travel is via bus or flight and they are hosted by Glen Peterson, Director at LVWMD/ representative from MWS. The goal is for tour participants to share what they've learned with all their friends and neighbors. Les Hardie went on one of these trips years ago and found it very informative and great fun. If you want to be notified when trips come up, Debra Peters is the person to contact at the Water District. 818 251 2125. For further info you can contact Deb Low at 818 251 2143.

The official Board meeting of the MNVCA was called to order at 8:03PM

New Business: Jo Powe, a member of the Board of Trustees of MRT (Mountains Restoration Trust) informed us that MRT has recently become a land owner. Judy and Dan Goldin donated a large parcel of open space land to MRT, along the creek to Camino Colibri and to Will Smith's property. MRT's mission is to protect and preserve the mountains and watershed for Santa Monica Mountains. MRT wants the community to be more aware of what they're about and what they do. They applied for a grant through CA Fire Safe Council to educate people in community with workshops and knowledge about fire prevention and safety. Meetings will take place at Saddle Peak Lodge, to include Jay Lopez and his staff. Also tree removal is part of a grant MRT has received. They have to have the permission of owner to remove vegetation from private property. They have targeted several locations of trees to be removed to reduce the fire load and danger. There are eucalyptus trees at Saddle Peak Lodge and also at the top of Cold Canyon near Mulholland intersection on MRT land currently slated for removal. MRT wants to receive a second wave of grants for hazardous vegetation removal and have been advised that they are more likely to be successful in getting a grant if the community has a Fire Safe Council. So they want to help the community become re-energized about putting together the Fire Safe Council. Les Hardie, Tracy Bunetta, Suze Randall are already on board: other interested people are welcome to get involved to move it forward in conjunction with MRT. MRT requested approval from MNVCA Board to create the council. Motion to endorse MRT's efforts to establish a Monte Nido Fire Safe Council (in addition to and separate from Arson Watch program) was approved. For more information about MRT or the vegetation removal program, contact Jo Powe 818 591 6749 jopowe@gmail.com.

And as a way to introduce Monte Nido to MRT, Suze Randall has offered to host a party to meet MRT staff etc. Scheduled for Sat Sept 28 at 4PM Please RSVP to mrtrust@mountainstrust.org, or 818-591-1701 ext 2. The event is Not a fund raiser.

MRT will have a casino night fund raiser at Saddle Peak Lodge on Oct 22, 6-10 PM. Visit mrtcasino.eventbrite.com for more info and to get tickets.

Treasurer's Report: 87 members are currently paid out of 400 mailer requests. Judy Goldin reported on balances in checking and CD. July 4th was fiscally successful. Motion to reimburse pony club for the \$627 in food ticket sales they collected at the picnic passed.

Old Business:

Vintage Properties: EIR ongoing, biology review ongoing. Then 4-5 homes are intended to be built. Approvals are still needed from coastal – engineering approvals will progress at same time as coastal...brush work needs to be done. Vintage can't build yet until much happens. Lot 7 was just regraded because Osgood just purchased it from private owners. A month ago there was no receiver for the open space lots, but the belief is that it will be state parks. Vintage has to get through Coastal before the lots can be donated. MRT is not interested in taking the property because the lots are small and not contiguous with other MRT lands so not in its purview.

New Business: FAA Noise – Stephanie Abronson responded to Jim Selfridge's Next Door posting saying that, years ago there was an issue with increased air traffic in the neighborhood. There seems to be a general consensus that there's way more air traffic than usual lately. Possibly the flight patterns to LAX have changed? Also helicopter traffic seems to have increased. The thought is that's wealthy Malibu commuters. Pevsner and Netanel put together a response years ago to the FAA. Joan Slimocosky has the paperwork from previous efforts. Will be discussed at next meeting.

“What to do in a fire, flood, earthquake” pamphlet?
The suggestion is to upload it as a pdf on Next Door website and encourage people to read, download etc.

Newsletter - No one is currently writing one. Unless someone volunteers to write it, it will not be published any more.

New Board Member – Welcome to Dana Chidekel.

Meeting adjourned at 8:53.

The next meeting of the MNVCA Board was not officially scheduled, but is expected to be held two months hence, in November.

Thank you MNVCA Members

Thank you to all the people who responded during the recent membership drive for Monte Nido Valley Community Association. It's only \$50 a year (\$25 for new members) to support the organization that supports you. The MNVCA organizes and finances insurance and infrastructure (like tables, microphones, trash, food) and other expenses for the July 4th parade and picnic, and the autumn BBQ and Square Dance. Board members and community volunteers organize and staff the Adopt-A-Highway cleanup, Fire Safe Council, the monthly Bulletin Board and this Newsletter. They represent our interests at Las Virgenes Homeowner's Association, at County Supervisor meetings, and with local developers to protect our rural character and our trails. Your donation helps make all this, and more, possible. It's a small price to pay for a big return! If you have not done so this year yet, please mail your membership checks to MNVCA P.O. Box 8054, Calabasas, CA 91372-8054.

Judy Goldin, Treasurer

*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: Carrie Baltin 818-224-4696

Vice Pres: Joan Slimokowsky 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**

youngsmh@earthlink.net

*The Next Meeting of the
Monte Nido Valley
Community Association
Board of Directors
Is scheduled for 7:00PM
Nov. 12, 2013
At the home of Gary Wooller
949 Crater Oak Dr.
Mark your calendars...
Plan to come ☺*

