



LOS TRANCOS WOODS & VISTA VERDE Newsletter – February/March 2013

World Travelers Call LTW & VV Home

We have “residents” from Italy, France, Spain, Russia, northern Africa, England, Australia, South Africa. Unfortunately, I am talking about the obnoxious residents called weeds. Invasive weeds spread quickly, stifle our natives, reduce habitat for native animals, rot our oaks, and some are fire hazards. We have a plethora of these weeds, but we also have a plethora of weed fighters in the community who have been particularly diligent in their fight over the years. Fighters, who maintain their own property and keep the weeds from spreading to surrounding properties, are especially needed.

Here is a quick rundown on 7 of the most noxious weeds: French Broom (*Genista monspessulana*), Bull Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), Italian Thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*), Yellow Star Thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*), Cape Ivy (*Delairea odorata*), Ivy (*Hedera sp.*), Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus sp.*). What is SO detrimental about these particular plants? Let me count the ways.

(The following information is gleaned from the California Invasive Plant Council web site, cal-ipc.org.)

- 1) French Broom – produces copious amounts of seed toxic to wildlife, forms dense monospecific stands, burns readily spreading fire to tree canopy layer.
- 2) Bull Thistle – seed viability is high, often above 90%, large plants can produce tens of thousands of seeds, spines are nasty (editor’s note).
- 3) Italian Thistle – dominates sites and excludes natives, one plant can produce 20,000 seeds, can spread grass fires to tree canopies.
- 4) YellowStar Thistle – reduces soil moisture, seeds can survive up to 10 years in the soil. (It has been partially controlled on Ramona Rd. and in VV, but will spread again if not eradicated.)
- 5) Cape Ivy – grows at a phenomenal rate, even a ½” stem fragment can root, extremely difficult to eradicate due to underground roots or stolon’s.
- 6) Ivy – causes build up of debris and moisture when it climbs tree trunks causing the bark to rot, vines can live over 400 years, creates dense cover as it spreads inhibiting other plants.
- 7) Eucalyptus – increases risk of catastrophic fires, leaves and shedding bark inhibits growth of other plants, hazardous because of branch failure.

This wet soil time of year is an opportune time to rid our yards and hiking areas of these other “residents.” Along with ridding ourselves of the weeds, there is also the opportunity to encourage our natives. By not picking the native flowers or digging up the bulbs or stepping on them when we create a trail shortcut, we can encourage them to go to seed and spread their native beauty.



1)



2)



3)



4)



5)



6)



7)

Tell-All-Hike:

Sunday, 3 March, 3-4 p.m., corner of Lake Rd. & Los Trancos Cir.

Come one, come all to a tell-all hike on invasive plants. If you have never been able to tell who's who, or you want to brush up on your weed elimination skills, then this is the hike (or rather stroll) for you. Bring the family, and enjoy the camaraderie and a good cup of tea. RSVP – 851-1787.

Submitted by Linda Drey-Nightingale with editing by David Smernoff

Neighborhood Neighborliness

The gully washers in December brought out the neighborliness in our neighborhood. Thank You to all those that came out to aid with water diversion and give moral support during the torrential rains. I personally would like to thank Stig Nybo and Marc Levaggi for their efforts in diverting surface water to a pipe in order to save the Schellenberg's home. I have heard stories of others coming out in the cold rainy weather to help out. It is wonderful to live in a community where the people around will pitch in without even being asked.

Submitted by Jan Avila

Los Trancos Woods Community Association

Many of our members have paid their two-year dues of \$60 which covers the cost of our directory, the annual Woods and VV picnic, and contributions to disaster preparedness. There are still a few we need to collect from. Please mail or drop off your check made out to LTWCA for LTW dues to 111 Carmel Rd.

Thank you. We cannot have an Association without your support.

Submitted by Jan Avila, Los Trancos Woods Community Association Board of Directors

Neighborhood Notes

- Welcome and congratulations to the new slate of **Vista Verde Community Association officers**:
President - Deb Smith, Vice President - Joan Blackmon, Treasurer - LuAnne Kalman, Secretary - Gayle Ma
- **Dog Walkers Alert:** Recently, piles of "orphan" dog poop have appeared along Los Trancos Circle and Lake Road, as well as along Old Spanish Trail in Vista Verde. Plastic newspaper bags for dealing with this problem are available from your own newspaper or in three containers around the community: near the mailboxes where Vista Verde Way enters Los Trancos Circle, at the trail head near the ponds, and at the stop sign where the Circle begins/ends. Please use them as needed--and if you find one of these containers empty, make a note to bring some newspaper bags to refill it.
- **Winter Science Classes** at P.V. Town Center are starting soon. You may sign up at the Town Center offices or on-line at the Town website www.portolavalley.net. If you have questions, you may send an e-mail to the instructor at tyryce@yahoo.com. Kindergarten – Third Grade: Wed., 3:30 to 5:00 p.m., February 27, March 6, 13, 20, and 27
- Our intrepid **local rainfall** recorder, **Gene Hunner**, reports November - 8.9", December - 14.7", January - 1". The total for the year to date is 25.7".

2012 Community Resource Guide

This is a long overdue thank you to the legions of people who worked on the Resource Guide to prepare the most accurate, up-to-date, useful Guide they could. We all owe our thanks to: Yvonne & Rich Tryce, Cindy Rowe, Keri Tate, Nancy Neuer, Linda Drey-Nightingale, Steve Friedman, and Susan Jensen.

If there are any corrections or changes for the Resource Guide, please let Linda, 851-1787, know and we will publish it in the next Newsletter.

Community Associations' Web Sites

The web site addresses are:

<http://lostrancoswoods.org/>

<http://www.vistaverdepv.org>

The group e-mail list is:

VistaVerdeLTW@yahoogroups.com

VistaVerdeCommunityAssoc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Thank you, Jerry Jensen & Rob Kalman for maintaining web sites