



LOS TRANCOS WOODS & VISTA VERDE Newsletter – June/July 2013

'Tis the Season to Be ... Fire Ready

With the weather being all over the map, it is hard to be inspired about fire readiness when the weather is cool, but then it turns hot overnight. Those cool days are the perfect time to get involved in trimming, raking leaves away from house/deck, or cleaning out gutters. Here are a few quick tips on prevention that may save our houses.

- 1) Clear out flammable debris (dead leaves, twigs, etc.) right next to anything composed of wood like house siding, decking, garden shed, fences, or woodpile. – **30 minutes**
- 2) Blow off your roof of debris and blow out your gutters while you are at it. – **30 minutes**
- 3) Trim up your trees about 4 ft. above anything flammable, and clear out dead wood from trees and bushes, anything that can be “ladder fuel” for a fire. – **1-2 hours**
- 4) Look for anywhere that leaves blow into crevices (vents, under decks, between structures). This is also where embers will blow. Clean the area out and install 1/8” mesh screens where useful. Adding a second layer of metal mesh over or below the existing venting creates a stronger barrier from embers. – **30 minutes-1 ½ hours**
- 5) Carefully check out the downhill side of your house, recognizing that fire travels uphill, and remove fire fuel more feet down the hill than on the flat. – **1-2 hours**
- 6) Install easily visible house numbers. – **15 minutes**

Here are a few quick tips of what to have ready for a fire.

- 1) Identify two exit routes from the house and then from the neighborhood and make sure all in the family know them. – **10 minutes**
- 2) Designate a safe meeting place for your family and a contact person outside the immediate area. – **10 minutes**
- 3) Assemble a Grab and Go Bag containing flashlight, portable radio, copies of personal documents, first aid kit, extra cash, medications (7 day supply), and Swiss army knife. – **40 minutes**
- 4) Install a fire extinguisher on each level. – **20 minutes**

Just pick one item a week to accomplish. Keep as large a defensible space around your home as is possible. Our community will benefit greatly from the efforts of all. Some of you may vividly remember one family whom we owe a huge thank you to. Because the Ma's did their fire prevention clearing, when their garage caught on fire, it was contained to their garage and house and did not spread. Let us all be prepared like the Ma's!!

Submitted by Linda Drey-Nightingale

Community Youth

Let us all applaud our youth who bring us hope and joy.

- Ian Brown on Vista Verde Way is graduating from Summit High School. He will be headed to Humboldt State in the fall.
- Monica Ferrone is graduating cum laude from Santa Clara University with a B.S. degree in marketing and a minor in retail studies.
- Samantha Ramsey is graduating from 8th grade at Corte Madera, and going to Woodside High School. Samantha tied for 3rd in the 8th grade Poetry Contest from the Portola Valley Library.
- Krista Nightingale is graduating from UC Santa Barbara with a B.S. in Environmental Studies and her plans for the future are “to have fun.”

Los Trancos County Water Board News

The LTCWD Board meeting on June 5, 2013 at 7:30pm in the Buckeye Room at the Portola Valley Town Center will focus on two important issues. All residents are invited to attend.

First, the Board will be finalizing and voting upon the 2013/2014 fiscal year budget. How and where the Board will be spending the District's annual property tax revenue will be debated. Second, and perhaps most important is the subject of the future state of the District. Recently there have been preliminary LTCWD communications held with various members of the San Mateo County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo). There are large questions ahead for the District and it is important that the community fully understand the issues at stake and is able to weigh in on the decision making process. Several possibilities exist: request activation of latent powers, reorganization, an orderly dissolution, or maintain status quo with the understanding that there may always be tension with LAFCo.

Plan on attending the LTCWD Board meeting on June 5th – these are your property tax dollars at work here.

Excerpts from an e-mail by Tracy Sherman

Neighborhood Notes

- For many years, **Molly Westrate** was a valued member of our LTW community, adding her signature charm & energy as a neighbor, a wife (Steve) & mother (Erika & Blake). There was about her an equable comfort and grace which co-existed with an extraordinary work ethic and range of eclectic interests in a life fully-lived. We extend heartfelt sympathy to Steve and to their family. She will be missed by all who knew her. Molly died on April 30 of ovarian cancer.

Submitted by Lenora Ferro

- **Michael McVey** passed away on February 19 after a battle with lung cancer. Mike resided in Los Trancos Woods for fifty-one years. He loved the Woods, having no desire to live, or visit for too long anywhere else. Mike was born in Palo Alto in 1928. He served proudly with the Army in Korea from 1950-52. He crewed for, and raced, Midget Gliders as a young man and enjoyed flying sailplanes and power planes. Mike was a fine neighbor who was always willing to help out others, even in floods. His mechanical expertise came in handy many a time for the neighborhood. Mike is survived by his wife of forty-four years, Dodie, and daughters, Jan and Kim. The family would like to thank Mike's many kind neighbors that offered help and shared fond memories of Mike and Dodie. It's no wonder Mike loved the Woods!

Submitted by Kim McKinney, Mike's daughter, and Greg Van Hauser

- **Perry Blackman** died April 2 after living up here since 1975 in the house he built. He and his wife, Joan, raised three sons up here. He frequently ran or hiked on Coal Mine Ridge. For 35 years Perry and Joan held a Christmas fun run. While on the Water District Board he pushed hard to refocus our most local government into projects that would bring us closer together as a community. Perry was always quick to help residents of our community with any needed repairs. He loved the Vista Verde picnics and whenever a costume was required, he got into the role with all four feet. Golf became a passion when his "Pain Management" vocation ended. Perry had a deep faith in Jesus and displayed this to the end of his life. Perry was a friend to all and a cheerful member of our community. Our thoughts are with Joan, his wife.

Submitted by Ross Edwards, Charlie Krenz and Joan Blackmon

- Our downcast **local rainfall** recorder, **Gene Hunner**, reports April – 1.0", May - 0". The total for the year to date is 29.1". Yikes, another parched year!

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