



LOS TRANCOS WOODS & VISTA VERDE **Newsletter – June/July 2015**

Personal Story – Prepare for Fire

In 2010 we sold our house in the Woods and moved to the high desert of the eastside Sierras. We thought that by moving to an area of scattered sagebrush, similar sized bitter brush and rabbit brush, and widely scattered pinon pine trees, that we would be free of worry from wildfires. We were wrong.

On February 6 the windstorm of an approaching cold front blew down a tree onto a power line about 4 miles south of our house. With its 80 mph wind gusts, this started a major wild fire. Fortunately, we were both home and could see the smoke from the fire from our house. Not much time later, we could see flames coming up the gully from the initial fire, now about 2 miles south of the house. At that time a sheriff's deputy rang the doorbell and warned us to get ready to leave. Ten minutes later he was back: "Get out!" So we did.

As you may have read in the news, the "Round Fire" burned 7,000 acres and 40 houses that afternoon, until the rain from the storm finally halted its advance. Fortunately, our house survived, as did those of our immediate neighbors, but most of the plants in our yards burned. We did get spring wild flowers, but we will have to remove most of the aspen and apple trees that we had planted.

Lessons Learned:

1. You may get only 10 minutes to pack and leave. Think about what is really important and try to remember to bring it when you go. Fortunately, we were both home because our lists of important things were not the same at all, but we did get most of it (forgetting things like medicines, family pictures, dog food, etc.). A couple of residents became notorious, because they snuck back in by a bad dirt road that was not blocked by the sheriff to rescue their pets.
2. Ask why some houses burned to the ground (almost none was partially burned) and others survived. The wild winds surely contributed to the randomness of the burned properties. There would be a house that was burned to the ground but all its plants survived, and next door there would be a standing house with no surviving plants. The area with both burned and unburned houses extends well over a mile in all directions. Only the far outskirts (such as where we live) had no burned houses. It seems that the air was full of flying embers, and if one landed on a plant or got blown into some burnable structure, the plant or house burned.

Prepare for fire:

Do not store stuff under your porches. No shake roofs. Screen the attic vents so the wind cannot blow embers through them. Keep burnable brush away from your house. The recommended distance is 100 feet, but do what you can. Do not store firewood near your house. Listen to your Fire-Safe Committee for local recommendations. Support your local fire department. We did not do all these things, and our house should have burned. We were lucky - some fireman sprayed our porch woodpile and it did not catch. Just luck. Check your homeowner's insurance policy - it costs more to rebuild than you think.

Submitted by Jan Simpson (Thank you for sharing this, Jan. Your experience is invaluable to us.)

Easter Delight

On Sunday April 5, 2015, a spirited group of some of our finest young residents ventured to Old Spanish Trail on news that a certain bunny had been sighted dropping brightly colored oval objects in the nearby woods. Equipped with suitable collection gear, the crew braved impending rain to search out and study these mysterious things. To their delight, the objects were filled with marvelous confections that made them jump up and down and run all around upon consumption. Our own field photographer, Autumn Stanley, was able to capture some of the action.

Submitted by Shivani Nautiyal

Community Picnic Coming Your Way – July 18th

Save the date! Saturday, July 18th from 3:30-6:30 p.m.

New Venue: Las Piedras Court (off Old Spanish Trail)

Get ready for fun: Live music, kid-friendly games, drinks, hamburgers, hotdogs & veggie burgers, and award-winning desserts. This year we are having a cook-off with prizes going to the best salads & appetizers.

In addition we are looking for volunteers to help with the picnic. Contact Eiri Inenaga to help. It is a great opportunity to make new friends and help out the community.

Submitted by Carolina Pitera

LTW Community Association Board Election

The results are in and thank you to all who put forward their names to serve the community!

District 1 Representative: Kim Acker

District 2 Representative: David Smernoff

District 3 Representative: Cameron Smith

District 4 Representative: Tom Thayer

At-Large Representatives: Sonia Martinez, Howard Post, Tom Uridel

Congratulations, and we look forward to the posting of the first meeting. A special thank you goes to Cynthia Dorrell who did an exemplary job of conducting the election.

Emergency Preparedness

CERPP & Woodside Fire Protection District Flyer Excerpt:

“After a large scale disaster, like the Loma Prieta earthquake and the most recent Napa earthquake, emergency services personnel will not be able to reach everyone in need right away. Six evenings and a Saturday will prepare you to help your family, neighbors, and community during a disaster. Learn invaluable skills in a stimulating, hands-on environment.” Learn about Organization, Fire Safety, Medical Operations, Search & Rescue, Radio Operations, Disaster Psychology and more. Tuesdays 6:30-9 p.m., starting July 7th – August 11th and Saturday, August 15th. Held at P.V. Town Center. Go to <http://cerpp.org/cert/index.html> for more information. Grab a neighbor and sign up for the class!

Submitted by Steve Friedman

Neighborhood Notes

- Gene Hunner reports our local **rainfall** figures: April – 2.3”, May – .2”, and season-to-date – 30.5”.
- **Local author**, Autumn Stanley has just published a children’s book, The Princess with the Purple Hair, which is just out, and available from Amazon.com.

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