



## **LOS TRANCOS WOODS & VISTA VERDE**

### **Newsletter – August/September 2012**

#### **Los Trancos County Water District**

##### *Living With Fire*

In our busy lives, it is easy to want to avoid being prepared for some of the scarier realities of living in a fire-prone area. But being informed and prepared helps moderate the fear and is essential in an emergency situation.

I just attended a workshop called “Living With Fire” organized by the Palo Alto Fire & Police Departments along with the Santa Clara FireSafe Council. It was an hour full of great reminders and recommendations for living in fire-prone areas. Here is an abbreviated version based on best practices:

- 1) Defensible Space
  - Create a 30-foot wide “Lean, Clean and Green Zone” and if possible, a 70-foot “Reduced Fuel Zone.”
  - Removal of dead material, continuous brush and Eucalyptus are recommended.
  - Escape route clearance is very important
- 2) Personal Preparedness
  - Make a home/family plan (CaliforniaVolunteers.com offers online plans)
  - Build a disaster kit (what would you take if you had to “grab & go”?)
  - Prepare a video of the interior of your home showing furniture, art and valuables and keep offsite for insurance purposes.
  - Be aware and informed. Go to [SMCalert.info](http://SMCalert.info) to register for the alert notification system that will immediately update you via email, text or smart phone during emergency situations.
  - Know your neighbors – neighbors helping neighbors.
  - Know your evacuation routes
- 3) If fire is imminent
  - Evacuate immediately & as early as is safely possible (note: evacuation is the responsibility of law enforcement).
  - If time allows, turn off A/C and gas at meter
  - Turn on inside and outside house lights
  - Pull up shades and/or remove curtains from all windows (make sure all windows are closed)
  - Do not turn on outdoor sprinklers
- 4) If you cannot evacuate
  - Move all furniture away from windows toward center of rooms
  - Remove window treatments
  - Remove deck furniture and miscellaneous items off deck and bring into house
  - Close all doors in the house and stay somewhere in the middle of the home
  - Cover mouth/nose with wet cloths to avoid breathing in the smoke
  - IMPORTANT: after fire passes, carefully inspect outside of house and re-inspect each ½ hour thereafter to make sure falling embers are not starting a fire

LTCWD Fire Safety will be hosting a formal presentation on the above material on Wednesday, Aug. 29 at 7 p.m. at Portola Valley Town Hall. Plan on attending as this could make the difference.  
*Submitted by Tracy Sherman, LTCWD Board Director - Fire Safety*

## **Los Trancos County Water District (LTCWD) Response to Comments**

*LTWCA (Los Trancos Woods Community Association) Board Comment: The prime goal and focus of the Water Board should be to safeguard and care for the Water Board's own lands, and especially to find a permanent trustee for them when this Water Board is no more.*

LTCWD Response: Please remember that the District has worked diligently to both care for, and seek additional protections, for our lands. Despite numerous and continuing efforts to identify a willing trustee, NO local entities are interested! The District has no plans to dissolve so the final and best protection is a majority on the District Board that supports keeping the lands as open space.

*LTWCA Board Comment: We also agreed that the Water Board should consider putting more controversial items to a community-wide vote.*

LTCWD Response: The District will not put controversial items to a vote. That is what elections are for. Once Board members are elected the community should engage them with issues, attend meetings, and if desired, revise the Board composition through elections held every two years. Please remember that special elections are also extremely expensive.

Please mark your calendars for a special meeting of the District Board on Thursday August 16th at 7 PM, Portola Valley Town Hall. The meeting will focus on the water movement control program including a demonstration of the District GIS database and upcoming program activities.

*Submitted by David Smernoff, LTCWD President*

## **Community Picnic at Pony Tracks**

Get your sunhats, sunscreen, and taste buds ready. The annual picnic will be Saturday, 22 September, from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Put it on your calendar now, so not to miss this wonderful neighborhood event. Details will be coming later. Volunteering is a great way to have fun with friends, meet new neighbors, and be part of creating a true community spirit, so bring on the stampede of volunteers. Contact either Linda at 851-1787 or Rob at [rfkalman@gmail.com](mailto:rfkalman@gmail.com) to take advantage of this fabulous opportunity.

## **Neighborhood Notes**

- It is coming; it is coming!! The new Vista Verde and Los Trancos Woods **Community Resource Guide** just came back from the printers, and you should be receiving your copy soon. As always check it over to make sure your information is correct, but more importantly, check those emergency preparedness pages to review what to do and how best to be prepared. The wildfire season is not yet half over, and it is only going to get worse before the rains come. We owe a great deal of thanks to all of you who worked so diligently to make this valuable document come to our doorsteps once again. Bouquets of good wishes go to you!
- **Quinn Arbor Raffaelli was born** to Josh & Claire Raffaelli on July 5, 2012 at 10:18am. 8lb 2 oz. and 21" long. Welcome to the community, Quinn! Congratulations, Josh and Claire!
- What is happening to the **proposal for stoplights in Ladera**? According to a San Mateo County source the Ladera Community has done a survey of their residents, has engaged the County in the discussion, and now needs to make a decision if they are going to move forward on the request for stoplights. If they move forward, there will be opportunities for public comment. In other words, this is nothing that is imminent but will probably take several years. There are serious safety and access issues in Ladera. In the mean time, let us all be alert and honor the speed limit as we drive through Ladera on Alpine Rd. Good neighbors are considerate neighbors.

## **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](mailto:VistaVerdeLTW@yahoogroups.com)  
[VistaVerdeCommunityAssoc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:VistaVerdeCommunityAssoc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

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