



LOS TRANCOS WOODS & VISTA VERDE **Newsletter – August/September 2014**

Fight the Drought

This was the third driest year on record and the warmest 6 months on record in California. Many of you have done much to cut water use and some plants are turning brown, thank you.

Wouldn't it be great to improve your garden with drought tolerant plants, and to have an irrigation controller that could sense the weather, and water just the right amount? What to do? Try this:

- Use the items in your *I Save Water Kit*.
- Look at your garden; look at your Cal Water bill.
- Do any planting before the winter rains. Start planning now for fall planting.
- Have an expert come to your home to give you advice on all of this, at no charge to you, courtesy of the Los Trancos County Water District.

Call to set up an appointment: Lori Morris, 408-829-8788, Landscape & Irrigation
Frank Niccoli, 650-592-9440, Landscape & Irrigation
Lori Palmquest, 510-374-6360, Irrigation
Danna Breen, 650-851-2101, Landscape

Some neighbors have already taken advantage of this service and were very pleased.
Your Saving Water Committee

A Fabulous Tank Finale Picnic

The 2014 Annual Community Picnic had excellent attendance with 260 community members and 50 guests all arriving on well-coordinated shuttles. People were thrilled to have the one last chance to tour the tanks before the military hardware heads off in all directions of the compass. The ever popular trains ran overtime to accommodate all the happy riders. A bouquet of thanks is due to the Littlefield families who allowed us to use Pony Tracks yet again, the faithful tank volunteers, the patient train volunteers, and the cadre of community volunteers, some jumping in at the last moment. We already have some volunteering for next year!

Submitted by Deb Smith for the Picnic Committee

(Editor's note: Deb is due more than a bouquet of thanks as her organization skills and creative ideas made this one of the smoothest running picnic we have had. Thank her when you see her.)

Los Trancos County Water District

For the last seven months, LTCWD has analyzed how the District can continue to sustain local services on a long-term basis as part of its investigations into different governance options. Faced with a myriad of problems, we are working to find the best set of solutions that will allow this community to continue to receive local benefits into the future. Our investigations continue and hopefully sometime in the fall, we will be communicating the results of our assessment. I encourage you to contact me if you have any questions about the District's progress.

In the meantime, we have refocused the District's Fire Safety Residential Incentive Program. We have had 30+ properties inspected by our fire safety expert, Ray Osterling, and had 3 households complete the necessary clearance work. The inspections were split evenly between LTW and VV. We are approaching the driest months of the year, so please participate in this important Program.

The Storm Drain Master Plan Committee will be holding a community meeting on Wednesday, August 27, at 7:00 pm, location TBD. The Committee will be presenting its final report at that time.
Submitted by Claudia Mazzetti, President LTCWD Board

A New Invader in Our Midst

We all know the ubiquitous Star Thistle, but what about Tocalote, *Centaurea melintensis*. Turns out, there is a new relative of Star Thistle that has snuck in and put down roots. While out doing my daily Italian Thistle pull in May, I happened upon this newcomer. Paul Heiple of the California Native Plant Society identified it for me and alerted me to the fact that it is indeed an exotic invasive and needs to be removed from our area. I encourage you to take a gander around your property and see if this invader has invaded you. Leaves are oblong and light green, but not gray-green like Star Thistle. It can be branched, or not, with a yellow flower head of spikes and a maroon colored bud.



Submitted by Linda Drey-Nightingale 

What do I REALLY need?

It turns out, in an emergency, it may not be what you think you really need. In 2007 my husband and I had made up a list of what would we take with us if we had to evacuate in an emergency. There was the 5 min., the 15 min., and the 1-hour list for how much time we had to pack the car. I decided to put the list to the test on 7 May when we had the Evacuation Drill in our neighborhood.

Here was our 5 min. list: turn off gas (earthquake and fire) and water (earthquake only), sturdy shoes, flashlight, portable radio, medications, first aid kit, warm and waterproof clothes, wallet, gloves, crowbar.

The 5 min. list was pretty accurate on time, but in 2007 cell phones were not as important as now, so add that to the list along with the charger. What was I thinking, when I did not have water and food on the list? I am "dead in the water" without those. Add that to the list. How about the whistle, duct tape, pen and paper? Wait a minute! This sounds like an emergency backpack to me. Grab and Go! Let's all make up our backpacks before it is too late. Not everyone is going to get out, if we all take 5 min. to prepare and leave at the same time.

Submitted by Linda Drey-Nightingale

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