

**MOUNT  
LAGUNA  
IMPROVEMENT  
ASSOCIATION**

**CABIN  
NEWSLETTER**

**JUNE, 2017**

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## **MLIA President's News**

*Frank Kalinoski*

Summer is here!

It is that time of year again to get the pine needles and oak leaves cleaned up around your cabins. With all of the rain and snow, the grasses and wild flowers will likely be especially heavy. The debris needs to be cleaned up within 30 feet of your cabin. Downed branches and ladder fuel needs to be cleaned up out to 100 feet from your cabin. The dumpster and burn pile for branches less than 6" in diameter are available at the old Air Force station. The key to the gate is available at the store. The Fire Inspections are expected to start in June.

At the April Fire Safe Council meeting we had a surprise visitor – our District Ranger Bob Heiar. Those in attendance had the opportunity to ask Bob about the issues we are concerned about on Mount Laguna. Bob was very forthcoming and answered all the questions put to him. We discussed the status of the Mount Laguna Fire station improvements, the dead trees and what to do with all the downed wood, the cabin inspections for fire and compliance, cabin access roads, and water.

*Continued page 2*

**Coming  
Up  
Soon!**

**RSVP NOW!**

**MLIA PICNIC  
SAT JUNE 24**

**Details on page 5**

**New Event!**

**WESTERN  
DAYS  
SAT AUGUST 26**

**Watch for Flyer**

**WINE A BIT and  
CRAFT BEER  
FEST**

**SAT OCTOBER 21**

## MLIA President's News, *continued.*

The Forest Service is in final discussions with the County regarding the Mount Laguna Fire Station improvements. The Cleveland NF now has a forester who is going to be evaluating the health of the forest and dead/dying trees and what to do with the wood. It was pointed out that cabin inspections are important for fire and compliance. I mentioned that other forests in California have enlisted cabin owners' help working together with the Forest Service to self-monitor compliance, Bob pointed out that our cabin access "roads" are actually "unauthorized access roads". There is an ongoing project to document the access roads that are truly needed for public access so that they can be permitted as well as access roads that are illegal.

The Forest Service has a project to update the four expired water system permits in the district including MLIA's. They are also in the process of improving their water system to support the needs of the Laguna Mountain Recreation Area for fire protection, campgrounds, sanitation. A lot of those projects depend on adequate staffing but when the President imposed a federal hiring freeze, the needs of the Descanso Ranger District were adversely affected.

After the FSC meeting, we had the Chili Social hosted by cabins 588 and 587. Many thanks to Jerry Schaeffer and Bob and Emily Olsen for sharing their cabins with us! We had a great turnout on a beautiful day, 10 Chilis to sample, and salads and deserts to enjoy. Congratulations to Chili Cook-Off winner, Donna Whisman. Additionally Bob Heiar showed up for our Chili event and hung around for quite a while giving people a chance to get to know our District Ranger a little better. This guy has a lot on his plate and we are just a part of it.

Discussing issues with Bob gave us an opportunity to get the Forest Service point of view about their efforts in trying to manage this federal land our cabins are sharing. It is quite a balancing act. He certainly listened to a lot of stuff and he was able to articulate knowledgeable responses. I came away with a better understanding of how the Forest Service works and the responsibilities of the District Ranger. I am looking forward to working with this guy. The issues that affect our cabins are on the list and I am sure they will get addressed. We will just have to be patient. I told Bob the MLIA is here to help in any way to get our issues addressed.



Summer Time means Social Activity Time on the Mountain! We have the Annual Picnic on June 24th, hosted by Joe and Joanie Cochran at their cabin #554. Larry Lambert is

planning a Western Days celebration on August 26th at the Turner's cabin #583. Larry is doing a lot of legwork to put this event on and he deserves our thanks and support. I also want to mention that Joanie Cochran is doing a great job as our social director. When we see her at a social event, she deserves a big "Thank You".

That's it for me. See you on the mountain!

*Frank*

**Cabin Improvements and permits  
Forest Service contact:**

**Laura Lolly**  
**[llolly@fs.fed.us](mailto:llolly@fs.fed.us)**  
**(858) 673-6180**

Laura will be working on cabin issues  
until July 2017.

# Clean-Up Time on the Mountain

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Here are some guidelines for your cabin brush reduction. You will also find complete information posted on the website at <http://mtlaguna.org/create-defensible-space>.

- 1) Fire inspections are scheduled to begin in June.
- 2) Pay attention to the fire danger level when you work. No power tools are to be used if the fire danger is extreme. Have a fire extinguisher handy or a hose primed while using power tools!
- 3) We are responsible for cleaning the area within 100 feet of our cabins. (Often this is shared with neighboring cabins).

#### **Within 30 feet of all structure:**

- **Rake leaves and needles and weed-whack grasses.** You can leave wildflowers and very low-growing shrubby plants that hold the soil.

#### **From 30 feet to 100 feet:**

- **Cut grasses to 4" or less.**
- **Remove dead branches and other ladder fuel.**
- It's OK to leave a layer of leaves and needles as mulch.

Check out the Cal Fire website at <http://www.readyforwildfire.org/Defensible-Space/> for more detailed information.

4) **Remove all leaves, needles, and pinecones to the dumpster** near the old Air Force base. You will need to get the key from Tom at the Laguna Mountain store. **Don't' keep the key all day**; return it to the store after each dumpster run.

#### 5) **Dumpster protocol:**

- **Only leaves, needles, and pine cones go into the dumpster.**
- **Push everything to the back of the dumpster!**
- **No bags please**—everything in the dumpster must be loose.

6) **Branches up to 6 inches in diameter can go on the burn pile** near the dumpster. Branches larger than 6 inches in diameter should be cut up and retained at your cabin for firewood.

7) **Please instruct any day laborers you use in these guidelines.** Go with them for the first run to the dumpster so you can assess the situation and see how much room is remaining in the dumpster.

If the dumpster is near full, please alert Joe Cochran at [alsbahr@gmail.com](mailto:alsbahr@gmail.com) right away.

***Thanks for your cooperation in keeping our cabins clean and fire safe!***



**Essential Fire Safety Information Apps**

**ReadyforWildfire.org**

Cal Fire preparation information, alerts, and more.

**ReadySanDiego.org**

San Diego County emergency preparedness and alerts.

Here we are 3 months into our April through November meeting schedule. I see that you've all been working on your cabins and the fuel reduction effort is outstanding as far as I can see. Forestry inspections are scheduled to begin in June. The MLIA generously donated proceeds from the annual Chili Social. We sold some of our un-used equipment at the Chili Social and we have more equipment to sell.

**For Sale at the  
Community Picnic June 24<sup>th</sup>  
Shovels, rakes, hoe, grain shovel.**

Our May meeting was attended by Bob Heiar, our Descanso Ranger District head. It was quite informative as to his mind set in addressing all the questions he was asked. It was refreshing in this age of bureaucrats. Ranger Heiar also attended our Chili Social and as I understand it continued the conversation with openness and sincerity.

A week or so ago MLIA sent out an e-mail with suggestions and guidelines for fuel reduction. The CalFire website "Ready for Wildfire" is an outstanding reference for those of you with a computer or smart phone.

Elimination of ladder fuel within 100 feet of your cabin is recommended. This includes cutting tree limbs on trees to 6 feet above ground on larger trees and a third of tree height on smaller trees.

**Fire Safe Council Information**

The Memorial Day weekend brought with it some confusion regarding the access to

the gate to the leaf dumpster on the old Air Force station. We were short on keys that weekend. The lock has been replaced with a new one. Tom, at the Laguna Mountain Store, still has the keys and he will continue to issue them. Be sure to return the key after each dumpster run. Don't keep it all day!!!

Thanks for your understanding and patience.

Again thanks for all of your cleanup efforts.

**See you at the next Fire Safe Council meeting on June 24<sup>th</sup>.**

Also any questions or issues please feel free to contact me.

Regards,  
Joe Cochran, President  
Mount Laguna Fire Safe Council  
619-540-4616

# MOUNT LAGUNA IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

## Community Picnic

All MLIA Cabin Owners,  
Private Residents, LMVA,  
and Cal Fire and USFS Fire  
Personnel Are Invited.

**Saturday June 24, 2017**

**Hosted by  
Joe & Joanie Cochran**

**at Cabin 554  
Los Huecos Road**

**12:00 pm – Potluck**

**2:00 pm – Prize**

**Drawings**

**50/50 Raffle  
\$100 Grand Prize**

**Winners must be present  
to win!**

**Bring a potluck dish to share and your meat  
to grill.**

**MLIA will provide  
grills for your use,  
soda, beer, plates,  
utensils and cups.**

**Please bring  
your own chairs.**



**Only Service Animals are allowed at functions  
serving food. No pets please.**

**RSVP to Joanie Cochran  
at (619) 473-1010 or  
sassyilks@outlook.com**

## Wildflower Season Started Early

And it's still going. Memorial Day weekend saw fields of lupine and yellow yarrow on the south side of Los Huecos Road. Indian paintbrush is scattered on the hillsides. Yerba santa was blooming half way up Sunrise Highway.

Some of my favorite spring-summer wildflowers are the early bloomers. At the end of April I took a walk out to Big Laguna Lake. There were buttercups, cream cups, checker bloom, thistles, wallflowers, Indian paintbrush and more. Here are a few of my favorites.

*Joanne Odenthal*



There was an entire field of magnificent cream cups blooming near the lake.



Indian paintbrush starts early and is still blooming. It is hemi-parasitic so it helps itself to food from friends nearby.

This thistle is evidently a tasty dish.



Checker blooms are in the mallow family. They like meadows and stream side habitats. You can also see them along the road where they get runoff water.

We were active on the mountain last month doing road work after the winter rains. Most of the work consisted of backhoe work on ingress and egress to culverts, creating "reservoirs" where runoff can pool before flowing on. A significant amount of material was placed on the road paralleling Escondido Ravine and drainage "cuts" were made to diminish pooling caused by excess runoff. A drive around all tract roads found them to be in pretty good shape recognizing that some of our past efforts have held up and further road damage has been averted.



## Road Work!

Our Adopt-a-Highway crew was hard at it after the Board meeting on May 6. In spite of some challenging weather conditions Frank Kalinoski, Mary Walke, Bill Holland, Doug Reed and myself briskly scoured the 2.6 miles of Sunrise Highway for winter play trash. We completed the 2.6 mile course just as rain started to fall. (As you might remember it snowed the next day!)

our area so I want to personally thank the participants for encouraging the road clean-up event to continue and not cancel.

That's all for now. See you at the picnic!!

Six workers is the minimum needed to cover

*Carl Sessions*



Mount Laguna is a favorite stop off for **Pacific Crest Trail** hikers in April and May as they begin their trek.

The PCT is 2650 miles long, going from the Mexican border to the Canadian. Thousands of dedicated and hardy folk do a part or the entire trail every year.



*"I want to do this when I am 90."*

PCT hikers gathered daily in front of the Mt Laguna Sports store.



Mt Laguna businesses, including our US Post Office, benefit from PCT hikers eating, mailing, re-stocking, and socializing in our community.

# NATIONAL FOREST HOMEOWNERS 2017 CONFERENCE

CARL SESSIONS,  
MLIA VICE-PRESIDENT

I appreciate the opportunity to represent Mount Laguna Improvement Association at the National Forest Homeowners annual conference in Seattle.

The NFH completed the cabin insurance survey. Seventy-eight percent of cabins are insured. Major losses reported were from break-ins and vandalism, storm damage, falling trees and fires in that order. NFH will continue to pursue their search for a "national" cabin insurance provided at rates hopefully better than what some of us may already be paying.

National Forest Homeowners is working hard to get all cabin tracts in the United States signed up as dues paying members. The goal is to link all 14,000 forest cabin owners into the NFH database in an effort to better fund NFH initiatives, create a cabin sharing/trading program like AirBNB and VRBO, and have more strength in numbers to deal with core issues. At one time there were nearly 20,000 leased

cabins in the Forest Service program. It is NFH's goal to not lose any more cabins.

Forest Service staff expressed concern regarding a possible change in USFS oversight being changed from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of Interior. Staffers fear that change might result in revenue generating sales of parklands, and more leasing for mineral exploration, mining, and farming. The Park Service is self sufficient from a cost stand point and the money generated is coveted by other departments. By 2024, all funds generated by the cabin lease program will be retained by the Forest Service for Forest

Service use and not retained by the US Treasury.

MLIA lobbied to have the next NFH Annual Conference in San Diego!!

Vicki and I thank MLIA for trusting us to represent our organization.

**For Conference information about cabin insurance, historic cabins, water rights and more visit:**

<http://www.nationalforesthomeowners.org>

## Donna's Chili

from Donna Whisman, Cabin 715  
2017 Chili Fest Winner

- 1 large can chili beans (the kind in chili sauce)
- 1 large can crushed tomatoes
- 1 package Chili seasoning mix
- 1 medium onion chopped
- 1 medium bell pepper chopped
- 1 whole yellow chili pepper and 1 whole jalapeno pepper
- 1 ½ pounds of carne asada meat

Cook beans, tomatoes, bell peppers, whole chili pepper and jalapeno pepper, onions and seasonings mixed together until tender In a stock pot.

Chop meat into ½" chunks and saute in a skillet until cooked. Add to stock pot and simmer.

**Tips:** Carne asada meat is easier to cut when partially frozen. Whole peppers can be removed, frozen and used for another purpose if desired.

SUMMER 2017

# MOUNT LAGUNA IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1935, the Mount Laguna Improvement Association acts a liaison between the cabin owners and the Forest Service addressing water, roads, and wood removal.



Photographs used in this newsletter  
courtesy of Nola Houston.

## Water Maintenance

Please report any problems with  
the MLIA water system to

**Dan Fritz**  
**(619) 405-1452**

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**New Email?**  
**Let us know!**

Send all contact information  
changes to

**Karen Motta**  
**(619) 977-2083**  
**[RKMotta@cox.net](mailto:RKMotta@cox.net)**

*Eugenie Newton, Editor at [evn8@san.rr.com](mailto:evn8@san.rr.com)*