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MOUNT LAGUNA IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

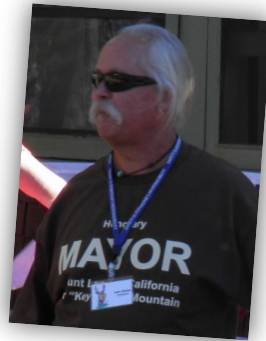
CABIN NEWSLETTER

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AUGUST 2013

Message from John Wallar

This will be my last message to the community of Mount Laguna as President of the MLIA. I will not be up for re-election in September. As of now, Frank Kalinoski plans to run for President. (Anyone else who is interested is welcome to run as well.) I hope all of you will attend the Annual Meeting on September 21. Many important issues will be discussed at the meeting.



The last month has been one of many challenges with the Chariot Fire that did so much damage to the area. The fire brought more focus to some things the Board has been working on, like our water supply. As many of you have heard, we are looking into buying the Stewart Water System or drilling another well so as to have a second source of water for our cabin community.

With the recent fire, the need for a second well has become even more of a concern. MLIA gave the fire fighters over 400,000 gallons of water mostly from the Ole tank on Los Huecos Road.

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Save the Date!

Sat., Aug. 17, 2013

Wine-A-Bit
Boiling Springs Tract
Cabin 751
3:00 – 7:00 p.m.

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Sat., Sept. 21, 2013

MLIA Annual Meeting
Red Tailed Roost on
Sunrise Highway
10:00 a.m.

DETAILS PAGE 2



Become an MLIA Board Member

The Mount Laguna Improvement Association is looking for new board members. You'll enjoy getting to know the mountain while making new friends and supporting our cabin community. For information contact JOHN WALLAR, MLIA President 949-422-9561 or email jwallar2@gmail.com.

Mount Laguna Improvement Association
Notice of Annual Meeting
Saturday, September 21, 2013

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF THE 51TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MOUNT LAGUNA IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION TO BE HELD AT 10:00 A.M. ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2013 AT THE RED TAILED ROOST ON SUNRISE HIGHWAY ACROSS FROM THE FIRE STATION. (PLEASE NOTE NEW LOCATION THIS YEAR).

THE MEETING IS FOR THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:

1. GENERAL BUSINESS OPERATION
2. INTRODUCTION OF ASSOCIATED ORGANIZATIONS
3. SECRETARY'S REPORT
4. FINANCIAL REPORT
5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2012-2013
6. CURRENT WATER SYSTEM ACTIVITY
7. TRANSACT SUCH OTHER BUSINESS AS MAY PROPERLY BE BROUGHT BEFORE THE MEETING
8. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.



ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME AND WE URGE YOU TO ATTEND.

MOUNT LAGUNA IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION
910 16TH STREET
RAMONA, CA 92065

FROM JOHN WALLAR, CONTINUED

It was the right thing to do and the system worked as we had planned. The refill recovery time has been slow since the tank was empty. When that happens air can get trapped in the lines and form air bubbles that block the new water running in the lines. Some water system upgrades need to be considered and over the next few months the Board will prioritize upgrades to complete as funds allow.

This Annual Meeting is an important one. The period leading up to the meeting is a good time for you to let us know what you think needs to be done as well as your questions.

I hope to see many of you at the annual meeting!

Water Meter Readings

MLIA will be reading the water meters after the annual meeting on September 21st. If you would like to double-check our accuracy, please read your meter at that time as well. Also, it would be appreciated if you would kindly clear any brush around the meter site and / or dig out any dirt that may have been left by critters. Thank you!

OUR WATER SYSTEM

Frank Kalinowski, MLIA Vice-President

MLIA provided about 400,000 gallons of water to CalFire and USFS firefighters to fight the Chariot Fire. We will not be compensated for this water by the government. The water came from our 420,000 gallon Ole tank situated above the Boiling Springs tract.

Most cabins are supplied by water from the Ole tank. Other cabins are supplied by our Los Huecos tank. Water is pumped to Ole about a mile from our well to the 120,000 gallon Los Huecos tank. It flows down ¼ mile to our pump house and is pumped about 2/3 mile up to the Ole tank. Water supplied to the cabins is by gravity feed.

The Chariot fire emergency brought to light some shortcomings in the operation of our system. These should be corrected (over time) to keep our water system a source of reliable and clean water for the cabins.

This is a list of things we need to do:

1. Build a fire-safe structure around our well-head. (Awaiting USFS approval.)
2. Perform an assessment of our well and perform rehab maintenance if necessary.
3. Locate and accurately mark all of our main lines. Our current maps only provide an approximation.
4. Replace the old transfer pump.
5. Provide for remote monitoring of the water level of out tanks. Now it is a float indicator on the tank.
6. Complete a TMF (Technical, Management & Financial) assessment for the California Dept of Public Health. This will include emergency operating instructions.
7. Establish an emergency water usage contract with the Mt Laguna Volunteer Fire Dept.
8. Have access to our well and transfer pump and water tanks in an emergency.



Another concern is that we only have a single source of water. MLIA has been approached by Jerry Suppa to purchase the Stuart Water System that supplies the Mt Laguna businesses and residences. A committee is in the process of evaluating that idea, but it still needs a thorough risk assessment before a decision can be made.

A second idea is to drill another well on USFS land. We have a site selected near our pump house and we have a bid, but we have not approached the Forest Service. A third idea is to contact the owners of the Spears private property near cabin 509 about purchasing one of their two wells close to our pump house.

There is no easy solution to secure a second source of water. Above all, as was clearly illustrated with the aftermath of the fire, water from any source must be able to be delivered to our storage tanks efficiently and reliably to ensure that the cabins have water.

FIRE SAFETY AT OUR CABINS

During the recent Chariot Fire, the possibility of our cabins being destroyed by wildfire was clear and present! CALFire assessed the fire-safe conditions surrounding the Boiling Springs Tract cabins. Each cabin site was assessed based on: a) Is the site accessible by a Type 1 engine? b) Location/cabin number; c) Is there a source of water? d) Is there a defensible space of 100 feet around the structure? e) Are civilians present? f) Special Notes and Hazards.



Fire fighters moved items around some cabin including combustible materials (firewood or building materials, propane bbq's). They also moved items (chairs, toys, wheelbarrows, etc.) that would impede movement around the cabin needed to defend the structure.

To help firefighters defend our cabins remember that each cabin owner is responsible for keeping a fire-safe area around their cabin. Our annual duty is to comply with the 100' Defensible Space brush, grass, wood debris clearance. Also, maintaining 30' of space cleared of combustibles and objects that would interfere with firefighter movements is recommended.

During a fire, if you are at your cabin, turn on your water, provide a garden hose of at least 50 feet and a ladder, and unlock your cabin prior to any evacuation.

The Forest Service has curtailed their annual safety inspections. The MLIA is considering ways to assess the fire safe conditions of our cabins.

Progressive Dinner



Everyone is Invited to Wine-a-Bit

SAT AUG. 17, 2013
3:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Join us at Cabin # 751 in the
Boiling Springs Tract.
Just follow the signs.

Enjoy an evening of food, drink,
friends and good cheer.
Donation \$10 per person.

Wine, Beer, Soft Drinks are
Provided. Bring an appetizer
and/or bottle of Wine to share
or, if you'd like, just come out
and socialize with friends.
Bring your own chair.

50/50 Drawing will be held at
\$1.00 per ticket.
Door Prizes will be raffled off at
\$1 per ticket /6 for \$5.

**NOTICE: SERVICE ANIMALS
ONLY ARE ALLOWED AT
FUNCTIONS SERVING FOOD.
NO PETS PLEASE.**

RSVP to Cookie
at 619-889-7145 or
cookie@cox.net.

Picnic



Fire Safe Council

501(c) 3 Nonprofit Organization

The CHARIOT FIRE of July 2013 caused great destruction on Mt. Laguna. Our thoughts are with all those associated with the Al Bahr Shrine Camp who lost everything. The Shrine Camp has been an active and influential partner with the Mt. Laguna FSC since our inception.



Our hearts go out in a special way to Bob Strangman, Assistant Manager of the Shrine Camp, and an involved member of the Board of the MLFSC. Some private cabins on USFS lands adjacent to the Shrine Camp were also lost and those remaining face challenges of water availability and access.

The exact cause of the CHARIOT FIRE is under investigation. Once it is known, I will send out an email with the information.

Now, as in all fires, an After Action Review, involving all the agencies (USFS, BLM, CALFire) active in the fire, is in process. We as a Fire Safe Council also need to review the situation and identify what we need to do as individuals and as a community to be better prepared when the next fire comes whether it is 3 years or 20 years. Because of our geography and vegetation, Mt Laguna has long been seen as at highest risk of fire. At our July 20th FSC meeting we already identified issues of access and egress for fire responders, water reliability, fuel reduction and hardening of

structures as paramount. We will continue to address this issue at upcoming FSC meetings and welcome any suggestions or observations you may have.

Over eighty-five members of the community attended our July 20th FSC meeting. We thank Donn Christiansen, USFS Descanso District Ranger, Jason Kraling, USFS Battalion Chief, Clay Howe, BLM, Battalion Chief and Walt Holloway, Division Chief, CALFire for taking



time to meet with us and educate us on fire behavior and issues specific to the Chariot Fire.

On a positive note, on June 7, 2013, the Mt. Laguna FSC received the Outstanding Project of the Year Award from the Greater San Diego Fire Safe Council at a luncheon on the grounds of the Sweetwater Reservoir. Six members of the MLFSC attended the luncheon. On July 11, the MLFSC received an award of \$2500 for ongoing fuel reduction from SDG&E at an event in Carlsbad. I was invited to give a short presentation on the award we received from the GSDFSC for our signage project funded by a previous grant from SDG&E.

Please join us for our upcoming FSC meetings: August 17 (followed by the MLIA Wine-A-Bit) September 21(a joint meeting with the MLIA), October 19, and November 16, 2013. Meetings are held at the Red Tailed Roost beginning at 10:00 am.

Native American Use of Fire on Mt. Laguna

This is an especially good time to consider what we know about how Native Americans used fire in California. Even though the Kumeyaay Indians were primarily hunters and gatherers who lived off wild plants and animals they were experienced and sophisticated managers of the natural landscapes that was and is their home.

Without doubt the most common and widespread practice was the use of fire to manage the landscape. The earliest Spanish explorers to California, Cabrillo in 1542 and Vizcaino in 1602, reported numerous smoke columns as they sailed up the coast. Some of these may have been natural fires as their journeys were at the height of brushfire season in September-October, but so many blazes were seen as to defy any presumption that they were all natural. In fact, once Spanish overland entradas were undertaken, beginning with the Portolá expedition to found the missions between San Diego and San Francisco in 1769-1770, it became clear that grasslands were repeatedly burned after the harvests of wild grass seeds by the Indians and to aid in rabbit hunting.

In the mountains, annual fires were set after the acorn and pine nut harvests to reduce leaf litter and pine duff to nutrients for plant life. It also inhibited the spread of parasitic plants like mistletoe. Controlled burns reduced fuel and inhibited undergrowth, preventing the dangerous wildfires we now confront every fire season. A mosaic of small fires reduced the chances of a massive wildfire thereby increasing the diversity and productivity of the local flora and fauna that an old climax forest does not possess.

Fires prevented the development of dense tree stands, especially the pine trees that held little economic value for Indians. The upland forests contained many more of the acorn bearing Black Oak trees that were the source of a crucial staple food. Trees were larger and further apart than they are now, more a parkland than a forest. Tom Lucas, Kwaymii elder of Mt. Laguna, remarked that pine trees were not as profuse in his youth as they were in later years, becoming weeds in his opinion. The burn sequences differed with habitat, weather, and harvest season. Patterns differed in the chaparral on the desert facing slopes from the mixed coniferous forests on the top. When and where fires were set was the responsibility of tribal shaman-specialists.

Anthropologists and archaeologists continue to research and debate alternative interpretations of prehistoric and ethnohistoric life ways with regards to land management.

Not all ancient hunting and gathering activities were likely sustainable but from what we know, 19th and early 20th century foresters could have learned a few things from the Native Americans before policies of total fire suppression were enacted.

Jerry Schaefer, Ph.D., Cabin 588, El Centro Tract

If you want to learn more, I recommend the following: *Before the Wilderness: Environmental Management by Native Californians* edited by Thomas Blackburn and Kat Anderson; and *Just Before Sunset* by Lora L. Cline



FALL, 2013

Mount Laguna Improvement Association

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

Visit our website at www.mtlaguna.org.

Water Maintenance

If you have any problems with the MLIA water system,
Please report it to Dan Fritz at 619-405-1452.



Have You Moved?

SEND ADDRESS OR EMAIL CHANGES TO KAREN MOTTA
AT RKMOTTA@COX.NET OR CALL 760-440-9554

Reminder About Restraint of Dogs on Mt. Laguna

Cabin owners are reminded that all San Diego County Restraint of Dog rules apply when your dog is at your cabin on the mountain.

At Home: At home, dog owners must effectively control their dogs by voice or electronic pet containment system, or must physically and humanely restrain them by a leash, fence, or other enclosure (SDCC Section 62.669[b]; Penal Code Section 597t).

Away from Home: If you walk or otherwise bring a dog to public or other private property (where dogs are permitted), you must restrain the dog by a hand held leash (not longer than 6 feet in length) (SDCC Sections 62.669[a], 62.601[d], and 62.601[y]).

Proper restraint of dogs will prevent them from harming or interfering with other animals, people, or property, and will also prevent them from becoming lost or from being injured by vehicles or other animals.

Eugenie Newton, Editor
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