

WINTER 2020

MOUNT LAGUNA IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

# CABIN NEWSLETTER

Volume 17

Number 72



## President's Update

*Frank Kalinoski*

We have had quite the turnover of cabin owners this past year or two - many due to health issues and deaths. I know I am getting older and keeping up with cabin necessities and chores is a little bit harder and takes a bit more time and effort. When Ralph Motta [long time cabin owner and an MLIA president] died this past October and I attended his funeral Mass in Point Loma, I was surprised at how many current and past cabin owners took the time and effort to attend.

We lucky few who own cabins on Mount Laguna are quite a unique group, quite the community! That is why when we schedule social activities, it is important that we make the effort to attend and celebrate ourselves and our unique cabin community. Karen Motta, our MLIA Treasurer, will be making serious decisions about keeping her cabin next year. When she sells, we will have a huge hole to fill in our organization. Karen has been our treasurer for 20 years and she is probably the most important person in the MLIA, considering all of the things that she does for us. According to the recently updated bylaws,

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>February 1</b> | <b>MLIA Board Meeting</b><br>9:00 - 11:00 am<br>Red Tailed Roost              |
| <b>April 18</b>   | <b>Mount Laguna Fire Safe Council</b><br>10:00 am-12:00pm<br>Red-Tailed Roost |
| <b>April 18</b>   | <b>Chili Social</b><br>Watch for flyer!                                       |



## *President's Update, continued*

her replacement should come from the Directors. If anyone has accounting knowledge and is interested in doing the treasurer's job please contact Karen or me as soon as possible.

Even during this quiet time of year, things are happening on the mountain. The Forest Service has started to burn those big ugly stacks of brush that were created this summer in an effort to reduce some of the fuel load around the cabins in the El Centro and Boiling Springs tracts. A few weeks ago they were burning near my cabin [504] along Los Huecos Road. The fire fighters were there in force ensuring that the burning was a controlled process. These guys know their jobs, which is good to know. The work has finally begun in the Laguna Campground major renovation project [seven years in the planning]. This project has helped us work closer with the Forest Service to ensure the Laguna Tract cabin owners are kept informed of their ability to access their cabins throughout the project.

We recently met with our District Ranger and he apprised us of where we are with their projects that can affect us: the Laguna campground restoration, the old Shrine Camp decommissioning, our options for a permanent water source for the Shrine Tract and an alternative access route, the permitting of the cabin access "roads", and cabin compliance. However people feel about the Forest Service, I have learned over Bob Heiar's tenure that we have a good one here. In my meetings with our District Ranger this guy takes the time to listen. He sees the value in communicating with the cabin owners and the MLIA. Unfortunately, Bob is going to be on assignment in the USFS Washington office for the first four or five months of 2020. They need him to help with their Forest Service budget process. At this time I don't know who his temporary replacement will be. Hopefully, he will find his way back to continue his work here.

You all are likely aware of the recent problems in Poway with their water quality and the inconvenience that this issue created for their water users. Dan takes water samples every month at different sample stations in our water system. These water samples are tested for bacterial contamination. If any sample is reported as PRESENT, Dan is all over the problem with retesting to ensure that our water system is providing a safe product for our cabin users. We are really lucky that the earlier leaders of the MLIA and the Forest Service worked together in the 1960's and 1970's to build the water system we have today. The new MLIA well pump replaced in September appears to be working as expected and pumping 23 gallons per minute. We are considering cleaning our main water tank, as required by our SD County water tank is filled and divers are sent to clean the sides and bottom. We are replacing some distribution meters and valves. All of this maintenance is done to keep our system in good shape without any additives or processing.



*See you on the mountain!!  
Frank*

# Fire Safe Council

Thanks to Marilyn Huntamer, Tom McNichol, Meg Moore, John Wallar, Richard Willis, Tina Pivonka, Mike Jacobs, Hal Ringhand and Jack Splinter for all your hard work this year for the Mount Laguna Fire Safe Council. And we look forward to your continued hard work in 2020.

Fire Safe Council meetings for 2020 will be held on the third Saturday of each month, except June, starting in April and ending in November. June's meeting will be held on Saturday June 27<sup>th</sup>. There will be no meeting in September due to the MLIA general meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup>. All meetings will be held at the Red Tail Roost, starting at 10:00 am.

The dumpster is gone until next year, but the site is still accessible for dumping of brush and branches up to 6" in diameter. Thanks to Jason Kraling and the Forest Service for this location. And always be diligent to keep your roof, gutters and around your cabin clear of leaves and needles.

With heating season here, it is a good time to check your heater and fireplace flues and dampers for proper operation and that they are free of any obstructions and soot build-up. Test all smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors and replace batteries as necessary. Thanks to the MLIA and the community of Mount Laguna for their continued support of the FSC.

*Doug Reed, President*

## Fire Safe Council 2020 Meetings

10:00 am - 12:00 pm  
Red-Tailed Roost

|                        |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| April 18 <sup>th</sup> | August 15 <sup>th</sup>   |
| May 16 <sup>th</sup>   | October 17 <sup>th</sup>  |
| June 27 <sup>th</sup>  | November 21 <sup>st</sup> |
| July 18 <sup>th</sup>  |                           |

No September FSC due to MLIA Annual meeting

## Laguna Campground Construction Update

Mount Laguna campground will be closed beginning in January, 2020. This is a temporary closure of the site until March 31, 2020. A temporary closure was determined to be the quickest way to expedite work with health and safety in mind. Winter is an ideal time to implement closures due to low usage in the campground.

Laguna Tract cabin owners will be given access to the fence/gate during the entirety of the campground closure. There will be orange construction fencing at the entrance to the campground so no key will be required for entrance.

The entire Laguna Campground Renovation Project will address the deferred maintenance of toilets, water systems, roads and campsite amenities. Campground construction has an anticipated completed date of late 2020.

Please contact Lindsey Steinwachs at [lindsay.steinwachs@usda.gov](mailto:lindsay.steinwachs@usda.gov) or 619-445-6235 ext. 3418 if there are any questions or concerns.

## Cabin Access Report

Our plan to work on the Boiling Springs Road project leading to the Ole Tank required rainfall to make the ground more pliable. Well, that took a turn when the deluge of rain came and then snow and then more rain. We rescheduled and now work has begun (photo) and will continue weather permitting.

All tract captains gave condition reports on their tract access during the November Board meeting. Mary Ladewig, the new tract captain for Lower Boiling Springs, volunteered to make contact with her cabin neighbors, in an effort to have that community prepared for the next leg of repair and renovation. Please note that any and all future work will be contingent on the outcome of the current Boiling Springs road project.

Questions may be directed to me or more information discovered at the upcoming MLIA Board Meeting on February 1, 2020.

**Carl Sessions**  
VP MLIA

Cabin 716 (619) 571-2284



Volunteers Farshid Dini, Brock Houston, Brock Ladewig, Mary Ladewig, Carl Sessions, Doug Reed, Arthur Miramontes, and Denise Whisman shared a fun lunch and good conversation at Carl's cabin afterwards.



*Brock Houston, Brock and Mary Ladewig at November 2nd Sunrise Highway cleanup.*

### Sunrise Highway Cleanup

Thanks to eight volunteers who picked up trash along Sunrise Highway November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Good to say, there wasn't much to pick up! Mountain visitors seem very respectful of the community.

## 2020 MLIA Events

February 1 – MLIA Board Meeting

April 18 – ChiliFest Social

May 2 – MLIA Board Meeting

June 27 – MLIA Community Picnic

August 1 – MLIA Board Meeting

August 15 – Wine-A-Bit

September 19 – ANNUAL MEETING  
*Red-Tailed Roost*

October 17 – Fall Fest

November 7 – MLIA Board Meeting



# Laguna Snows

Photographs  
by  
Nola  
Houston



# ~ The Gifts of Evergreens ~

Evergreens are the classic winter plant. The smell of evergreen boughs, wreaths, and trees goes with winter and the holiday season. It also signals the medicinal gifts they bring.



*Cedar needles*

Most of us know the dark green Incense Cedar, shaped like a classic Christmas tree. The name Incense Cedar gives an idea how this tree might be used. Burning cedar branches releases the essential oils such as camphene, cineole, myrcene, and pinene. These oils have antibacterial and antiviral actions, so actually help “cleanse” the air. Juniper, cedar, and cypress were all burned during epidemics to purify areas such as sick rooms and houses where illness was present. Local Indians also used this practice. Some Indian groups used a tea made from cedar seeds for asthma. A steam inhalation of the branches and leaves was used to treat chest congestion and colds.

Pines are definitely the evergreens you see most on the mountain. On Mt. Laguna, the most common pines are Jeffrey Pines, with some Ponderosa Pines, Coulter Pines, Sugar Pines, and Pinyon Pines also present. Jeffrey Pine and Ponderosa Pine are both also known as Yellow Pines. They interbreed so sometimes it’s hard to know who’s who. The bark of the Jeffrey Pine often has a sweet scent like vanilla or butterscotch. This is most present on a warm day when the bark releases its essential oils. The Ponderosa Pine smells more like turpentine and the cones are smaller than the Jeffrey. (For identification purposes, pinecones on the Jeffreys have spines that face inwards, while the Ponderosa spines face out and feel quite prickly.)

The pine tree was an important food and medicine source for the local Indians. Pine nuts were harvested, eaten raw or roasted. The best pine nuts came from Pinyon Pines, and harvesting trips were made annually to harvest the best nuts. Nuts were also harvested from other pines, depending upon what was available. There are a few Pinyon Pines left near Kwaaymii Point and you can access them via the walking trail behind the Visitor Center. There were many more Pinyons on the mountain before a fire in the 1940s burned most of them. Those behind the Visitor Center are the last to survive.

Pine needles are high in vitamin C and can be made into a refreshing tea. A strong infusion of pine needles in water can be used as a steam inhalation for respiratory congestion. Pine needles in the bath are said to relieve aches and pains. Michael Moore, a specialist on herbs of the west and southwest, reported that the inner bark and pitch are both useful as expectorants.

If you want to try a simple tea, take a handful of fresh pine needles and break them up. Place them in a pot with 2 cups of water. Bring to a boil, then turn off the heat and let it sit for about ten minutes. Strain and drink. You can also add honey. Enjoy!

*Joanne Odenthal, Cabin 505*

*Sources: Balls, Early Uses of California Plants; Foster & Hobbs, Western Medicinal Plants and Herbs; Moore, Medicinal Plants of the Mountain West.*



*Pine needles*



# MOUNT LAGUNA IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

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

[www.mtlaguna.org](http://www.mtlaguna.org)



## Water Maintenance

Please report any problems with the MLIA water system to  
Dan Fritz at (619) 405-1452.

## Have You Moved? Let Us Know!

Please send your address and email changes to Karen Motta at [rkmotta@cox.net](mailto:rkmotta@cox.net) or call (619) 977-2083.