

CABIN NEWSLETTER

FALL, 2023

MOUNT LAGUNA IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

VOL 21, No 87

Thank you, Frank!

**Acknowledging
Frank** as MLIA
President for the
last 10 years.

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Annual Meeting

**Don't Forget the
Annual Meeting!**

September 16th, 2023,
10:00 – 12:00pm
Red-Tailed Roost

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Save the Dates

**Fall Food Fest
October 21, 2023**

Watch for flyer!

**Fire Safe Council Meeting
Saturday, Oct. 21, 2023**
10:00 am Red-Tailed Roost

**MLIA Board Meeting
Saturday, Nov 4, 2023**
9:00 – 11:00 am



Notes from Frank

In December 2013 I contributed my first message to the MLIA Cabin Newsletter. Since then, many topics have been addressed:

. . . the Chariot Fire; the Mt Laguna Fire Safe Council; MLIA water system operation and status updates; water system infrastructure improvements: well head improvements, transfer pump, and pump house improvements, Los Huecos water tank, Ole water tank, pipes, valves, meters, and water tank maintenance, working with Dan Fritz, MLIA water system operator, every week.

. . . incorporation of the Shrine Tract cabins into the MLIA; passage of the Cabin Fee Act; NFH annual conferences; NFH Communication award; social events [Chile Fest, summer Picnic, Wine-A-Bit, Fall/October Fest].

. . . new cabin owners and older cabin turnovers; changes in Descanso District rangers and Recreation officer and Recreation Residence Permit administrators; cabin inspections; cabin permit compliance.

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. . . maintaining cabin defensible space, hazard tree removals; forest fuels reduction; septic tank replacement problems; cabin permit transfer problems.

. . . replacement of the Shrine Tract water system; water system testing and inspections; catastrophic water leaks; the weather; dogs; hunters; SDG&E power pole replacement.

. . . the Coronavirus pandemic; quarterly Board meetings; the MLIA annual meeting; Zoom meetings; Adopt-A-Road clean-ups; cabin access "roads"; change in oversight of the water system from the county to the State.

. . . this Newsletter; the MLIA website; the NFH Outstanding Leadership Award; the efforts made by the Executives and Directors to further this organization; changing Officers and Directors.

Now it is time for me to go and for another capable person to take my place as President of the MLIA.

See you on the mountain!!

Frank

Cabin 504, El Centro Tract

**P.S.**

Every item Frank mentions here involves hours and hours, if not days and days of work by Frank during the last ten years. We and our cabins are safer with water and more secure with our Forest Service partners for all his efforts.

Frank is my cabin neighbor and loves a cold beer, to tell stories, and play cornhole, even if he is a bit growly sometimes! He has been a remarkable president for MLIA and has worked very hard to make the mountain better for all of us.

Thank you, Frank!
Eugenie Newton, Cabin 505

Key Info about MLIA Annual Meeting

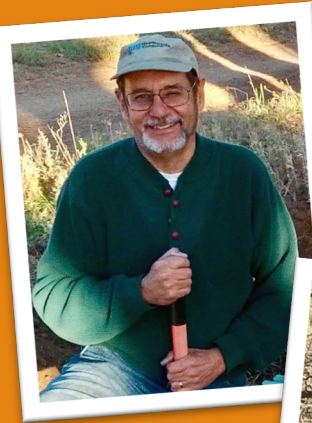
All cabin owners should have received a series of documents prior to the meeting—agenda, committee reports, candidate statements, ballot, etc.

Be sure to check your email. If you haven't received anything, please let me know at mliacabins@gmail.com. And please, cast your ballot as soon as possible.

We look forward to seeing you on the mountain!

Joanne Odenthal
MLIA Secretary

Frank Kalinoski, MLIA President



Frank, winner of the
Golden Megaphone
Award!
~ Kerry Anderson



I met Frank when we initially bought our cabin in Fall 2021. Dan and I were trying to obtain USFS permission for a septic system replacement. Frank will probably remember my phone call – I know I will. I was in tears (probably more than tears, possibly hysterical) and wanted to enlist the support of MLIA.

The Forest Service had just communicated that we look at septic replacement alternatives such as: a shared septic with a neighbor, an above ground storage system or a composting toilet. Frank openly listened, tried to calm me and then went to our defense with the USFS, possibly impacting his own relationship with the local Ranger, but he advocated for us.

Cabin owners, you had no greater advocate than Frank behind you in supporting the Cabin Program! I want to thank Frank for his endless support and years of service to MLIA. Many hours, many heartaches, many accomplishments, and all volunteer! Frank not only gives his time to the mountain, but he is active on national committees with the National Forest Homeowners Association.

~Bunny Krall



In 2013, disaster struck on the mountain. The **Chariot Fire** tore through the Shrine Camp, destroying nearly all of it. Ten USFS cabin owners lost their cabins permanently, with no option to rebuild. The remaining seven had their Use Permits suspended indefinitely. It was a terrible reminder of the power of nature and the power the USFS holds over all of us. From the day I first approached Frank suggesting the remaining cabin owners to join the MLIA, he has been a tireless and effective advocate as well as a trusted partner.

Ten years later we have new access, the mess has been cleaned up, the fire scar is fading, and we are testing a new, permanent source of water. Frank has been right there through all of the twists and turns. The Shrine Tract cabin owners are incredibly grateful for Frank's tireless efforts. Frank has set a high bar for future leaders of the MLIA with his broad vision of the strength and power of the MLIA.

~ Devin Briesse

New MLIA Bill Payment Process

MLIA is implementing electronic invoicing for fiscal year 2023-2024. This change will reduce time and costs to complete the billing process. The MLIA annual invoice will be sent to the cabin owner email on record for each cabin. Payment is due on or before 30 days from the invoice date to avoid late fees, and can be made electronically or by check.

To pay by check

If you don't want to use Zelle, pay with a check and send to:

MLIA
P.O. Box 91
Mount Laguna, CA 91948

To pay electronically

MLIA has set up Zelle at Chase Bank. Check if your financial institution supports Zelle at <https://www.zellepay.com/get-started> or call your bank/credit union. MLIA cannot accept PayPal, ApplePay, Venmo or individual credit or debit cards at this time. If your bank supports Zelle they should be able to walk you through the process.

How To pay online with Zelle:

- 1) Verify that your bank supports Zelle (See info above)
- 2) Go online to your bank or credit union and access your account
- 3) Look in the menu options for "Send Money with Zelle"
- 4) Access the Zelle menu. Click "Send Money"
- 5) Under "Select Recipient" enter "Mount Laguna Improvement Association"
- 6) Add MLIAcabins@gmail.com for phone number or email
- 7) You may be asked to verify your request through text or email (two step verification) to add a new payee
- 8) Click "Send and Invite" or "Send" (there may be slight differences for each bank/credit union)
- 9) A screen will appear that allows you to enter the amount of your bill. It should also show which account it's being sent from.
- 10) You have a chance to "Review" the transaction. If you have an opportunity for a memo, please add your cabin number and invoice number
- 11) Complete your transaction and the money is sent!



Lots of Rain and Cabin Access

Mt. Laguna received a whopping 7.11" of rain from Tropical Storm Hillary. It was a welcome reprieve leading up to fire season. It also suspends the prescribed burn program for a few weeks and provides our forest with much needed moisture. Our cabin access road maintenance and preparations were put to a true test by so much rain. Fortunately, the rain was steady over a long period of time rather than a prolonged downpour.

Culverts are particularly troublesome if not cleared prior to a weather event of this magnitude as reflected in the photo at the entrance to Burnt Rancheria. This culvert was plugged causing the water to undermine the entrance from Sunrise Hwy. Thank you to Lois and Don Hall, Cabin 563, for stepping up to mitigate the damage.

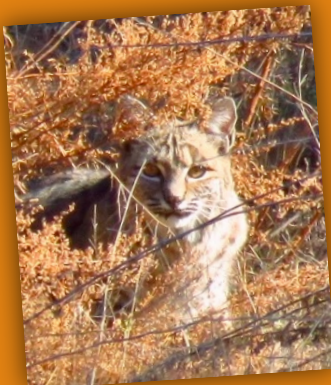


Lois and Don Hall

Consideration must always be given to local topography when using water bars, diverting flows to open space rather than down a road, and environmentally friendly materials that bond together to form a stable foundation for emergency class size vehicles as well as our own family vehicles. Hydrology is a very important aspect of life on our mountain. The MLIA Board will be reaching out to our Forest Service partners to develop a more comprehensive maintenance and erosion prevention program for the future.

Thanks to all of you that have volunteered and contributed to access maintenance in the past and those that will in the future.

*Carl Sessions, VP-MLIA
(619) 571-2284*



Cabin neighbors





Mechelle Perrott and Per Martin, Cabin 607

Mechelle and Per enjoy hikes in the forest, especially near Jeffrey Pines with that wonderful vanilla smell. Mechelle works as a teacher and Per as a software developer. Per is also a member of the San Diego Astronomy Association. He uses the Tierra Del Sol

location for dark sky viewing, and attends the Julian Starfest. Per has been helping with the endurance running races, as HAM radio operator, in the Mt Laguna and Cuyamaca areas.

Mechelle grew up in Ohio with frequent visits to relatives in rural Pennsylvania surrounded by woods and wildlife. Her grandfather had a hunting cabin, and some uncles collected Native American artifacts found in the woods. Mechelle and Per often rent a cabin in Idyllwild during vacations. They wanted their own forest cabin and searched the Julian area for a place but did not find anything. Now they have a cabin home in Mt. Laguna and are extremely happy to be here.

Bunny Krall

STAYING FIRE SAFE

**The next MLFSC meeting is scheduled for
Saturday, October 21st at 10:00am
at the Red-Tailed Roost.**

An invitation will be emailed prior to this meeting and we will be using the agenda from the August 19th meeting. Our meetings will conclude with the November 18th meeting, and elections will be held at this meeting. If you are interested in a Board position or Director position, please contact me at the email below.

Forest Service and CalFire re-inspections have been completed. If you are not in compliance with your defensible space clearing, please do so as fast as possible. This helps to reduce the wildfire fuels and risk in our beautiful forest.

The Forest Service and AT&T are currently working on identification and removal of hazardous trees around the communication lines. AT&T is also in the process to survey and remove the old and unused wood poles that carry their lines. They plan to attach their lines to the SDG&E's steel power poles. Duration and completion of the work is unknown.

The Forest Service plans to station a group of firefighters at the old CalFire station as a Fuels Reduction and Management team for our area all year round. More information and details will be announced by the Forest Service as the plan develops.

Doug Reed

See more Fire Safe news on page 7

CLEAN-UP TO STAY FIRE SAFE

Thanks to our new Battalion Fire Chief, Troy Bell, Camp Ole Captain Billy Simmons and the whole Camp Ole crew for setting up the community only brush pile and dumpster site at the Old Air Force Station. It is open for our use 7 days a week from 8:00am to 6:00pm only. We need to follow the rules so we don't lose usage of the site.

Please follow these rules when using the dumpster and brush pile.

1. Our lock has yellow tape and the combination is 1225.
2. Always close and lock the gate behind you when you enter and lock the gate when you leave.
3. We are only allowed to use the designated brush pile and dumpster, no other areas.
4. The dumpster is for leaves, grass/weed cuttings, pine needles and pine cones only. **No dirt, rocks or bags allowed.** Unload to the back and up to the top edge of the dumpster first. Please close the doors after unloading.
5. The brush pile is for native shrubs, brush and branches up to a maximum of 6" in diameter only, and only from the Mt. Laguna community. Unload toward the back of the brush pile first.
6. Please keep the site clean of trash. Construction debris is not allowed at this site.
7. This site is for Mt Laguna community members only, no contractors allowed.
8. Follow the posted signs to and from the brush pile/dumpster only and drive slowly while at this site.

GOT HOURS?

Please email your volunteer hours for your home defensible space clean-up to mountlagunasafe@gmail.com.

These hours are now required to submit for SDRFF/SDG&E Grant reporting records.

Equipment Available for Clean-up

MLFSC has the following equipment available for use by our community members.

1. Gas powered weed whackers for \$20/1 or 2 days.
2. Gas powered trimmer and pole saw for \$20/1 day.
3. Gas powered wood splitter for \$30/1 day.

Please contact one of our equipment managers, Jack Splinter @ 858-472-4368 or Richard Willis @ 619-990-1404, for availability and to schedule pick-up and return of the equipment.

Thank you to members who have donated to the MLFSC. If you wish to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Fire Safe Council, please mail your check to:

Mt. Laguna Fire Safe Council, PO Box 292, Mount Laguna, CA 91948.

Thanks to the Mount Laguna Community, US Forest Service, CalFire and the MLIA for continued support of the Fire Safe Council.

Doug Reed, MLFSC President
ohio0411@hotmail.com

National Forest Homeowners Association

Monies Coming Back to Our Forest!

Bunny Krall

Solving Septic System Issues

Historically, NFH and cabin owners were instrumental in drafting the Cabin Fee Act (CFA) that became law in December 2014. The CFA limits the increase in annual national fees and allows you to more easily afford to be a cabin owner.

As part of the Cabin Fee Act, starting in 2025, these fees are slated to go back to the forest to administer the recreational residence program and other recreation programs carried out on National Forest System lands. Up until now, cabin fees paid to USFS went into the general governmental fund. NFH submitted a proposal, recommending how these monies (retained funds) may be distributed and used by the Forest Service. You can find out more at: <https://www.nationalforesthowners.org/page/Advocacy>.

MLIA discussed the fund allocation proposal at the August Board meeting. Attendees suggested ideas about how the funds could be allocated including: cabin access improvements and maintenance, road and trail access, hazard tree removal, plans to clear non-compliant lots, maintenance and fire suppression projects, water system maintenance and improvement.

MLIA leadership is following up with Cleveland National Forest (CNF) Leadership regarding our recommendations for these funds.

Need a new tank or leach field? System backing up?

First, call a septic company to troubleshoot the problem. It may simply be a clog in the line or a need to pump your tank. Septic companies can send a camera down the pipes and determine blockage locations and/or septic tank location.

If a new septic system (tank and/or leach field), is needed, a USFS Septic Request Form must be completed. The form details what proposal information is required before it is sent to Andrew Cheskaty, Assistant Permit Administrator. The proposal form must be fully completed; if information is missing the request will not be considered.

The proposal should include: reason system needs repair/replacement, scaled diagram of cabin and surrounding area (cabin, outbuildings, driveways, location of old septic tank and leach field) and contractor's name. The contractor needs to provide information about: new septic tank and/or leach field location and associated pipes, size and type of septic tank and leach lines, action regarding old septic system, (i.e. removal or left in place and crushed), action regarding displaced soil, equipment to be used, and how equipment will access the site.

Email Andrew Cheskaty, for the Septic Request Form (Andrew.cheskaty@usda.gov.) Andrew will *be the point of contact for your proposal* and process your request through the USFS system.

If you have any questions about the Recreation Residence fund allocation proposal or want some assistance with the Septic Request form or process, please contact Bunny Krall at ekrall415@cox.net or (858) 663-4390.



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

mtlaguna.org

Thank you to
Nola Houston, Karen Motta, and all our cabin
photographers for sharing their work for
us to enjoy.

Water Maintenance Issues?

Report immediately to
Dan Fritz
at (619) 405-1452

Keep MLIA Up-to-Date!

Send your contact changes
to

Joanne Odenthal at
mliacabins@gmail.com

Eugenie Newton, Editor
evn8@san.rr.com