



CABIN NEWSLETTER

MOUNT LAGUNA IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

VOL 22 ~ NO 92

The main players in water service on Mt. Laguna in 1975 were the Forest Service, the Mt. Laguna Water Co. (chartered by Clay Stuart), the Shrine Camp, the USAF, and Holmes Ranch (40 acres of private land with a well just north of cabin 509). MLIA was being sustained by water from the Forest Service, Clay Stuart and Holmes. This was true through the 1960s. At the 1969 Annual Meeting cabin owners approved a one-time special assessment of \$500 per cabin to drill a well and lay pipeline to a storage tank.

WHO'S GOT THE WATER? 1975 - PRESENT

1975 was an important year for cabins on Mt. Laguna. It was the first year that we had a good, consistent independent source of water. The Ole tank (420,000 gallons) was put in place in 1970, the same year that a well was drilled to provide the cabins with their own water source. That well

Continued page 2

~ NOMINATING COMMITTEE OUTREACH ~

The MLIA board has two open board positions. Our Nominating Committee, comprised of three existing board members, is actively seeking volunteers to fill the remaining terms of two open seats until the October, 2025 Annual meeting. At that time, you would submit your interest in a full two-year term to our general membership during that election cycle. You would join us in the operation, maintenance, and future growth of our community water infrastructure on Mount Laguna.

We are a water utility and we are seeking candidates with backgrounds in plumbing, water systems maintenance, management, engineering and infrastructure repair/replace projects. It is not imperative that a candidate has these exact skill sets. We additionally seek any combination of the following: leadership qualities, diverse office skills, information technology background, accounting, and, above all, a **willingness to serve**.

We are an all-volunteer organization dedicated to ensuring clean, consistent water to our cabin community for today and the future. Please join us by sharing your time, knowledge, and friendship with those of us that are passionate about the community water mission. For additional details and to submit a Candidate Statement. contact:

Carl Sessions, Nominating Chair, santeeduo@cox.net
or (619) 571-2284, Meg Moore, megamodsd@gmail.com, or
Elizabeth Dunn, infoforelizababeth@gmail.com.

Water, continued from page 1

(Well #1) did not have sufficient flow to supply the cabins without supplementation from the Forest Service, the Stuart water company, and Holmes Ranch.

Bids went out in 1972 to secure a contractor to drill a second well. The Los Huecos tank was authorized in 1974 and held 126,000 gallons. From the Los Huecos tank, water is distributed to the Los Huecos and Laguna cabin tracts, as well as sent downhill to the pumphouse to be transferred to the Ole tank.

The pump on Well #1 failed in 1974. The site for Well #2 was permitted by the Forest Service in February of 1975 and drilled the same year by Butler Drilling Co. of Alpine. The well bored 8" through solid and fractured granite to 656 feet. Initial standing water level was at 240 feet. A submersible pump was installed in November, 1975 by Webb Pump & Supply of Escondido. This well has been our source of water since then. The submersible pump has been replaced as needed throughout the year, (1983, 1992, 1998, 2002, and 2019) with an average life span of 9 years.

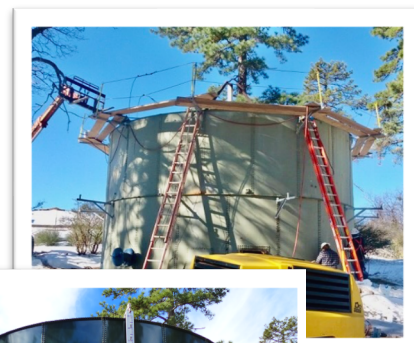
In 1989 the Mount Laguna Improvement Association incorporated as a 501c12, which is a nonprofit mutual benefit association. This designation is used for organizations such as small water companies and HOAs where the membership comes together to provide services for "mutual benefit" of the members. MLIA incorporated with the express purpose of improving "conditions of cabin sites in the Laguna Mountain Recreation Area of the Cleveland National Forest, State of California, by installing and operating water systems." [Articles of Incorporation, California Secretary of State, 1989]

The well, wellhead, pump house, and tanks have all needed maintenance over the years. In June of 2006, the Ole tank was reconditioned at a total cost of \$85,700. The Los Huecos tank was found to need either rehabilitation in 2014. In September of 2015 the MLIA membership approved the replacement of the Los Huecos tank at a cost of \$85,000, with final cost at \$91,878. The new Los Huecos tank was erected in the winter of 2016.

The well head and the pumphouse have also needed work over the years. The well enclosure had become seriously rotted, and was redesigned and replaced in 2014 with Forest Service approval. The cost was minimal so the expense (\$8195) was covered within the regular budget. The pump house transfer was also replaced in 2013 to allow for faster transfer of water up to Ole.

MLIA now has a storage tank at Los Huecos and a transfer pump that will last years. The well pump will need periodic replacement due to wear and tear. The well head enclosure is good and stable.

Old Los Huecos tank



Refurbished Los Huecos tank



New wellhead housing

The final, major infrastructure piece is the Ole reservoir tank. Stay tuned for additional information and updates in separate, email communications directly from your MLIA Board on this and other important future projects.

Joanne Odenthal, Cabin 505

Source: Kalinoski, Frank (2023) Mount Laguna Improvement Association Water System Infrastructure paper prepared for MLIA.

April 12th - Chili Social

May 3rd - MLIA Board meeting

July 19th - Wine-A-Bit & Craft Beer Social

August 2nd - MLIA Board meeting

October 11th -

MLIA Annual meeting

BBQ after the Annual Meeting

November 1st - MLIA Board meeting

2025 DATES TO REMEMBER

DIRECTORS STEPPING UP

Please extend a big round of applause to current board members, Per Martin and Daniel Morris, for stepping up in a big way to cover the duties of Communications Director and Treasurer.

Per has dived into our website and will keep it current, fresh, and up to date with today's data and information. He is also taking on member communication in a much broader form. He will be in charge of sharing timely messages from our Board to cabin members, then distributing questions and concerns from those members to the appropriate Board member for response and reply. Per's broad knowledge of systems and electronics have already proved to be of great benefit to the position.

Daniel has enthusiastically volunteered to join the executive team working hand in hand with our new bookkeeper in the administration of MLIA treasurer duties. He has financial experience as a small business owner and was a previous Board member of the Shrine Tract community. Daniel will be compiling data from our bookkeeper to share with MLIA board as needed. Daniel will be an important resource as we move forward with important upcoming infrastructure projects.

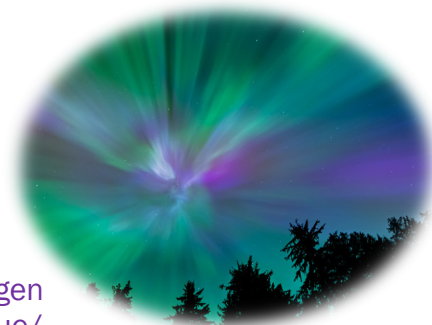
MLIA Board

CAN AN AURORA BE SEEN FROM MT. LAGUNA?

Per Martin, Cabin 607

Auroras have been in the news lately as our sun is in a period of high sunspot activity, solar flares, and geomagnetic storms. Typically, the aurora can only be seen from northern states and Canada. But whenever there is a very strong geomagnetic storm and a clear night sky, the highest portion of the aurora can be seen from Mt Laguna (looking North), usually only through a long exposure photo or perhaps through the dark-adapted eyes of a young person.

The highest parts of the aurora (> 180 miles altitude) are the blue/violet of hydrogen and helium and the red from oxygen and nitrogen. (The blue/violet range of the aurora is too dim to be seen.) The yellow/greens, blues, deep reds and blue/violets from the lower parts of the atmosphere normally seen in pictures from Alaska or Norway are not visible here in southern California.



There are a few ways to find out when the aurora might be visible. The first is if there is a continuous flow of traffic into the Mt Laguna area at night as the curious seek a dark location to observe.

continued on page 4 **3**

GOOD TO KNOW!

*Bunny Krall
MLIA Liaison to NFH*

Our MLIA annual fee includes membership for each cabin permit holder in the National Forest Homeowners (NFH). NFH is the cabin owner's voice in Washington, DC and is an excellent resource for cabin owners. The organization has a paid lobbyist that monitors activities and legislation impacting the cabin program.

Cabin owners can take advantage of all NFH offers by:

- Staying in touch through the NFH website: nationalforesthomeowners.org
- Attending the Annual Conference to network with cabin owners from across California and the US. The 2025 NFH Conference is in Pasadena, California on May 2-3. More information and registration will be posted on the NFH Website soon.
- Access fire Insurance Information for your cabin.
- Pose questions to NFH leadership and cabin owners across the nation through the "Ask the Community" forum.

Forest Service Payment Timing

Wondering why you received your FS fee invoice later than usual? The Forest Service is doing this to ensure that payments made for the 2025 invoices are part of the new 2025 Fee Retention Funds to be used in the Recreation Residence Program. The fees have a due date February 1, 2025.

For invoice questions call the Forest Service billing department at (202) 205-1144.

Also, good to know ~

Cabin fees are being distributed back to the national forests because of NFH's effort 10 years ago. Our NFH reps worked diligently with Congress on the Cabin Fee Fairness Act in 2013-14 to have this provision and others, including capping how much the Forest Service can raise our yearly fees.

It was a long fight. Our NFH dues and our letters to Congress supported NFH leaders to get this done. Many new Mt. Laguna cabin owners are not aware of that history but are benefiting today because of those efforts.

Eugenie Newton, Cabin 505

Thank you, Mary Ladewig and Laura Bier

... for your many contributions to MLIA. Mary and Laura recently left their MLIA board positions in the last couple of months. Mary served as Treasurer and Laura as Communications Director while on the Board. Each of them made significant contributions to our organization bringing their expertise and good judgment in upgrading several key functions.

As Treasurer Mary converted MLIA to online billing and bill payment. She completely revised and updated the MLIA roster. That might not sound like much but it was a complicated task with 265 cabins and various owners requiring an up-to-date and current interface with the USFS and the National Forest Homeowners. Mary also brought a financial planning suite to managing MLIA finances and records.

Laura shared her professional communication expertise in revamping our mtlaguna.org website

making it work across multiple device platforms. She also upgraded MLIA's email and electronic communication capabilities. Cabin owners can now easily update their contact information and tailor email preferences.

Eugenie Newton, Cabin 505

Aurora's, *continued*

Or you could visit these websites. When the KP index reaches 9, the aurora may be visible here with a long exposure camera photo.

<https://www.swpc.noaa.gov/products/planetary-k-index>.

<https://www.spaceweatherlive.com/en/auroral-activity/kp-index>, <https://www.solarham.com/>

STAY SAFE OUT THERE !

Fire Safe Council Officers

The MLFSC annual elections were held at the November 16, 2024 meeting. The following are the results of this election and the Board and Directors from now until the November 2025 elections.

President: Doug Reed

Vice President: Joe Cochran

Treasurer: Tom McNicol

Secretary – Meg Moore

Directors: Mike Jacobs,

Tina Pivonka, Richard Willis and Dan Krall.

Congratulations to all of you and Thanks for your commitment and hard work.

Greater Mt Laguna Last Chance Survival Simulation Workshop

The Fire Safe Council of San Diego County will be hosting the “Greater Mt Laguna Last Chance Survival Simulation Workshop” on March 15, 2025 from 9am to 3:30pm at the Roost. Please see flyer on page 7 for registration and information. More details to be emailed to all.

Thanks to Jay Moser and Dan Krall for making this happen!

Dumpsters

The last dumpster of the year was removed on December 18th. Thanks to all who filled the dumpsters and helped to reduce the amount of wildfire fuels in our community.

The brush pile at the Old Air Force Station has [NEW hours of operation, 8:00am to 4:30pm.](#) Our access to the brush pile is subject to [closure](#) due to bad



weather and/or bad road conditions. Please follow the rules for using the brush pile and keep this area clean.

Thank you to the Forest Service for providing the space for our brush pile and dumpster.

Winter Safety Checks

During this winter, it is a good time to check your heater and fireplace flues and dampers for proper operation. Be sure and they are free of any obstructions and soot build-up.

Test all smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. Replace the batteries if they are older than one year. Please check your detector manual for requirements to replace batteries.

Power Shutoff Help

As a reminder, during a public Safety Power Shutoff, or emergency evacuation of our community SDG&E will set-up power Community Resource Centers (CRC) or an emergency evacuation of our community. Check the SDG&E website for

exact locations of these charging stations.

The SDG&E website (SDGE.com) shows CRC locations, outage maps, weather reports, area cameras and power shutdown status.

Be sure to sign up for weather and power outage warnings and alerts to your cell phone and email through your SDG&E online account.

Thank you for donating!

Thank you to all those who made donations to the MLFSC this year. This money will help to support our operations and expenses.

Equipment

Please continue to contact our Equipment Managers, Richard Willis (619-990-1404) or Jack Splinter (858-472-4368), to schedule your usage of the MLFSC equipment.

Fire Safe Council Meeting

Our next MLFSC meeting will be on April 19, 2025, 10:00 am at the Roost. We will send out an email with more details.

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

Have a wonderful and safe winter,
Doug Reed,
President MLFSC
ohio0411@hotmail.com

Restoring and Strengthening Cabin Owners Rights

The national cabin community has suffered over 500 cabins lost to wildfire and other disasters in the last six years. Forest Service (FS) current policies and practices have made the recovery and rebuilding process very challenging for replacing cabins.

Rebuilding Decisions

Forest Service policy requires a rebuild decision, but does not specify a timeline for making the decision if your cabin is destroyed. *The CPRA would set a firm 12-month requirement for such a decision.*

In addition, current FS practice does not allow an appeal of an unfavorable rebuild decision.

The CPRA guarantees the right to appeal such decisions.

Surviving Improvements

Currently, the Forest Service does not allow the sale of other surviving improvements (septic systems, water systems, docks, etc.) following cabin destruction by wildfire or other disasters. For cabin owners who do not have the means or desire to rebuild a cabin, this prevents them from selling these surviving improvements to another party willing to invest in constructing a replacement cabin.

The CPRA requires the FS to allow the sale of

these privately owned improvements, including any prorated share of a community improvement to another party willing to meet FS requirements for replacing the cabin.

In-lieu lot

Forest Service policy allows but does not require the offer an in-lieu (alternative) lot if your cabin is destroyed and your lot is determined to be unsafe or unsuitable to build on.

The CPRA would require such an offer and include developing a new lot if an existing lot was not available.

Fee Adjustments

The 2015 Cabin Fee Act (CFA) required the Forest Service to implement a policy for temporarily waiving or reducing special use fees if access to and occupancy of your cabin is impaired for reasons outside the control of the permit holder. The recently published FS policy limits the application of a fee adjustment to a very limited set of circumstances.

The CPRA would require the policy to apply to all reasons outside the control of the permit holder.

For more information, please reference [Restoring Permit Holder Rights](#).

*Desiree La Maggiore
Field Director, [National Forest Homeowners](#)
Board member and past President,
Salt Creek Summer Homesites, Shasta-Trinity NF*





LAST CHANCE SURVIVAL SIMULATION WORKSHOP

GREATER MT. LAGUNA, PINE VALLEY, AND DESCANSO

The Last Chance Survival Simulation Workshop was developed to empower residents in high-risk, wildfire prone communities, to prepare for evacuation and potential wildfire entrapments. Each year, it becomes more apparent that there is a need to enhance wildfire safety and evasion training for at-risk communities.



About the training:

- Free to local residents, this one day, in-depth course covers recognition primed decision-making, open-source fire intelligence, contingency planning, and other practices that may enhance the likelihood of surviving a fire entrapment scenario.
- This course expands upon "Ready Set Go", a widely accepted statewide standard for wildfire preparation.
- In the afternoon, we'll take the case studies, planning models, and other information covered, and apply it to Warner Springs' unique landscape and challenges by simulating an evacuation and visiting "Temporary Refuge Areas".

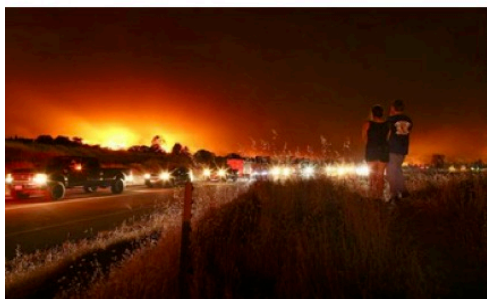
Workshop Logistics:

When: March 15th, 2025

Time: Registration begins at 8:30am. The workshop will run from 9am-3pm.

Location:

- Refreshments and lunch will be provided.
- [Register for this free workshop on our website here.](#)
- For more information, or support signing up, please contact Morgan Dioli at the FSCSDC - morgan.dioli@rcdsandiego.org or 619-562-0096.



This workshop is hosted by the Mt. Laguna Fire Safe Council & administered by the Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County, in partnership with the Fire Safe Council of San Diego County. Special recognition is given to the workshops originators. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.



MOUNT LAGUNA IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION



MOUNT LAGUNA IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION WEBSITE
MTLAGUNA.ORG

Keep MLIA Up-to-Date!

Have you moved in the last year? Changed phones or emergency contacts?

Use the "update preferences" link at the bottom of any MLIA email to make changes!

Water Maintenance Issues?

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

Eugenie Newton, Editor
evnewton8@gmail.com