

# NEWSLETTER



## DEL CERRO — A WINTER WONDERLAND!

The Holiday party was the usual warm, convivial gathering. You “shoulda’ been there.” The Villardi’s drive, covered with snow, became a mini-winter resort. Sleds were available and hay bales at the foot of the slope prevented any too adventurous youngsters from zooming on down Crestwind. Adults looked on enviously and (almost all) refused the temptation to revert to childhood.

Adding elegance to the party was Brian Seo who moved among the guests playing carols on his violin. This talented 8 year old has been studying for 2 years with a prominent local musician, Josh Brumm. At age three, Brian announced to his parents, David and Cindy, that he wanted to play the violin. And now he does, for which we all are grateful.

The festivities continued on New Year’s Day when Villardi’s Resort opened again for another day of sledding. The children (and some parents) were competing to see who could hit the hay bales the hardest. Meanwhile, the rest of us

enjoyed Gigi’s homemade chili and a table filled with other treats and goodies...not to mention cider, German beer, and even champagne.

The backdrop for the event was a silhouette of Catalina, lighted by the world’s most beautiful sunset, compliments of Tom and Gigi Villardi!

## NEW NEIGHBORS

*Michele and Derek Dee* are newcomers on Amber Sky. They’re enthusiastic about “friendly” Del Cerro. Let’s continue to reinforce that impression.

They have three youngsters: Zeke, five, in Country Day School, David Blake, in United Methodist preschool and Alli Marie, who’s a year old. No pets yet, but Michele reports that Derek would like to add a dog to the household. He’ll find we’re also an animal friendly neighborhood!

## NATURE PRESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Most of you will recall that a joint City of RPV - PVP Land Conservancy committee known as the PUMP (Public Use Master Plan) Committee has been tasked with developing a plan to maintain and manage the use of the Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve. The plan being developed by the Committee includes recommendations on the trails that will be maintained, the acceptable uses of the trails, and appropriate signage, educational materials, and amenities to support those uses. The PUMP Committee’s recommendations will be reviewed and approved by the City Council before implementation.

Development and implementation of this plan is one of the commitments that the City and Land Conservancy made to the various local,

state and federal agencies that allocated funds to enable the City to purchase the open space adjacent to Del Cerro. The public funds (which covered approximately three-quarters of the total purchase price) were set aside for the primary purpose of creating nature preserves to protect and restore the native habitats of endangered and threatened wildlife species.

The PUMP Committee's task is a challenging one that requires protection of the native habitats of endangered and threatened species that live in the preserve, while allowing passive recreational use (hiking, non-motorized biking, and equestrian activities) in a manner that does not harm the protected species or their habitats. As you can imagine, the decision process involves a delicate balancing of many competing interests and a strong spirit of compromise to succeed.

The Committee is currently finalizing its recommendations on trails and trail uses. Each existing trail has been reviewed with respect to its impact on native habitats and wildlife corridors, each trail's connectivity to other trails, whether a trail unnecessarily duplicates another trail's path, and which use or uses a trail can safely accommodate.

The Committee's recommendations would reduce the trail network in the Canyons Ecological Reserve section of the PB Nature Preserve by approximately 50%. (The Canyons ER is the name of the 400+ acres adjacent to Del Cerro that was acquired in 2005.) Trails in the other 850 acres of the Preserve will be reduced by 22%, resulting in an overall reduction of 33% of the trails in the Preserve's total 1,300 acres. Use of each remaining trail has been designated as pedestrian only, bicycle only, pedestrian/equestrian, pedestrian/bicycle, or multi-purpose (pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian), based primarily on safety considerations.

The trail recommendations will be presented to the City Council in a public workshop scheduled on Saturday, February 23 at 9:30 am at the Point Vicente Interpretive Center. All

interested residents are encouraged to participate and to provide feedback on the recommendations to the Council and the Committee. After the City Council approves the plan, it will be implemented. Thereafter, it will be reviewed periodically and updated or modified, as appropriate, when conditions or circumstances change.

After the workshop, the PUMP Committee will review trail amenities, including parking, trailhead features, signage, and vista points, and other uses such as the archery range and paragliding.

#### TEMPORARY BAN ON USE OF LOCAL TRAILS

Late last year, the RPV City Council placed a temporary ban on the use of most of the trails in the Canyons Ecological Reserve (the area directly below Del Cerro adjacent to Amber Sky homes). Pedestrian, bike and horse travel is still allowed on Burma Road (the main trail that begins at the Crenshaw extension, also known as Dirt Crenshaw) and 2 connecting fire roads, but not on most of the other trails that connect to the main road. The native growth and habitat in that area have sustained significant damage in the last couple of years due to the extremely dry weather, general increased use of the trails, and misuse of the trails by some folks. While most trail users are careful not to cause damage, some thrill-seeking "extreme" bikers, and undoubtedly some careless hikers and horse riders, have created some new trails without regard to the damage that their actions cause.

City staff members have placed signs designating which areas are "off-limits." The Lomita deputy sheriffs are enforcing the restrictions. The ban will likely be in place for a substantial period of time to allow the area to recover.

Please heed the signs. The area needs a "time-out" to recover from the recent damage. This is also a good opportunity for all of us to remind ourselves that we all can probably be

better stewards of the open space. Stay on established trails, slow down and watch carefully for oncoming traffic as you pass around curves in the trail where visibility is limited, don't litter the area, keep your dogs on leashes, pick up after your dogs, ... and politely remind others to do the same, when needed.

#### NATURE PRESERVE DONOR RECOGNITION SITE AT DEL CERRO

You may recall from earlier newsletters and other neighborhood notices that the Land Conservancy is developing plans for a donor recognition site at Del Cerro Park to recognize private donors who assisted in the City's acquisition efforts for the creation of the Portuguese Bend Nature Preserve. The site was conceptually approved by the City Council in early 2005.

Following are the design parameters for the site:

- ★ An overlook will be constructed at the southern edge of the park (toward the ocean, overlooking Portuguese Bend), consisting of donor recognition signs, bench seating, and landscaping.
  - ★ The design of the site will utilize natural materials consisting of local stone and will respect the surrounding terrain by maintaining views and minimizing grading.
  - ★ A pedestrian trail made of decomposed granite will connect the existing parking lot with the proposed overlook. The pathways to the site are intended to remain a reasonable distance from adjacent homes to minimize possible intrusiveness. Additional foliage will be planted between the paths and the adjacent homes to further protect the residents' privacy.
  - ★ A few stone-clad benches will be placed along the proposed trail route and at the site to provide limited seating.
  - ★ An "entry welcome" sign and a donor recognition sign are planned.
- ★ Bench and sign heights will be kept very low to blend with the ambience of the park and not interfere with other park activities. (Currently the benches are planned to be 18"-24" in height, and the signs are planned to be approximately 30" in height.)
  - ★ The overlook will be kept a safe distance from other authorized park activities, such as the model airplane flying.
  - ★ No additional lighting is contemplated, as that might bother adjacent residents and encourage nighttime use of the park (which is currently prohibited).

Drawings of the proposed design can be viewed on the City's website at <http://www.palosverdes.com/rpv/planning/planning-zoning/RPV-Vision-Plan.cfm>. Scroll down past headings for Workshop No. 1, No. 2, and No. 3. Copies of the design can also be reviewed at the Planning Department at the RPV City Hall.

The City staff and Land Conservancy plan to review the design with neighbors and obtain additional feedback from them in the near future. The design will subsequently be presented to the City Council for review and approval. Del Cerro residents will be notified of the dates for those events when they are scheduled.

#### DEL CERRO EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANNING

We are very pleased with the support we have received from residents in beginning the development of a Del Cerro Emergency Plan. So far, 90 families have completed Household Disaster Preparedness Survey forms (78% of Del Cerro residents). We believe we are establishing a strong foundation of support for a successful program. A special thanks to all who have agreed to participate and especially to those who have helped us collect the necessary information.

If any residents would like to participate but have not completed the survey form, you may obtain a copy from Kathy & Al Edgerton (310-544-7390 or [alnkathye@msn.com](mailto:alnkathye@msn.com)).

A summary of our results was recently submitted to the RPV Neighborhood Watch folks, and "Help/OK" signs were ordered for all who have elected to participate. (Following a disaster, these signs are to be placed prominently near the front door to indicate whether a family needs assistance when neighborhood assessment begins.) When we receive the signs, we will ask our block leadership team to distribute them to residents.

We are currently completing spreadsheets of neighborhood resources, and will review each block with its block leadership group to address any areas needing clarification and to seek approaches to any resource shortfalls that may come to light.

We know that our neighborhood is a little short on residents who have received CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) and amateur radio training. CERT training includes instruction in fire suppression, search & rescue, first aid, CPR, and triage. Amateur radio training can include classes in both basic ham radio operation and communication with the RPV Emergency Communication Center at City Hall following a disaster. If you would like to take classes in either subject, please let Kathy & Al know. They will be glad to arrange them for you.

Now is also a good time to review the supplies your family might need in an emergency. A comprehensive disaster supply list recommended by the American Red Cross can be obtained from the RPV website at [http://www.palosverdes.com/rpv/emergency\\_preparedness](http://www.palosverdes.com/rpv/emergency_preparedness).

#### ENTRY SIGN UPDATE

We received Planning Commission approval to build a new sign at the Del Cerro entry in late January. You will recall that we planned to accomplish the building of the sign over 2

beautification grant cycles to maximize the amount of funding from the city and to minimize the use of HOA funds. The grant funds available each year without HOA matching funds is \$3,000.

The design selected by our residents consists of a low monument base clad with natural stone and a sandblasted wood sign surrounded by distressed wood beams on top of the base.

We will shortly finalize the work which can be accomplished with this year's funding. We will build the monument base for the sign this year. If there is a portion of the funds left, we will consider buying the stone veneer for the base, and possibly applying the stone to the base. The sign itself will be purchased using funds from next year's grant cycle. Our existing sign will be temporarily affixed to the new base until the new permanent sign is installed.

You probably recall that a single new sign on the Barnett's side of the entrance will replace both of the existing signs. The City no longer allows developments to have 2 entrance signs.

#### OF THE HILL...

##### *What's the Matter with You!*

Those of you who drive down Oceanaire as though it's your private Indy 500 are putting your neighbors in real jeopardy.

Those of us on the curve of that hill must exit blind driveways and have too often narrowly missed being struck by speeders who ignore the 25 mph limit. On some occasions drivers are so close to the curb that even though we may pull out gradually, we're nearly "creamed" by our unheeding neighbors.

Most of you are aware of this problem and proceed cautiously. We are grateful to you. Admittedly, sometimes it's the "visiting" truck or pickup. But more often it's the same drivers who are consistently heedless and live above the curve of Oceanaire.

*Guest Editorial*

## RPV MAILING LIST

Did you know that you can sign up to receive periodic messages from our City staff on current issues and activities in RPV? The City will send you information on topics of your choosing via confidential e-mail lists. There are over 30 topics from which you may select, such as pending development projects, various city committee activities, recreational activities, RPV-TV weekly schedule, and "Breaking News." We have found the "Breaking News" items to be especially helpful. Those notices have recently covered topics such as the status of the recent trash collectors' strike, traffic problems in the City due to construction, power outages, road repair, the temporary ban on local trail use, etc. You may subscribe by visiting the RPV website at <http://palosverdes.com/rpv/listserver/index.cfm>. You can also easily add or delete any subscription if you find that you need different or less information.

## SKUNK NEUTRALIZER RECIPE

Has your pet Fido or Fluffy ever tangled with a skunk? If so, you probably won't forget about it any time soon. You might also want to file the following recipe for eradicating the skunk smell for future reference. It appeared in an article in the Los Angeles Times on January 27 and was developed by a materials engineer in Illinois several years ago. The article recommends that you wear latex gloves when applying the mixture.

Mix 1 quart of hydrogen peroxide (3% strength), ¼ cup of baking soda, and 1 or 2 teaspoons of liquid soap (Softsoap or Ivory work well). Mix ingredients just before using or the concoction will lose its effectiveness. (And it apparently produces a gas that could make a closed container explode if kept on a shelf.) Apply to the pet, being careful to avoid the eyes. Apply with an old washcloth to area around the eyes. Massage the solution into the fur. Leave on coat for about 5 minutes. Rinse with warm water.

According to the newspaper article, the skunk smell should be completely or almost

gone. The process can be repeated if the smell persists. The process works by chemically breaking down the pungent compounds in skunk spray. The end product of the process is a sodium salt.

The mixture is safe for dogs and cats if used carefully. The hydrogen peroxide may slightly lighten the color of your pet's fur, but it won't harm it. Apparently, this process is reported to yield much better results than the more conventional approaches using lemon juice or tomato juice.

If your pet manages to touch washable fabrics in the house before you have a chance to clean it, add a scoop of OxiClean stain remover to the load of laundry for fresh-smelling results. OxiClean also contains a hydrogen peroxide-like compound.

And you thought this newsletter never has any practical information in it!

## NEW WASTE MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE

Tuesday: Trash & Recycle Materials

Friday: Trash & Green Waste

As a courtesy to the neighborhood, please remove trash containers from the street as soon as possible after pickup and store them in a location not visible from the street.

We appreciate your cooperation...

## DOGS WILL BE DOGS...

It has been called to the Board's attention that one or two dog owners are not taking the responsibility for cleanup after their pets and are therefore damaging neighbors lawns.

Please don't leave anything behind when walking your dog!

Many thanks.

## HOA BUDGET REPORT

We have just completed the seventh month of our current fiscal year and we have concerns about the level of resident participation. You may recall that our budget was developed assuming that 100 of our 120 property owners or residents would pay the

requested dues of \$50 per household. (We have averaged 105 participants over the last 8 years since the HOA was reactivated, with the lowest previous total being 101.) So far, we have received 91 dues payments, so we are still somewhat short of our planned revenue of \$5,000.

We expect to spend almost \$5,000, eighty percent (over \$4,000) of which is used to maintain the entry landscaping. The feedback from our resident survey a couple of years ago indicated that most residents felt that improvements to the look of the entry should be the highest priority of the HOA. Since then, substantial funds and time have been invested in that effort. The current spending level is needed to maintain that investment. Most of the rest of the budget was spent early in the fiscal year on the summer picnic.

If we do not receive any additional payments, we will need to dip into our reserves from previous years to cover expenses by the end of this fiscal year. At the current spending rate, we will begin to deplete the cushion we have built up for unexpected expenses.

The Board is currently contacting the households who have not yet paid this year's dues. We understand that residents are extremely busy with higher priorities than paying HOA membership dues. However, we hope that those who haven't yet done so will take the time to send their checks for \$50 to the Del Cerro HOA, PO Box 3704, Palos Verdes, CA 90274. If you are not sure if you have paid dues for this year, please contact HOA treasurer Char French (310-541-9877 or [charfr@aol.com](mailto:charfr@aol.com)).

If we are not successful in increasing participation, we will need to develop options with lower spending levels for next year's budget.

A summary of our budgeted dues and expenditures as well as performance to-date is included.

We will keep you posted on our progress on this issue.

Del Cerro Homeowners Association FY 2007-2008 Budget and Year-To-Date Performance 31-Jan-08			
	FY 2008 Budget	Year-to- date Actuals (thru 1/31/08)	Total Year FY 2008 Forecast
<b>Total Dues</b>	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,525	\$ 4,525
Event Fund		\$ 270	\$ 270
<b>Total Revenue</b>		\$ 4,795	\$ 4,795
<b>Expenses</b>			
Entrance Expenses			
Gardening	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,050	\$ 1,800
Water	\$ 900	\$ 651	\$ 1,000
Electricity	\$ 284	\$ 213	\$ 284
Lights/Sprinklers Repair/ Maint.	\$ 200	\$ 49	\$ 200
Replacement Annuals	\$ 800	\$ 0	\$ 800
Subtotal Entrance Expenses	\$ 3,984	\$ 1,963	\$ 4,084
Annual Membership Meeting	\$ 100		\$ 100
Summer Picnic	\$ 700	\$ 642	\$ 642
Office Supplies/PO Box/Misc.	\$ 100	\$ 56	\$ 100
RPV Council of Homeowners Associations annual dues	\$ 45	\$ 45	\$ 45
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$ 4,929	\$ 2,706	\$ 4,971
<b>Total Dues Less Expenses</b>	\$ 71	\$ 2,089	\$ (176)
Unused Funds from Prior Years	\$ 3,473	\$ 3,473	\$ 3,473
<b>Cumulative Unused Funds</b>	\$ 3,544	\$ 5,562	\$ 3,297
<b>Del Cerro Sign Project</b>			
Grant funding	\$3,000	—	\$3,000
Expenditures	\$3,000	—	\$3,000
Net HOA Expense	—	—	—

### Please Communicate With Your Board

If you have a neighborhood question, or have any ideas for future newsletters, please contact a Board member. We usually meet on the third Monday of each month. If anyone would like to attend a Board meeting to raise an issue, feel free to contact a Board member to find the date of the next meeting and to place your item on the agenda.

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