

Los Altos Hills Town Newsletter - June 1991

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Town of Los Altos Hills

NEWSLETTER



Fire Safety

On July 1, 1985, a fire destroyed nine homes in Los Altos Hills. The fire covered 150 acres of Los Altos Hills and Palo Alto between Interstate 280 and Arastradero Road. In addition to the nine homes that were destroyed, numerous other structures were damaged.

The City Council has established July 1st of each year as the final deadline for fire safety precautions to be implemented. This is especially important this year in view of the several drought years we have experienced.

Hills property owners are required by law to remove dry, wild grass in order to eliminate a potential fire hazard.

The Los Altos Fire Protection District recommends grassy areas be rototilled or disced. Cutting and removing the grass also lessens the fire hazard, but is not always as effective as rototilling or discing.

If residents fail to remove wild grass as specified by both Town and County ordinances, the Town or County may do it themselves and add the cost to the landowner's property tax bill.

City Manager Appointed by Council

The City Council has appointed Les Jones to succeed Tom Frutchey as the Town's City Manager. Mr. Jones was formerly Director of Public Services with the City of Coronado and assumed his responsibilities in the



Tribute to Our Troops

Citizens from local communities will pay tribute to the men and women of the Armed Forces on July 4, 1991, at a celebration to be held at NAS Moffett Field's Shenandoah Plaza. From 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. the station will be open to the public, with a special program beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Called a "Tribute to Our Troops," the event is being held in conjunction with the United Service Organization of Northern California, and was intended as an opportunity for citizens of local communities to honor men and women of the U.S. military for their service throughout the years as well as during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The effort was generated by the communities of Santa Clara Valley, the Santa Clara Valley Council of the Navy League, and the USO after President Bush announced the Fourth of July as a day set aside for all Americans to thank Armed Forces personnel and celebrate the homecoming of Desert Storm troops.

Activities planned for the morning include a flag raising, 21-gun salute, USO entertainment and patriotic music by civilian, Navy and Air Force performers, and aircraft static displays available

Town on June 17, 1991. Mr. Jones was selected from an excellent field of candidates and the Council and staff are looking forward to working with him.

Dick DeLong has been serving as the Town's Acting City Manager since January, and has done an excellent job in guiding the Town through this transitional period. Our sincere thanks to Dick for his contributions and assistance during this time.

for viewing in Hangar One after the program.

Individual community sponsors (residents) from the surrounding cities will then invite military personnel who are stationed in the area to join them in their respective Independence Day observances in the local area at the conclusion of the morning's activities.

If you are interested in sponsoring a military person please call Town Hall.

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TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS

NEWSLETTER

Pathway Guidelines

The pathway system is a unique recreational feature of our town. We need your help to keep it functioning and growing. How can this be done? Here are some dos and don'ts regarding the paths.

DO: Clear paths in the road right-of-way and any off-road paths located on your property. Trim shrubs and ground cover so that they do not encroach on the path. If landscaping is being planted, plant well behind the easement (five feet is recommended) so that as the shrubs and trees grow, they do not obstruct the path or vision. Trim back branches of trees overhanging the path. The town recommends a 12 foot height for the lowest branches to provide clearance for horseback riders. The town has the right to prune back shrubbery and trees on any path, but owners might be happier with their own work.

DO: Design all drainage facilities adjoining paths so they do not drain onto the path.

DON'T: Ride or drive a motorcycle, car or other motorized vehicle on the pathways.

DON'T: Park cars or place debris boxes or store any material on the paths. This practice forces users of the paths onto the road. Many of our roads are narrow and winding, and users of the paths are placed in jeopardy when the paths are obstructed.

We appreciate all the support our residents have given in the past. With your continued help, the pathway system will provide a safe and pleasurable way to view our lovely hills.

Drought

DO: Use path maintenance request forms at Town Hall for maintenance needed on any path in Town.

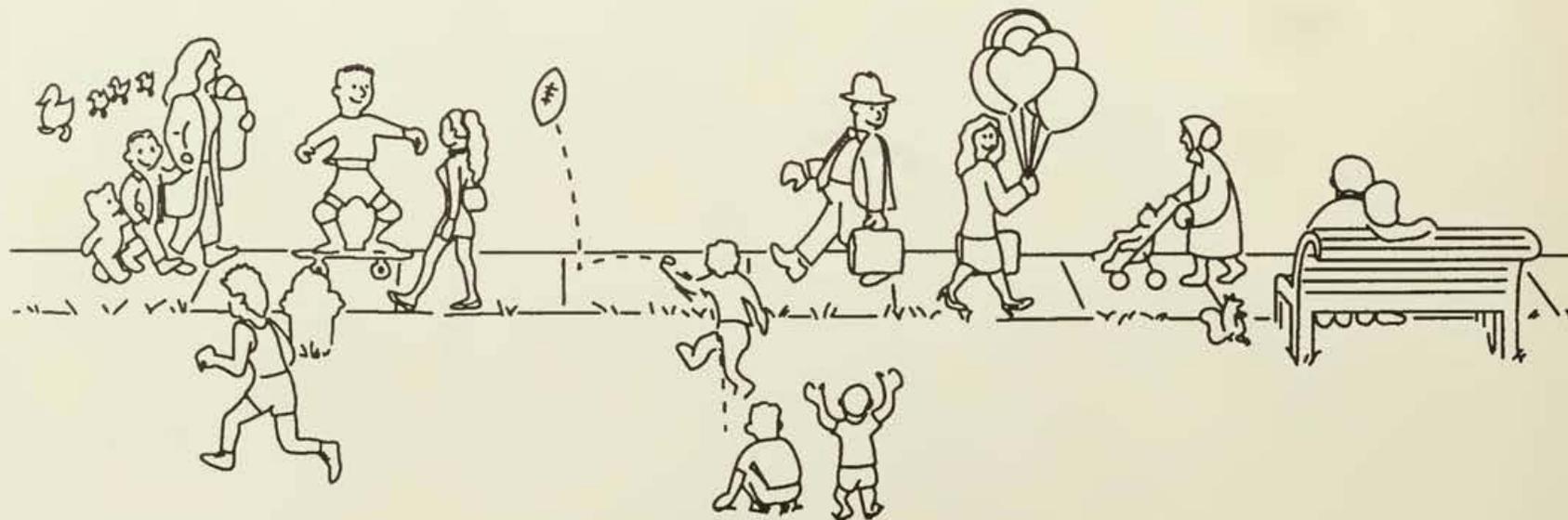
DO: Call Town Hall (941-7222) for the name and telephone number of any pathway committee member for assistance and information.

DO: Resurface existing driveways with acceptable material recommended by the City Engineer to prevent pedestrians and equestrians from slipping. Currently the recommendation is for roughening of concrete driveways as they cross over the path and the use of chip seal 3/8" x No. 6 for asphalt to provide a non-slip surface. The City Engineer will assist any resident in determining the best material and methods to use.

The "Miracle" March rains have brought the Hetch Hetchy reservoir to a level (29% of normal) that has permitted San Francisco to increase our allotment. At its meeting on April 29, the Purissima Hills County Water District Board of Directors rescinded Ordinance 91-1, requiring a 75-76% cutback in summer months, and adopted new regulations which are much less severe and will, it is hoped, achieve a 26.5% reduction from 1987 use.

The Board emphasized that the Hetch Hetchy levels are still low and encouraged users to keep up their conservation efforts which were so successful in April.

The new regulations no longer include authorization for staff to install flow restrictors on households which do not comply with rationing goals.



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TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS

NEWSLETTER

Mid-Peninsula Support Network for Battered Women

The Mid-Peninsula Support Network for Battered Women is committed to ending abuse against women and their children. Their services include a shelter in a safe place, a 24-hour crisis line, legal advocacy, support groups, a children's program, a male batterer's counseling program, clinical counseling and community education and outreach.

Please call Mid-Peninsula Support Network for Battered Women if you have any questions or need their services. The number for the office is (415) 940-8750 and the crisis line is (415) 940-7855.

Deadline of Waiver of Fees for Earthquake Repairs

During the recent budget discussions, the City Council established the following policy: "Building permit fees will be waived for earthquake repairs only for those persons who have declared their earthquake damage with the Town prior to October 17, 1991." If you have any questions about this policy, please call Town Hall at 941-7222.

Schedule

Los Altos Chamber of Commerce Community Calendar

JULY 4, THURSDAY

Community Family Fun.
Covington Mini-park, 201 Covington Road,
10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Info: 941-0950.

JULY 13, SATURDAY

Byrne Park — dedication of Artemas Ginzton path, 10:00 a.m.

JULY 12, 13, 19, 20, SATURDAY AND SUNDAY

L.A. Recreational Dept. Youth Theatre
presents: *Peter Pan*, Spangenberg Theatre,
Palo Alto. Info: 941-0950.

JULY 13, 14, SATURDAY, SUNDAY

Los Altos Arts & Wine Festival
10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Main and State Streets.
Info: 949-5282.

Los Altos Hills Historical Society

Please mark your calendars for these future events. A General Meeting will be held on Sunday, September 22nd, at 3:30 p.m. at Town Hall. Arlene Taaffe Reed will make a presentation on "The Taaffe Family and the Los Altos Hills area." On December 8th, at 3:30 p.m. at the Alexander's residence, there will be the Annual Historical Show and Tell. Please bring some object of interest and be prepared to share its historical significance with the Town.



Los Altos Hills Safety Committee

If any Los Altos Hills residents are aware of areas of concern relating to safety, please notify the Safety Committee by calling Town Hall at 941-7222. Between the Safety Committee, the City Council, and the Fire and Sheriff's Departments, every effort will be made to alleviate safety problems and work toward a safer Los Altos Hills.

JULY 26, DEADLINE

Los Altos Day at the SF Giants vs. L.A. Dodgers. August 10, 12:35 p.m., \$8.00, Recreation Dept. 941-0950.

JULY 28, SUNDAY

Ye Olde Towne Band Concert
Shoup Park, 1:30 – 3:00 p.m.

Next
Friends of the Library
of
Los Altos and Los Altos Hills
Used Book Sale

Saturday, September 7, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, September 8, noon to 3:00 p.m. (Bag day!)

Hillview Community Center
97 Hillview Avenue, Los Altos

Trees Are a Necessity, Not an Amenity

There is an alarming trend among Californians to decrease the number of trees planted because of the drought. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection estimates that over 10 million trees have died in the wildland due to the drought. We must compensate the best we can by planting even more trees in urban areas where we can care for them.

Let's not save water by discontinuing tree planting. Let's be creative and accept the challenge of finding new ways to efficiently water trees.

Local native plants should be considered when selecting plants for your garden. They have several advantages over exotics. They usually require less care and water and adjust well to our various soil conditions.

As ascertained by a recent survey, most of our residents prefer to retain the rural appearance of our Town. A degree of this look can be achieved by planting trees in clusters rather than rows and by using a variety of plants in those clusters. If you would like information or recommendations in selection of plantings,

please contact Town Hall or a member of the Environmental Design and Protection Committee.



New Exhibit Curator

At their regular meeting on April 17, 1991, the City Council appointed John Ann Corlino as Exhibit

Repair Creeks Carefully

Anyone experiencing problems with creek erosion on or near his or her property should know that such problems must be treated properly. The Town has literature on ways to correct, repair, and prevent creek erosion, and all residents are encouraged to come take a look at it.

Many people have been filling in eroded areas with brush and yard debris. This solution is only cosmetic, and often leads to more extensive damage in the future. If control devices are not placed properly, water will continue to run under and around loose debris thrown in creek beds. The water further erodes the creek bed, and all damage is concealed by the loose brush that was meant to protect the creek.

If you are concerned with local erosion, please contact Town Hall, or come in and take a look at the materials available. All work in creeks must be permitted by the department of Fish and Game. Town Hall has relevant phone numbers for those interested.

Also, residents can take advantage of the Evergreen Conservation District for ideas and assistance in repairing creek damage. They may be reached in San Jose at (408) 288-5888.

Recycling Program Review

The Los Altos Hills recycling program started in July of 1990 has been a great success. Through "curbside" collection of recyclables and residential drop-off of yard waste, the town is diverting approximately 20-40% of its waste from landfills. Los Altos Hills' program is one of the first of its kind in the country, and so far has been one of the most successful.

Los Altos Hills residents are to be commended for

Council appointed John Ann Carnie as Exhibit Curator for a term of one year. John Ann graduated from Los Altos High School and attended Foothill College majoring in Drama.

She has been active in the arts most of her adult life either as an artist/performer or a collector/supporter. She lived in Morocco for a year (painting) as well as Greece, Italy, and Mexico for short periods of time.

John Ann plans to show local children's artwork as well as adult artists in all mediums. Her first exhibit is scheduled to open the first week of July. Anyone interested in having their work considered for exhibit is encouraged to contact John Ann through Town Hall, 941-7222.

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LOS ALTOS HILLS residents are to be commended for their efforts, and for their patience in dealing with this previously untried program. One glitch in the program to date has been the unexpected expense of the yard waste drop-off facility. Due to the unexpected level of success of this element, expenses have been much greater than anticipated. Consequently, the Town has had to make some changes to the program.

Currently, residents must bring their own yard waste to the site, or accompany their gardeners. While this practice is inconvenient, it prevents citizens from other communities from using the program at the expense of Los Altos Hills residents. Hopefully new changes in operations at the site will further reduce operating costs, and current restrictions will be lifted. For the time being, however, the Town asks your cooperation with and understanding of these measures.

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TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS

NEWSLETTER

Yard Waste

As part of the recycling program, the Town operates a disposal facility at 27400 Purissima Road where you can dispose of your yard waste (grass clippings, trimmings, etc.) free of charge. This facility is open Wednesdays through Sundays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Please note the current regulations regarding the facility: 1) You will be required to show a current

Avoid Dumping Chlorine and Concrete in Storm Systems

As summer approaches, residents with swimming pools should know that only dechlorinated pool water can be discharged into the street or storm systems. Exposing pool water to sunlight will dechlorinate it. Thus, anyone wishing to empty a pool into the local storm system should allow the water to be exposed for an adequate period beforehand.

facility: 1) You will be required to show a current driver's license with a Los Altos Hills address; 2) No vehicle larger than a 3/4 ton truck will be allowed to use this facility; and 3) All trees, branches, limbs, etc. must be sawed or cut to 6' lengths.

On another issue related to recycling, it has been suggested that residents keep their recycling bins indoors unless it is the scheduled day for pick up.

Copper Sulfate from Los Altos Hills is Damaging the Bay

Water laden with copper has inundated San Francisco Bay, and regional officials have asked local jurisdictions to inform residents that excessive levels of this unwanted substance are coming from residential activities. High levels of copper in the Bay can kill ocean animals and vegetation, and therefore have an adverse effect on the ocean ecological system.

The primary culprits in the accumulation of copper are root control chemicals and fertilizers. Many of these products — used by residents, gardeners, and plumbers alike — contain copper sulfate. As rain falls or properties are irrigated, copper sulfate is washed into sewers, streams, and groundwater supplies, and eventually makes its way to the Bay, where the copper damages the delicate underwater ecosystem. This problem is intensified in times of drought, when there is less water flushing detrimental substances out of the Bay.

If copper levels continue to remain high in the Bay, residents will likely see increased sewer and storm drain charges. A simple solution to this problem is for residents and plumbers to use fertilizers and root control remedies that do not contain copper sulfate. There are many products on the market that do not

Pool filter backwash water must be processed in the sanitary sewer, and should not be disposed of with dechlorinated water.

On a similar note, contractors working in Los Altos Hills should be notified that it is illegal to wash cement trucks and fresh cement into the storm drains. Cement clogs up the drains, and due to its chemical nature, kills fish and plant life in the streams in which it is dumped. Cement should be disposed of by contractors in an approved manner.

Contractors should contact Town Hall staff for more information (941-7222).

Progress Report on Library Expansion

Plans for expanding our library are progressing on schedule. Shortly after the November election when the expansion was funded, an Architectural Review Committee was established with representatives from the library staff, the City of Los Altos, the Library Commission, and the public. In January, the firm of Ehrlich Rominger was selected to work with the committee to develop a design concept that meets all of our major objectives.



All the appropriate committees have approved the conceptual plans. There is a copy in Carol Tefft's office (head librarian). Detailed design drawings are now being developed. (Construction will begin next fall with completion approximately a year away. During that time the library will be open as much as possible, though there will certainly be some disturbance in the service. Parking will increase (when

contain this substance, and residents should use them now to avoid higher utilities costs in the future.

turbance in the service. Parking will increase (when the construction is finished) by more than 30 spaces.

As we get closer to construction there are sure to be more public hearings to allow everyone to follow the progress. There are few communities in the state that use their library more than we do.

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Animal Regulations:

Please remember that according to the Town's Code, no person owning or having control of any animal shall permit an animal to obstruct the reasonable and comfortable use of property in any neighborhood by chasing vehicles, molesting passersby, barking, howling, baying or making any other noise.

With summer upon us, and everyone enjoying outside activities, please take particular note that in addition to the regulations about noise, your animals also should not be running loose unless they are on your own property.

Community Volunteers Needed

Presently, there are vacancies on the following Town Standing Committees: Community Relations; Finance; Pathways, Recreation and Parks; and Safety. In addition, there are also vacancies on the Joint Volunteer Awards Committee.

Applications are available in the City Clerk's Office at Town Hall. If you have any questions or need any additional information, please contact City Clerk, Pat Dowd, at 941-7222.





Town of Los Altos Hills
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Los Altos Hills, California 94022

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More on Emergency Preparedness

Note: The following information was received too late for inclusion in this edition of the Town Newsletter. However, Town officials felt that the article was very informative and timely, so it is being added as an insert.

As the anniversary of the Loma Prieta earthquake approaches, the Town hopes all residents have taken extra measures to prepare for disasters, and all 35 designated emergency neighborhoods are encouraged to attain an appropriate level of organization.

- *Printed materials on emergency preparedness are available from Town Hall.*
- *A short video is available for neighborhood meetings.*
- *Town officials will be glad to meet with you to discuss important safety issues, as well as how the Town's emergency plan will work in the event of a declared disaster.*

There are many outside sources of assistance. Two excellent sources of up-to-date information are:

- *The brochure The Next Big Earthquake..., distributed in your newspapers a few weeks ago.*
- *The Quake article in the October 1990 issue of Sunset magazine.*

For more information, contact Town Hall at 941-7222.

Neighborhood 12 Report

Our Town's Neighborhood Emergency Network, established in 1985, designated 35 neighborhoods in order to achieve the best possible coordination of information and resources in the event of a natural disaster. Our Town officials have systems in place to respond to a major emergency, but it is up to us to organize our neighborhoods so that we can effectively communicate with the Emergency Operations Center, and efficiently obtain needed help and information. Our local resources range from the material (horses, construction equipment, 4-wheel-drive vehicles, car phones, swimming pools) to the professional (doctors, nurses, engineers, HAM radio operators). We are fortunate that Los Altos Hills has such an abundance of resources because

during an emergency we are going to have to depend on ourselves and each other first.

Neighborhood 12, coordinated by Rory and Dan Kaplan, has been very active in organizing for an emergency that we hope never occurs. The neighborhood consists of approximately 115 homes east of Foothill College, covering Dezahara Way, Byrne Park Lane, Deer Springs Way, Julietta Lane, Altamont Road between Appaloosa Way and Corbetta Lane, Moody Road between Tanglewood Lane and Chaparral Way, and Taaffe Road from Altamont down almost to Taaffe Lane.

In July we held our first organizational meeting. We divided our very large area into five sub-areas, with coordinators for each. In September we held a follow-up meeting, attended by Councilmember Barbara Tryon, that assessed the progress made, the work still to be done, and possible future plans and programs.

One of the results of the July meeting was the creation of a questionnaire that was distributed to every home in Neighborhood 12. The questionnaire requested information on topics such as each family's needs, skills, equipment resources, and the home's physical plant. A confidential inventory is being compiled from the returned questionnaires, and will be maintained by the coordinators.

Another result of our July session was a meeting for Neighborhood 12 residents with the Fire Marshal (Captain Mordecai) of the Los Altos Fire Department. That meeting covered topics ranging from fire safety issues to the proposed new fire station for the Page Mill Road area. (Los Altos Hills residents should note that the Fire Department will do free home inspections on a scheduled basis.)

Our neighborhood group is also discussing other possible ideas. These extend from red and green flags for every home that could be placed on mailboxes after a catastrophic event to indicate that family's post-emergency status, to walking each other's property to see the location of gas and water lines, electrical load centers, potential slide areas, etc.

Future Neighborhood 12 meetings may include a session with our designated HAM radio operator and possibly arranging a mock disaster drill. An idea necessitated by disaster has resulted in the pleasures of getting to know neighbors and of making new friends.

Written by Rory Kaplan, Sandy Charapat, and Laurie Haron