



OUR TOWN

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS

MARCH 2017



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2016 TOWN PICNIC BY THE NUMBERS

1,647
Attendees

111
Volunteers

1,050
Chickens served

700
Hot dogs served

150
Gallons of ice cream

1,704
Soft drinks

108
Bottles of wine



Town Picnic 20th Anniversary

This year, the Town Picnic celebrates its 20th anniversary. This beloved town tradition began as the Spring Family Picnic, held on the afternoon of May 31, 1998, at the Los Altos Hills Little League Fields (now Purissima Park). Residents were invited to bring their own picnic lunch and a blanket to spread out on the grass. About 325 town residents attended. The town provided soft drinks, beer, wine, strawberries, and ice cream sundaes. Entertainment included a balloon-blower, a clown, and music by the band String of Pearls; activities included a pathway walk and an inflatable jump house for children. Residents enjoyed learning about and taking pictures with the fire engine from the local fire station. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2]





weather and conflicts with other events. Accordingly, the budget has increased with the size of the crowd and the number of activities and type of entertainment offered. The budget for the first picnic, for example, was under \$2,000; 20 years later, the budget for the Town Picnic is approximately \$40,000.

A variety of different musical groups have performed at the picnics over the years. One notable example is Ye Olde Towne Band, from Los Altos, which performed at the picnics from 2004 to 2006. Starting in 2005, a variety of inflatable and other games were used instead of just an inflatable jump house. Some years, Native American crafts were demonstrated by the town's Parks and Recreation Committee. Contest games for children, with prize ribbons for the winners, were introduced. The Golden Gate Lionel Railroad Club set up and operated a large model train display. Tables with information about various town committees and organization became a routine part of picnics.

In 2007, a classic car show was established as part of the Town Picnic. Many of the classic cars on display are owned by residents of Los Altos Hills. The following year, cars were awarded prizes by town staff.

The firefighters' union continued supplying the barbecue each year through 2012. In 2013, Art Marshall, president of the firefighters union, advised the CRC that the firefighters were no longer able to provide the barbecues. Consequently, the CRC hired a concessionaire to prepare and serve the meals.

The 20th Annual Town Picnic will be held on June 4, 2017, from 12:30 to 4:00 pm. All town residents are invited to this free fun-filled afternoon. A reservation flier will be mailed to residents in early May, and reservations are required so that the proper number of meals may be ordered.

So why did the Community Relations Committee (CRC) decide to organize a picnic event in 1998? The CRC is charged by the town with coordinating and sponsoring regular town events. In the 1990s, the CRC organized several spring dinner dances that were held at the Fremont Hills Country Club, appropriately named "S'Bring in the Hills." Once the town started hosting annual volunteer recognition dinners at the club that tended to duplicate the CRC's party, the members of the committee believed it was time to develop a different type of event. Under the leadership of long-time town resident and chairman Roy Woolsey, the CRC organized this first town picnic.

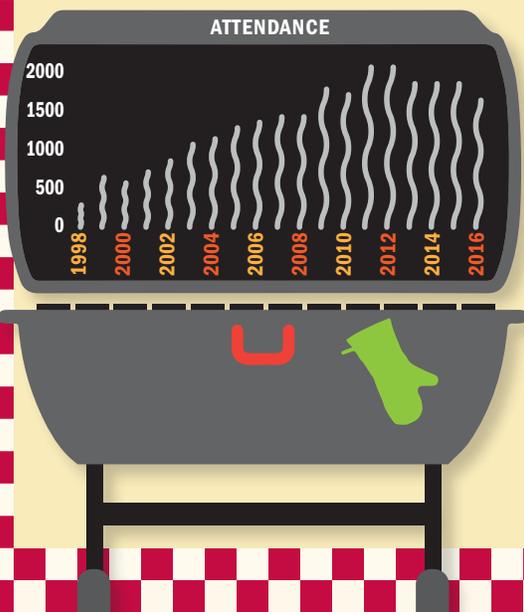
Captain Bob Hagg, who was among those demonstrating the fire engine at the first picnic, offered the firefighters to organize a barbecue if the town had a picnic the next year — and the CRC accepted their generous offer. Subsequently, the second Spring Family Picnic was held on May 23, 1999, and included a barbecue of chicken or hot dogs, chili, salad, bread, and watermelon provided by the Santa Clara County Firefighters Local #1165, led by Art Marshall. The town just



had to pay the wholesale cost of the food. The firefighters volunteered their time to prepare and serve the meals. The added attraction of the barbecue more than doubled the attendance from the first year to about 675 residents.

With the risk of hot or inclement weather in an outdoor event, for the third picnic held in 2000, the CRC rented four 20x20-foot canopies. The number of rented canopies substantially increased in the next few years, so that the picnic could be held regardless of weather. And the canopies have also increased in size. Last year one of the canopies measured 40x80 feet, allowing hundreds of residents to enjoy their meals while listening to the band and conversing in the comfortable shade.

The picnic grew in attendance and number of attractions from year to year. Attendance increased to over a thousand by the sixth Town Picnic, and stabilized between 1,500 and 2,000 each year in the last decade — roughly a quarter of the entire population of Los Altos Hills. Attendance depends to some extent on the



FROM THE CITY MANAGER

In 2016, there were 29 residential burglaries in Los Altos Hills. From 2003 to 2016, the town experienced a residential burglary rate of approximately 1%. The town has taken proactive steps to address property crime, with a 33% increase in law enforcement spending this current fiscal year. This includes \$250,000 budgeted for additional sheriff's deputy patrol hours.



Carl Cabill

In September 2016, a public crime prevention forum was conducted by Sheriff's Captain Rich Urena, who serves as the town's Police Chief in accordance with the town Municipal Code. The forum was well attended and can be viewed at the town's website <http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/222/Public-Safety>. Town staff and the Sheriff's Office have looked into the possibility of installing automated license plate readers in town. The start-up cost is very

high at over \$500,000, with annual maintenance costs of about \$50,000. Some residents have indicated that license plate reader cameras would be welcomed. However, there doesn't appear to be any research available at this time that correlates reductions in residential burglaries with the installation of fixed automated license plate readers.

Crime prevention does not neces-

sarily have to come at such a high cost and an invasion to privacy. There is much that residents can do to secure their homes and reduce their chances of becoming victims of crime. According to Urena, improving the security of one's home possessions begins with a comprehensive analysis of the house, property, and one's personal habits. The Sheriff's Office has developed a residential security survey that is intended to help residents systematically detect areas where their home security is weak. For those residents who would like assistance in assessing their home security, a copy of this document can be downloaded from the town's website: <http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/documentcenter/view/460>. The Sheriff's Office also continues to offer a security survey service to residents, where a sheriff's deputy will visit a resident's home and offer suggestions on improving security. To learn more or set up an appointment, contact the Sheriff's Office at 408-299-2311.

BURGLARIES IN LAH

YEAR	NO.
2003	24
2004	21
2005	46
2006	32
2007	24
2008	33
2009	16
2010	18
2011	33
2012	18
2013	42
2014	46
2015	15
2016	29

FROM THE PLANNING DIRECTOR

Planning staff continues to work on several key projects initiated in the last two years. The master path map update and the Stirling Subdivision are currently in the public hearing process at the Planning Commission level. Short-term rentals and the town's annexation plan were discussed by the City Council in January 2017.

Master Path Map Update

The Planning Commission considered a draft master path map at a well-attended public hearing held in October 2016. The commission requested direction from the City Council on whether the areas annexed to the town since 2005 should have the same pathway requirements as older areas of town planned prior to these annexations. A joint council-commission study session was held in February 2017 to discuss this matter. They will consider the establishment of a cap on the construction costs that a resident will be responsible for when a new pathway segment is required to be installed as part of their new residence, second unit, or major addition/remodel project.

Annexation Update

In October 2016, the City Council discussed the Mora Island Annexation which includes 86 properties located on Mora Drive, Terry Way, Eastbrook Drive and Court, Partridge Lane, Mora Glen Drive, and Mora Heights Way. The council-authorized geotechnical evaluation of Eastbrook Drive in the vicinity of Entrada Way is in progress. Town staff are working with Santa Clara County LAFCO and staff in the surveyor's and assessor's offices,

and continuing the evaluation of service impacts. These include provision of fire, police, sewer, and garbage services for the properties included in the annexation area. The council further discussed the town's annexation plans at its January 2017 meeting, placing priority on the Mora Island annexation.

Short-Term Rentals

The City Council will be discussing whether to proceed with a new ordinance to regulate short-term rentals (rentals for less than 30 consecutive days). Anyone interested in being added to the mailing list to receive notification of public meetings on this topic should contact the Planning Department.

New Town Staff

The vacant planning and building administrative clerk/technician position was filled in late January with the hiring of Veronica Flores. Veronica started with the town in September 2016, filling in on a contract basis. She was hired as a permanent staff member after successfully completing a town recruitment process. Veronica is a resident of Mountain View. Her hobbies include reading, hiking, and traveling.



Suzanne Avila, AICP, Planning Director



REFLECTIONS ON WATER

Reflections on Water, an exhibition of paintings by Katherine K. Allen, will be on display at the Los Altos Hills Town Hall from March 15 through September 2017. An artist reception, open to the public and free, will be held on Sunday, March 19, 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. at Town Hall. Refreshments and wine will be served. Beginning at 3:00 p.m., the artist will conduct a “walk-and-talk tour” of the exhibition. Guests will have the opportunity to hear her talk about her inspiration and how she translates her personal connection to nature into colorful, expressive paintings.

Water is the focus of Allen’s current work — specifically, transient, personal impressions of water and landscape. She transmutes these into two-dimensional memory poems of texture and color that are simultaneously seductive, meditative, and dramatic. Marci McDade of *Fiberarts Magazine* described Allen’s work as having a “mysterious quality evoking memory and atmosphere.”

Allen lives and works at the edge of the Chesapeake Bay in Easton, Maryland. Elaborating on her work, Allen explains, “My studio sits on an edge of land where water and sky meet. The constantly changing atmosphere and dramatic light that are visible here have deeply influenced my work. Each of my paintings is a relic of deep looking, a record of quiet awe, and an attempt at capturing a vanishing moment that lingers but will not stay.”

Originally from Oklahoma, Allen earned an MFA from the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Allen’s work has been collected and exhibited by many prominent domestic and international venues. Her art is also held in museum, corporate, and private collections throughout the world. She has won an impressive amount of awards and honors throughout her artistic career and is featured in many national and international art publications. Her work can be seen on her website, www.KatherineKAllen.com.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PROPERTY TAX BILL



TWICE A YEAR, residents of Los Altos Hills send a large check to Santa Clara County Office of the Assessor. But where does that money go? There are two types of assessments, *ad valorem* (from Latin meaning in proportion to the value) and fixed-dollar amounts per parcel. Passed in 1978, Proposition 13 limits California property tax to a maximum levy of 1% and limits annual increases in assessed value to 2% per year. In addition to the state maximum levy, county, city, and local agencies also collect taxes. The table at right lists explanations of each special assessment tax and taxing agency for the town.

By Kit Gordon. After a productive career as a chemical engineer, Gordon now donates her time with a variety of organizations to improve local watershed health.

Title	Description	Cost per Parcel
1% Levy	K-12 Schools: 44%; Community Colleges: 7%; Special Districts: 6%; Town of Los Altos Hills: 5.22%; County: 12%; Other: 25.78% (includes fire district)	1%
Los Altos School District Measure H (2002)	To hire, train, retain teachers, provide competitive teacher salaries, fund school libraries, purchase textbooks, preserve science classes/modern labs, maintain neighborhood schools and small class size, protect junior high electives like music, foreign language, computer classes, and balance the educational program.	\$597
Los Altos School District Measure E (2011)	To protect excellent education in Los Altos elementary and junior high schools; preserve core academic programs in reading, writing, math, and science; retain highly qualified teachers; and provide books and classroom materials. Expires 2017.	\$193
Los Altos School District Measure GG (2016)	To continue excellent education for all local public elementary and junior high school students; maintain outstanding core academics, innovative science, technology, engineering, and math programs; and attract and retain highly qualified teachers; to renew expiring Los Altos School District education annual parcel tax. Expires 2024.	\$223
Los Altos School District Bond Measure N (2014)	To expand and upgrade schools to avoid overcrowding; upgrade classrooms and labs to keep them safe, clean, and in good repair; update technology; maximize energy efficiency and acquire, construct, or equip classrooms and facilities. Authorized the issuance of \$150 million in bonds to benefit the Los Altos School District.	0.0479%
MVLA High School Bond Measure A (2010)	To pay for new classrooms and "green renovations" at the two high schools. Authorized the district to issue \$41.3 million in bonds.	0.0112%
Foothill De Anza Community College Bond Measure C (2006)	For construction, equipment and technology in the Foothill-De Anza Community College District. By law, funds may not be used for academic programs or operating expenses. Authorized the district to issue \$491 million in bonds.	0.0234%
Santa Clara County Library Measure A (2013)	To provide up-to-date book collections/research materials; children's reading programs; bookmobile services for seniors/the disabled; library hours; qualified librarians and other general library services/materials in the nine libraries in the Santa Clara County Library District.	\$33.66
North County Library Service Measure L (2010)	To maintain Los Altos and Woodland library hours, purchase books and materials, support library programs, and for general purposes.	\$76
Santa Clara County Library Retirement Levy	Helps pay retirement costs.	0.0024%
Santa Clara County Retirement Levy (1944)	Helps pay retirement costs for counties with more than 14,500 CalPERS employees.	0.0388%
Mosquito-Vector Control Assessment	To provide mosquito and general vector control pursuant to California Health and Safety and California Government Codes. The district offers a variety of services and information to help residents protect themselves and their families from animals and insects of medical importance (vectors).	\$13.76
El Camino Hospital Bond Measure D (2003)	To help fund the replacement hospital with a \$148 million general obligation bond.	0.0129%
Hospital Seismic Safety Measure A (2008)	To prevent state mandated shutdown of one-half of Santa Clara Valley Medical Center's beds; closure of SCVMC's trauma, burn center; and, loss of disaster response, by rebuilding, and improving earthquake safety of the hospital, meeting state seismic laws, and help replace closed medical facilities in downtown San Jose authorized the County of Santa Clara to issue \$840 million in general obligation bonds.	0.0086%
Santa Clara Valley Water District Measure B (2012)	District projects that would (1) ensure a safe, reliable water supply; (2) reduce pollution in waterways; (3) protect the water supply and dams from earthquakes and other natural disasters; (4) restore wildlife habitat and provide open space; and (5) provide flood protection for homes, businesses, streets, and highways.	\$75.88
Santa Clara Valley Water District Flood Northwest	To plan, design and build flood protection facilities in northwest Santa Clara County.	\$49.32
Mid-Peninsula Open Space Measure AA (2014)	To improve access to hiking and biking opportunities, protect and preserve redwood forests, natural open spaces, the scenic beauty of our region and coastline, critical wildlife habitat, restore creeks to protect water quality, and reduce forest fire risk. Authorized Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to issue up to \$300 million in bonds.	0.0006%
Clean Healthy Bay Measure AA (2016)	To protect San Francisco Bay for future generations by reducing trash, pollution, and harmful toxins, improving water quality, restoring habitat for fish, birds, and wildlife, protecting communities from floods, and increasing shoreline public access.	\$12
Santa Clara Valley Water District State Water Project	Pays for a portion of state water project imported water. Imported water increases groundwater supplies and improves habitat in Coyote Creek and Guadalupe River.	0.0086%
Affordable Housing Bond Measure A (2016)	To provide affordable local housing for vulnerable populations including veterans, seniors, the disabled, low and moderate income individuals or families, foster youth, victims of abuse, the homeless, and individuals suffering from mental health or substance abuse illnesses, which housing may include supportive mental health and substance abuse services; the County of Santa Clara can issue up to \$950 million in general obligation bonds.	0.01266%
Total	Total depends on resident school district. This is the total for residents in LASD & MVLA districts for 2017.	1.167% +\$1,080.62



BULLIS CHARTER SCHOOL

Sharing
Best Practices
Near and Far

Bullis Charter School (BCS) was founded in 2004 as “a model of educational innovation.” In the 13 years since, the school has demonstrated a strong commitment to developing innovative pedagogical approaches and sharing best practices with others. In an effort to learn about a variety of educational approaches, BCS teachers and administrators have traveled to seven countries, and in turn, the school has hosted educators from all across the globe.

Just this year, educators from Japan, China, Texas, and all across California have visited BCS, and the school has received inquiries from as far away as Denmark and Kenya. Many of these educators are inspired by the signature programs BCS offers its students and come to get a better understanding of how they are put into practice and how they can be replicated in schools near and far.

For some of the visiting educators, the tours are a chance to see innovative practices that they have only heard or read about. This is especially the case for the core aspects of BCS’s integrated academic program: Personalized Learning, Design Thinking, the Fabrication Lab (FabLab), and MakerSpace. The tours allow teachers, administrators, and other education specialists the opportunity to speak with BCS staff to better under-

stand the school’s curricula and answer any questions visitors may have. This opportunity is especially of interest for groups that are looking to replicate BCS’s school model in their community.

Mike Montgomery brought a team of teachers from Open Window School in Bellevue, Washington. They visited BCS’s FabLab to see how it supports project-based Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) units incorporating design thinking, model making, engineering, and other subjects. The FabLab is a dedicated space where students engage in tinkering, creative coding, product design, prototyping, and electronics building. Students use a wide variety of tools including computers, laser cutters, 3D printers, and portable power tools (table saw, miter saw, drill press, and others). After the tour, Montgomery remarked, “We were thrilled to be given so much time and individual attention



Clockwise from above: (1) One-to-one conversations are an opportunity for both visitors and students to learn. (2) Graduate students from Gakugei University observe a kindergarten classroom. (3) Students answer questions for visiting principals from Dallas. (4) BCS teacher Robert Taylor describes the unique features of the school’s FabLab. (5) Second graders engage a visitor as they practice a presentation about Leatherback Sea Turtles. (6) Fifth graders creating human anatomy sculptures in art class.

**As
much as possible
and in as many ways as
possible, we want to share
our insights and innovations
to ensure that same level of
academic excellence we provide
our students can be repli-
cated in different
schools.**



and impressed with the intentional effort at BCS to work across disciplines and with the FabLab.”

Bank Street College of Education’s Karen DeMoss and Brigid Fallon traveled from New York to spend two days visiting BCS. Karen and Brigid lead Bank Street’s Sustainable Funding Project, which seeks to ensure that all aspiring teachers are prepared through affordable, high-quality programs. They chose to visit BCS after hearing about the similarities between the school’s Associate Teacher (AT) program and their vision of a national teacher residency program. ATs are newly credentialed teachers at BCS who work with three homeroom teachers for a whole school year. In this capacity, ATs learn how to implement educational best practices, provide a second set of hands to help with small group instruction and differentiation and provide an additional credentialed teacher in the classroom to help improve student learning. Karen and Brigid interviewed the AT’s, homeroom teachers, and BCS administrators to learn more about the rationale for the AT program, how the program works, and what the benefits are for the school, the teachers, and the students. They will incorporate their findings in a published case study and use this work to further policy changes at the national level.

Dr. Taisuke Hosokawa from Tokyo’s Gakugei University organized a 12-person group of professors and graduate students to travel from Japan to BCS to see the FabLab and MakerSpace in action. The group was also interested in seeing how an ethos of global citizenship and emphasis on world languages plays out in the classroom. Hosokawa said the tour was inspiring for their country’s reform efforts because at BCS “education is based on innovative philosophy and [BCS] puts it

into practice.” While Dr. Hosokawa’s group visited for a single day, BCS recently hosted an extended stay for four teachers from Chengdu Experimental Primary School and Chengdu Chengfei Primary School—a top technology school network in China.

For Wanny Hersey, founding superintendent of BCS, the tours are a larger part of BCS’s commitment to innovate and develop new teaching methods and best practices that can be adopted by other schools in BCS’s home community and globally.

In addition to the tours, BCS finds other ways to engage with the local community and share best practices. BCS is now in its second year of the popular STEAM Practicum collaboration with the Santa Clara County Office of Education. After a successful launch in partnership with Autodesk and the Exploratorium, BCS is providing a year-long training for more than fifty administrators and educational leaders from across Santa Clara County. The goal is to transform their own organizations through integrating STEAM units and design thinking and project-based learning processes into their own curricula.

“As much as possible and in as many ways as possible, we want to share our insights and innovations to ensure that same level of academic excellence we provide our students can be replicated in different schools. Our mission to push the boundaries of public education doesn’t stop at the borders of Los Altos or Santa Clara, it extends worldwide,” said Hersey.



Building Community

In 1991, Los Altos attorney Jim Reynolds, frustrated that he could not accommodate clients' requests to donate to their community in their estate plans, called together a group of residents to explore a solution. Attending that initial meeting were Los Altos Hills resident Rick Glaze, and Los Altos residents Roy Lave, Bob Grimm, Dave Reeder, and Winnie Chu. Together with 30 founding families that raised \$30,000, they established the Los Altos Community Foundation (LACF). During its early years, the foundation was guided by the 10 principles of building a strong community set forth in the treatise "Building Communities" by John Gardner, a Stanford professor, former secretary of health, education and welfare under President Johnson, and honorary LACF founder. Today, the foundation, serving Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, and Mountain View communities, enables residents, private foundations, and businesses to give back and get involved through local philanthropy and civic engagement.

LACF helps the community in three ways:

Helping Local Nonprofits

Through LACF, donors pool their resources to accomplish things that no one individual can do alone. The foundation, its Donor-Advised Funds, and its programs have given close to \$10 million in grants and scholarships, many to nonprofits and students in the three communities LACF serves. A number of local private foundations, including the Packard, Brin-Wojicki, Morgan Family, and Geschke Family Foundations, contribute to LACF as part of their commitment to our local communities. Recently, LACF gave grants to Westwind 4-H Riding for the Handicapped, Community Services Agency, MVLA Scholars, Children's Health Awareness Council, Mentor-Tutor Connection, and Community School of Music and Arts. Residents of Los Altos Hills can open a Donor-Advised Fund with LACF. And those who are involved with a nonprofit serving our communities are invited to apply for an LACF grant.

Fostering Social Entrepreneurship

LACF helps residents start new nonprofits to address local needs. For example, LACF supported Los Altos Hills resident Mona Armistead as she developed the Community Values Youth program aimed at promoting the YMCA Project Cornerstone's 41 assets of healthy youth. Los Altos First Friday, founded by Los Altos Hills resident Kim Cranston, is another program sponsored by LACF. Many Los Altos Hills residents currently support Mentor Tutor Connection and MVLA Scholars, programs that LACF incubated.

Enabling Residents to Get Involved

Since 1994, LACF has offered its Leadership Education ADvancement (LEAD) class so residents can learn more about the organizations serving Los Altos and Los Altos Hills. Class participants join community leaders from education, healthcare, nonprofits, and business, in addition to social innovators and local government officials in interactive conversations during 11 class sessions, running from January through May. Also, LACF and its programs offer many volunteer opportunities for residents.

To learn more about LACF and its programs, please visit the organization's website, www.losaltoscf.org, or call 650-949-5909.



Clockwise from left: MVLA Scholars, an LACF-incubated program, provides scholarships and mentoring to local high school graduates, all first in their families to attend college. Westwind 4-H Riding for the Handicapped brings confidence and joy to children with help from a LACF Community Grant. Opening a Donor-Advised Fund at LACF helped the Bremeaus teach their family about generosity. Started at LACF, Living Classroom, a garden-based education program, is now its own nonprofit serving LASD, PAUSD, and MVWSD.

CALIFORNIA

Wild Lilac

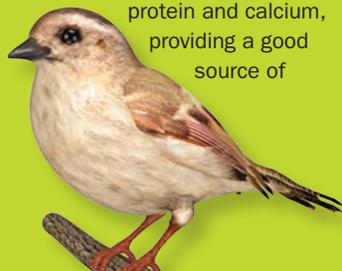
California has its own native lilac, and while it is completely different than the traditional varieties (native to Asia), it is equally as beautiful in many respects. The California wild lilac, also known as Ceanothus (see-an-oh-thus), jimbush, buckbrush, deerbrush, or blueblossom, ranges in size from a ground-cover (a few inches in height), to a shrub or small tree (up to 20 feet in height), and the flower colors include white, blue, purple, and pale pink. It is a versatile California native plant that has been cultivated for the nursery market. It is drought tolerant, low maintenance, and typically blooms from March to May, providing some of the earliest color in our surroundings.

The California lilac also provides an early nectar source for pollinators, including butterflies, honey

bees, solitary bees, and several beneficial insects. It is also a host plant for the caterpillars of several butterfly species, including the spring azure, California tortoiseshell (shown above), California hairstreak, and the hedgerow hairstreak.

The California lilac produces nectar for hummingbirds. The shrub also provides food and cover for many bird species. Bushtits (shown below), finches, and quail eat the seeds and stems. Larger birds, like flycatchers, find a buffet of insects during the blooming season.

Mammals use this shrub too. The early spring leaves are rich in protein and calcium, providing a good source of



nutrition for mule deer.

The California lilac

is native to the California chaparral but is a versatile plant for native landscaping. Once established it does not require water or fertilizer. In fact, some species have nitrogen-fixing nodules on their roots, which is not unusual for a plant that is adapted to grow well after fire and contribute to the health of the soil, to the benefit of other plants.

When it blooms in spring, this lilac it is typically covered in purple fragrant flowers. The shrub is particularly striking when planted alongside the western redbud that flowers pink at the same time of year. The rest of the year the lilac remains evergreen. It is compatible under oaks, although only the groundcover would be recommended in that situation. It generally does not respond well to

pruning into a hedge, but it makes an excellent component of the less-manicured hedgerow.

This native California plant was very useful to humans well before California became a state. Its leaves can be dried and steeped for tea; its stout branching stems were used to thresh seeds as well as for tools, needles, and fish dams; and its leaves and flowers contain saponin, so has been used as a fragrant soap.

In Los Altos Hills, California wild lilac naturally occurs on the drier chaparral slopes at the base of the Santa Cruz Mountains (to the west of Westwind Barn). However, it has also been planted along the median of I-280 between Foothill Expressway and Magdalena, along with Western redbud. Look for it this year as you travel the highway between March and May.

Taylor Vanderlip is an environmental consultant specializing in biological issues.



DISASTER PREPAREDNESS: On the Ground and Over the Air



Did you know that Los Altos Hills has a dedicated team of resident volunteers ready, willing, and able to respond in the event of an area-wide disaster? The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) academy trains residents to prepare for and respond to life-threatening events in our community. CERT members can mobilize neighborhood resources, deliver immediate assistance to victims, organize emergency communications, and provide support to first responders.

Originally developed by the Los Angeles City Fire Department in 1985, FEMA made CERT training a national program in 1993. The CERT program in the Town of Los Altos Hills and surrounding unincorporated area was established in 2007. The Los Altos Hills County Fire District funds the CERT program and is supported by the Town of Los Altos Hills and the Santa Clara County Fire Department. Over the

past nine years, more than 260 town residents have been CERT trained, making the local CERT one of the most proactive in the Bay Area.

Following a major disaster, it may take up to 72 hours before professional responders can reach our neighborhoods. This means that when disaster strikes, local CERT volunteers are likely to be the initial responders arriving at the scene, before the arrival of emergency crews. To prepare for this important responsibility, CERT volunteers go through a structured training program to learn how best to help their neighbors in a disaster. This training addresses common but critical situations that occur after disasters, such as turning off gas, how to effectively use a fire extinguisher, how to splint an arm or leg, how to bandage a wound correctly, and so forth.

Teamwork: CERT and Amateur Radio Operators

Communications skills are critical during any disaster. A component within the Los Altos Hills CERT has evolved over the past four years to address these needs. This unique group of CERT volunteers is licensed amateur (ham) radio operators. They are known as the "CERT/RECON Team" (recon is short for reconnaissance). The CERT/RECON Team adds communication capabilities that help CERT members communicate efficiently and accurately with each other and with the Emergency Operations Center located at Town Hall — especially if other communication systems fail. With the coordinated work of the CERT/RECON Team, the entire town can be surveyed and assessed within 30 minutes of a disaster.



How Do I Become a CERT Volunteer?

CERT training academies are offered in the communities served by the Santa Clara County Fire Department and rotate throughout the year. Some of the skills taught include organizing resources, medical operations, basic search and rescue, how to use a fire extinguisher, and damage assessment. The CERT academy takes place over a three-week period, typically two evening classes per week. Los Altos Hills will be hosting a CERT academy that begins on March 6, 2017. Registration is \$35. For more information about upcoming CERT academy dates and locations, please contact the Santa Clara County Fire Department Community Education Services at 408-378-4010, via email: communityoutreach@sccfd.org, or website: www.sccfd.org.

UPCOMING CERT ACADEMIES

Los Altos Hills:

3-06-17 to 3-25-17

Saratoga:

4-11-17 to 4-29-17

Cupertino:

6-12-17 to 7-08-17

Los Altos:

9-12-17 to 9-30-17

Los Gatos:

10-16-17 to 11-04-17

The Grieving Process

Symptoms, Remedies, and Resources

Experiencing a loss, whether the result of death, illness, or another significant change in a person's life, can bring about a range of emotions. Each of us will manage those emotions differently. It is not uncommon to experience some or all of the following reactions to some degree or another:

- A physical reaction to the situation which can include an upset stomach, extreme fatigue, headache, tight neck and shoulders, and other symptoms
- Feelings of sadness, anger, denial, guilt, anxiety, or fear
- Confusion and thoughts of disbelief and disorientation

There are certain behaviors that usually occur as well when it comes to dealing with grief, which range from sleeplessness to social withdrawal, crying, restlessness, absentmindedness, and a loss of appetite. As the person begins to adapt to their new reality, the grieving process becomes less intense and he or she begins to return to his or her prior routine, and with time, the sadness and symptoms associated with the loss ease and become less intense. It's important to remember grief is a highly individualized process with no clear and firm timeline.

Grief is a normal, natural, and healthy response to loss and understanding it better can be helpful when a person faces a difficult change. Greater understanding also helps the person recover from it and grow from the experience. An expert on the grieving process, psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, identified the five stages of grieving:

Denial: This can't be happening to me

Anger: Why is this happening — who is to

blame for this?

Bargaining: Don't let this happen, in return, I will...

Depression: I am too sad to do anything

Acceptance: This happened to me and I am at peace with it

It is important to learn how to live with the loss, express emotions, and ask for help while moving through these stages. Taking care of physical needs by getting enough rest and staying healthy while allowing time to grieve are also keys to overcoming grief and moving on. Expect to have some setbacks, but try to focus attention on good memories and not the "should haves or could haves." Writing down thoughts and feelings can prove beneficial.

Finding a supportive person to help ease the healing process who doesn't judge and is a good listener can also provide comfort and make the process less painful. Seeking out community resources to address specific needs is also helpful. However, if time goes on and the feeling of grief is not subsiding or the grief is just simply too overwhelming for the person to function adequately, they may need to seek professional help. Fortunately, our community has many resources available for a variety of needs (see highlight box on right).

Chaplain John A. Harrison is Director of Spiritual Care at El Camino Hospital

Centre for Living with Dying (Santa Clara)

(408) 243-0222

www.billwilsoncenter.org/services/all/living.html

Offers individual counseling or grief groups to adults and children facing life-threatening illness or who have had a loved one die.

The Compassionate Friends of Santa Clara County Chapter (Santa Clara)

(408) 249-9570

<http://www.compassionatefriends.org>

Offers peer-led grief support after the death of a child.

Hospice of the Valley

(408) 559-5600

www.hospicevalley.org

Offers individual grief counseling and support groups.

KARA – Grief Support for Children and Adults (Palo Alto)

(650) 321-5272

<http://www.kara-grief.org>

Offers comprehensive grief support, crisis intervention, and education for children, teens, families, and adults.

Mid-Peninsula Widow and Widowers Association (Los Altos)

(408) 259-4433

www.mpwwa1.org

Offers support, support group, and peer-led social activities for people who have lost a spouse.

NAMI Santa Clara County

(408) 453-0400

<http://www.namisantaclara.org/resources/grief-support-resources/>

Offers a list of local and online resources for people experiencing grief.

Older Adult Transitions Services (OATS) Program at El Camino Hospital

(866) 789-6089

www.elcaminohospital.org/OATS

Offers therapy for older adults experiencing grief over life transitions.

Pathways Home Health, Hospice & Private Duty (Sunnyvale)

(888) 755-7855

<https://www.pathwayshealth.org/grief-support/>

Offers individual grief counseling, support groups, and healing workshops.





TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS
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Los Altos Hills, CA 94022

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Town Newsletter Statement of Purpose

This is the official town newsletter to communicate current issues, services, and activities in Los Altos Hills to the residents of the town — to facilitate, encourage, and improve interaction between the residents and the town government. The newsletter is published quarterly. **Deadline for the next issue is April 5, 2017.**

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www.losaltoshills.ca.gov

Our Town

Our Town is published with assistance from the City Clerk, Deborah Padovan, and Town Volunteer Committees.

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Los Altos Hills City Council

Gary Waldeck, Mayor
John Radford, Vice Mayor
Courtenay Corrigan
Roger Spreen
Michelle Wu

City Manager

Carl Cahill

CALENDAR

March 5

Sun., 10:00 am – 1:00 pm
Leadership Conference
Los Altos Hills Youth Commission is hosting their 6th Annual Leadership Conference for middle and high school students. Free, please RSVP to: lahyouthcommission@gmail.com.

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Sun., 2:00 – 5:00 pm
Reflections on Water
An artist reception featuring fine art, gourmet food and wine. Beginning at 3:00 pm the artist Katherine K. Allen will conduct a walk-and-talk tour of the exhibit. The event is free and open to the public. For more information call 650-941-7222.



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Fri., 3:30 – 5:30 pm
Middle School Dodgeball Tournament
Hosted by the Los Altos and Los Altos Hills Youth Commissions at the Egan Junior High City Gym. For more information contact lahyouthcommission@gmail.com.

April 15

Sat., 9:00 – 10:30 am
14th Annual Hoppin' Hounds Easter Biscuit Hunt
Bring your dog to Byrne Preserve for this on-leash biscuit hunt benefitting Palo Alto Animal Services. \$5 donations recommended. For more information call 650-947-2518.

Sat., 11:00 am – 1:00 pm
Easter Egg Hunt
Get your Easter basket ready for a friendly hunt at Purissima Park.



11:30 ages 5 and under,
Noon 6 and up.

23

Sun., 1:00 – 4:00 pm
Earth Day Celebration
Wild cats and reptiles. Due to the cat presentations no dogs allowed. For more information call 650-947-2518.

May 5

Fri., 6:30 – 8:00 pm
Friday Night Live
Open mic night talent show for high schoolers around the area. Contact lahyouthcommission@gmail.com to perform at Hidden Villa.

7

Sun., 2:00 pm
Snakes in Our Garden
Town Hall. Learn about snakes from renown reptile expert Ken McCloud. Sponsored by Open Space Committee. To learn more, call Jean Struthers, 650-941-2586.

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Sat., 9:00
Pathways Run/Walk
Join us for a 5K, 10K, or 1 mile run/walk. To register and for more information visit: lahpathwaysrun.org.

June 4

Sun., 12:30 – 4:00 pm
20th Annual Town Picnic
Open to all residents of Los Altos Hills. For more information look for mailer in May.

Calendar events are also posted on town's website: www.losaltoshills.ca.gov