

**A Community
Newsletter**

from the

**Grossmont –
Mt. Helix
Improvement
Association**



viewpoints

April 2004

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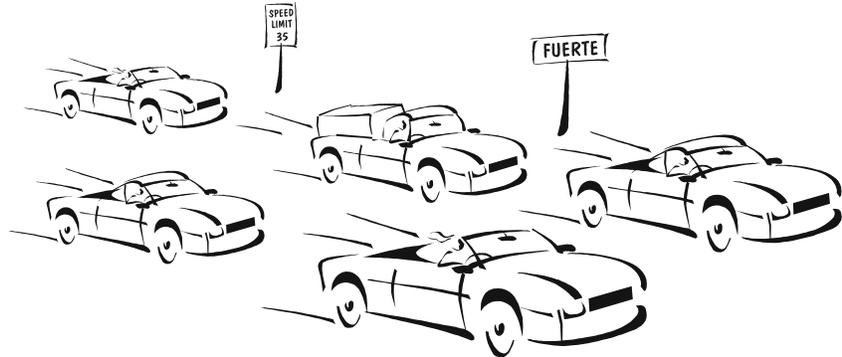
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Fuerte Drive Speed & Volume...What Can We Do?

Several GMIA members and your GMIA Board of Directors have concerns regarding the volume and speed of traffic along Fuerte Drive. GMIA has been studying this problem as well as possible solutions. Fuerte Drive is classified as a “light collector” road with a posted speed limit of 35 mph. Currently, the volume of traffic far exceeds that which is appropriate for a light collector road. The speeds along Fuerte also are usually far higher than the posted speed limit. In researching the reasons for these circumstances, your GMIA Board has reached the following conclusions.

VOLUME

First, the majority of the traffic is coming from non-Mt. Helix residents. According to an informal study done by the Valle De Oro Planning Group, nearly forty (40%) of the traffic on Fuerte Drive is from non-Mt. Helix residents!

Fuerte Drive is clearly being used as a means to get from Rancho San Diego and even Jamul to Interstate 8 and State Route 94. One key to solving this problem is the construction of the missing ramps at State Route 125 interchange. GMIA is diligently monitoring this situation with Caltrans, SANDAG and the County of San Diego. We believe that traffic relief on Fuerte Drive will come only

with these ramps completed. A second problem GMIA had identified is the timing of the traffic signals on Jamacha Road leading up to State Route 94 as well as the ramp signals near Bancroft Drive at the interchange with State Route 125. Again, GMIA continues to work with the appropriate agencies to resolve this problem.

SPEED

Regarding the speed along Fuerte Drive, several members have suggested speed humps and/or increasing the number of stop signs. Speed humps are not feasible along Fuerte Drive as the posted speed limit is too high at 35 mph for these to be safely implemented.

Additional stop signs are not feasible for several reasons. First and foremost the majority of the intersections on Fuerte Drive do not merit stop signs according to County of San Diego standards. These standards state that “A stop control may be considered at an intersection where existing conditions suggest the need to provide a greater level of right-of-way assignment. A stop sign should not be considered as a “cure-all” or used as a substitute for less restrictive alternatives. Often, improving the sight distance at an intersection can eliminate the need for a stop control. **A stop control is used to assign right-of-way and should not be used to regulate the speed of traffic. Studies have demonstrated that although motorists reduce their**

GROSSMONT - MT. HELIX



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Viewpoints is a community newsletter published by the Grossmont – Mt. Helix Improvement Association. Letters to the Editor should be sent to P. O. Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943-2751.

This newsletter reflects the efforts of your entire Board of Directors.

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A Letter from the President



Kristine Alessio

Spring is upon us and your GMIA Board is looking forward to our two big events coming up in May, our Garden Tour and our Annual Dinner. I hope that you all will be joining us for these events. They are excellent ways to meet your neighbors, your GMIA Directors and to find out more about GMIA! Please invite your non-member neighbors, I am sure they will enjoy both of these events.

Traffic along Fuerte Drive continues to be a major issue in our community. We are working toward some resolution of the volume and speed issues. Hopefully through both our work and the persistence of individual members we will be able to slow people down and take some of the traffic off the road. We are also beginning work on beautification and traffic safety issues at the intersection of Fuerte and Avocado. Watch for more information on this project in upcoming editions of Viewpoints!

You will notice that in this edition of Viewpoints, we decided to give out some Orchids and Onions. We do not anticipate that we will be doing this on a regular basis, but if you discover anything super spectacular or super terrible in your neighborhood let us know. We may be up to giving out some more of these “awards” in future Viewpoints issues.

Finally, some long time GMIA members found a March 1982 Viewpoints. Back then it was two typed (yes, on 1a typewriter) pages copied front to back! GMIA has come along way in the past twenty-some years! However, the last paragraph of that March 1982 Viewpoints still rings true today and I thought I'd share it with you: “GMIA continues to work for its members and the area. Problems in zoning changes, traffic, road maintenance,, etc. are dealt with on a continuing basis. Our “rural” way of life in the midst of urban development must be protected. Only through constant vigilance and community spirit can this be achieved.” Joseph W. Maddocks, GMIA March 1982. Some things do not change, and GMIA has been and will remain a constant force in assisting residents in our area to preserve our community. ▲

Thanks to Our Donors

Members often make donations to support the operations and functions of GMIA, in addition to paying their annual dues. Your GMIA Board appreciates these financial gestures and periodically recognizes these donors in this newsletter. Below are the names of the most recent donors since the publication of the last list of donors. Again many thanks from your GMIA Board of Directors.

Henry and Olinda Arnold John and Yvonne Rosenberger
Joseph and Marie Kershaw William and Adele Woolman
Louise and Nick Nicoloff

Crime in Our GMIA Community

And How The Neighborhood Watch Program Can Help Combat It

Crime: It Is Present In Our GMIA Community

The commitment of criminal acts in our GMIA community happens; unfortunately it is now a consistent factor in our community. Not that this or any other similar community has ever been without any incidence of crime. In the early days of this community, back when some of our members first built their homes in this wonderful area, crime was more of a rarity, and the nature of crime different and less severe than we are experiencing today. But today, our GMIA community must recognize that the incidence of crime in our residential areas is now an obvious element that must be addressed. Even the nature of crimes must be considered, since we now have incidences of more brazen and severe crimes such as daylight burglaries, home invasion, and even assault and rape.

Since our GMIA community is situated in the unincorporated area of San Diego County, law enforcement for our entire GMIA area is under the jurisdiction and responsibility of the San Diego County Sheriff's Department. The Lemon Grove Sheriff's Station is specifically charged with responsibility for law enforcement in the County area in which our GMIA members reside. The Sheriff's Department documents and reports on all crime activity in the County, and further divides the statistics into smaller areas or "beats." Unfortunately the beats used by the Sheriff's Department are not exactly coincident with the GMIA membership boundary areas. However, we can rely on the general results and trends reflected in the various beats that overlay our GMIA community to obtain a good understanding of criminal activity and enforcement that is taking place in our GMIA community.



While the trend for an increase in crime and the more serious nature of crimes, has been increasing over the past few decades, the general area of our GMIA community did experience a slight decrease in the overall crime rate in the year 2002. However the problem of crime in our community remains a primary issue of concern, just like other significant issues such as traffic congestion on our community roadways, inadequate freeway infrastructures, lack of a strong Code Enforcement in our community, etc. Therefore, your GMIA Board of Directors is taking a new and proactive approach to encourage our members to actively participate in important actions to help decrease and prevent crime in our GMIA Community.

Crime Prevention: The Neighborhood Watch Program

While we like to think that our law enforcement agencies have the primary responsibility for the prevention and control of crime in our communities, common sense should make us realize that the citizens of any community are in the best position to make the required "frontline" attack on crime in their own community. Law enforcement agencies commonly recognize that the best way to prevent crime in a given area is to enlist the help of the law abiding residents in that area.

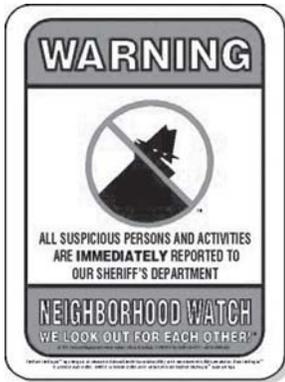
To put into force that obvious common sense principal, a long established na-

tional program is promoted by the Sheriff's Department in San Diego County. That program is known as the Neighborhood Watch Program, or "NWP". The NWP is a nationally sponsored and coordinated program under the leadership of the National Crime Prevention Council, a Federally funded organization with headquarters in Washington, D.C.

The NWP has been in operation in San Diego County for almost 20 years, and is patterned after a plan of operation that has proven successful on a nationwide basis. The NWP is directed by the SD County Sheriff's Department as an integral part of the Sheriff's overall crime prevention and detection program. Every Sheriff's Station is staffed with Crime Prevention Specialists who organize and coordinate NWP groups in specific neighborhoods. The NWP is a key crime prevention program that has been active in our general GMIA community for many years. Under current guidelines specific NWP groups are organized to involve residents on a specific street, or section of a street, in residential neighborhoods. There are approximately 20 different NWP groups currently organized and operating in our specific GMIA community. NWP groups currently organized and operating in our GMIA community are centered along the following streets.

Neighborhood Watch Program Primary Street Name	
Wister Drive	Rockwood Rd
Lavell Street	Sunrise Hills
Edgewood	Navaja Lane
Vivera Drive	Edgeview Drive
Shadow Rd	Shadow Glenn
Grosalia Ave.	New Ranch Rd
MacRonald	Altoona Drive
Fuerte Hills Drive	Sunray Place
Fuerte Drive (1)	Meadow Creek Rd
Fuerte Drive (2)	

CRIME, continued from page 3



To implement the NWP in San Diego County, the Sheriff's Department crime prevention specialists have a mission to educate, organize, and

train community residents to form and participate in a specific NWP group for their own residential area. Under this mission, the Sheriff's Department crime prevention specialists will meet with community residents who are interested in helping control and prevent crime in their local residential area.

This assistance includes help in organizing NWP groups and educating members of such groups in proven techniques to prevent and decrease neighborhood crime incidents. Community residents interested in becoming active in an existing NWP group, or forming a new NWP group where one is needed, should contact the SD County Sheriff's Department.

There are two Crime Prevention Specialists with responsibility for the two Sheriff's crime prevention sections that

overlay our greater GMIA community area: **Julio Garcia**, and **Erin Drown**, both operating out of the Sheriff's Lemon Grove Station. They can be contacted at telephone number **(619) 337-2037** and letting the secretary, Shirley Robinson, direct the caller to the appropriate Crime Prevention Specialist.

Julio and Erin are available to help organize new as well as motivate existing NWP groups in specific neighborhoods. This includes providing literature on the NWP, assistance and presentations at initial organizational meetings, and periodic consultations as requested. Evidence of the presence of an active NWP group is the observation of posted "Neighborhood Watch" signs.

Purchase and posting of these NWP signs are the financial and administrative responsibility of each specific NWP group in coordination with the Sheriff's Department Crime Prevention Specialist assigned to the area.

It is the Sheriff's Department policy that NWP signs can be posted only in community areas where a specific NWP group has been organized and coordinated with the Sheriff's Department, and is still viable and functioning. Community members may notice the current existence of NWP signs in areas and streets not included in the above list of

streets for which the Sheriff's Department recognizes that a viable and active NWP group is currently in operation. The noticeable deteriorated condition of many signs is probably a good indication that an active NWP group is no longer operating effectively in that area. **The Sheriff's Department can provide information for obtaining replacements for deteriorated signs in areas where a recognized NWP group is functioning.**

In summary, GMIA strongly encourages members and residents of our GMIA community to actively participate in crime prevention in our community. We believe one of the best ways to do this is to be a member of an active Neighborhood Watch Program group for your street or area. To that end, we encourage each GMIA residential family to join an already active Neighborhood Watch Group, or if no active NWP group exists for your area, be the one that initiates action to establish a new NWP group for your specific street or area. Become active in the crime prevention program by talking to one of our SD Sheriff's Department Crime Prevention specialist for our area, at **(619) 337-2037**. Remember the unofficial motto of GMIA:

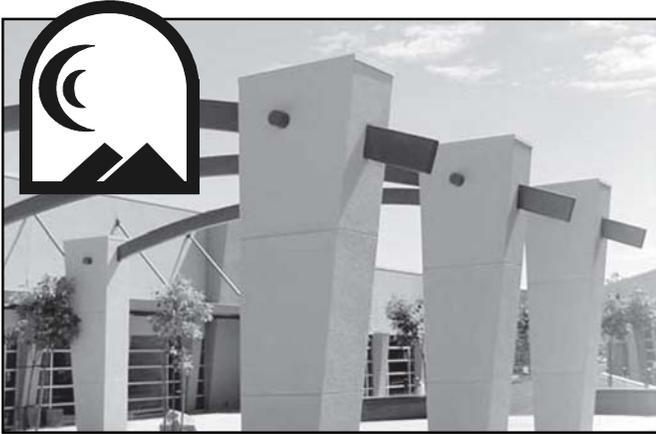
The only thing necessary for bad things to happen to our community is for good community members to do nothing! ▲

2004 Calendar of Events

<p>Sunday, April 11, 6:30 a.m. Easter Sunrise Service Mt. Helix Park</p>	<p>Shuttle starts at 5:30 a.m. Pastries and beverages served starting 5:45 a.m. Sponsoring church: Christ Lutheran Church of La Mesa</p>
<p>Sunday, May 2, Noon to 4 p.m. GMIA Annual Art & Garden Tour</p>	<p>An announcement on this event has been included with this newsletter. Sponsor: GMIA</p>
<p>Monday, May 10, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. GMIA Annual Dinner Meeting La Mesa Community Center</p>	<p>Sponsor: GMIA Dinner is served at 6:00 p.m. Announcement and Reservation Form for this event has been provided with this edition of the newsletter.</p>
<p>PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW FOR THESE IMPORTANT EVENTS!</p>	

Planning and Land Use

CUYAMACA COLLEGE *Releases Draft "EIR" for Proposed Expansion Projects*



Cuyamaca College is planning to grow! Currently a Master Plan has been developed to allow for the expansion of Cuyamaca's facilities to serve an estimated enrollment of 15,000 students in 2015. Several new buildings and facilities are planned including,:

1. **Additional parking lot** adding 244 parking spaces adjacent to Rancho San Diego Parkway. The additional parking will be conveniently located across the entrance road from the One-Stop Student Services Center and next to the all-purpose recreational field
2. **A new Student Center** which is planned to be in close proximity to the learning Resource Center and academic and administration buildings. The Student Center will accommodate a bookstore, student affairs administration, health center, student government, club offices and meeting rooms, multi-ventor food court, dining area/multi-purpose (240-640 seats), snack/convenience store, student development services, and support staff.
3. **New Science and Technology Mall** including physical and life science labs, computer science labs, and computer art labs to meet the college's present and future needs. It will also house two independent learning labs, one a Basic Skills Training Center and the other a Biochemical Instrumentation Lab to

support the physical and life sciences.

The Cuyamaca College Master Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report dated December 2003 is available for review. The public review period was December 24, 2003 through February 16, 2004. GMIA recognizes that due to an

oversight which resulted in the Valle De Oro Planning Group not having this document in time to meet the review deadline that the public comment period has passed. **However, the Valle De Oro Planning group is now currently reviewing this document and will forward its comments to the appropriate regulatory agencies. GMIA urges all concerned citizens to do the same.** GMIA has concerns over potential increases in traffic along Avocado Blvd. and/or Fuerte Drive as a result of the expansion of the College.

Copies of the Cuyamaca College Master Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report are available for review at the following locations:

GCCCD Facilities Planning Office
8800 Grossmont College Dr., El Cajon

Cuyamaca College Library
900 Rancho San Diego Pkwy, El Cajon

Prop 'R' Program Headquarters
900 Rancho San Diego Pkwy, El Cajon

Rancho San Diego County Library
1555 Via Rancho San Diego, El Cajon

Casa De Oro County Library
9805 Campo Road, Spring Valley

Comments on the adequacy of the Draft EIR should be sent to Facilities Planning and Development, 8800 Grossmont College Drive, El Cajon, CA 92020, Attention Dale Switzer. The District will prepare responses to comments received

during the public review period regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR. The comments and responses, together with the Draft EIR and its appendices, will comprise the Final EIR. In arriving at a decision to proceed with the Master Plan, the District Governing Board will consider, among other things, the information in the Final EIR and will determine the adequacy of the environmental documentation under the California Environmental Quality Act

For more information on the planned expansion, including renderings of the proposed new buildings as well as a full list of the new facilities planned and a proposed construction time line, please visit: www2.gafcon.com:82/gcccd/cuyamaca/index.html. ▲

Chicken Ranch Update

By the end of January, the Dept. of Planning and Land Use reviewed and replied to a developer's application for a General Plan Amendment, a Rezone and a Tentative Map of the "Chicken Ranch" property. There were many points that the County addressed and which the developer needs to address before the application can be further processed. The County supplied an estimated processing schedule for this application. The developer must submit the "1st Draft Extended Studies" by May 26, 2004. Then, there is a lengthy period for reviewing and revising.

According to the DPLU schedule, at this time the DPLU's initial project hearing (PUBLIC COMMENTS!) comes in early 2005. Note: this date is subject to change. For more information, concerned citizens may contact the planner in charge: Stella Caldwell, Planner, County of San Diego, Department of Planning and Land Use, 5201 Ruffin Road, Suite B, San Diego, CA 92123, (858) 495-5375. Refer to case number: GPA 03-006, TM5343, and R03-017.

Happenings...In and Around Our Community

Rodent Control — What You Need to Know

There has been a noticeable increase in rat and mouse problems in our area. Usually home invasions occur in the fall as food sources disappear, when rodents seeking other food sources find homes to be their solution. Unfortunately, this situation has been exacerbated recently, in the wake of the October fires.

We offer the following tips on how to tell if you have a rodent problem, what you can do, and what services are available from the county.

Signs of Rodent Presence

Rodents always leave signs of their presence. Look for droppings, snail shells with a cut in them (rats), grease marks along walls or where they would get into buildings, and of course the damage they create. Mice and rats are excellent climbers, so check thoroughly from ground to roof for entry points. All a mouse needs is 1/4 inch hole to get in; a good rule of thumb is that if a pencil can fit into it, a mouse could too. The illustration below shows some of the conditions that invite rodents onto your property.

If you feel you have a problem, County Vector Control will provide free recommendations for you to control it yourself, or advise your private pest control service. If you would like a County technician to visit your home, call (858) 694-2888. Scheduling an inspection can take up to 10 days.

Steps for Control

There are 3 steps necessary to control rats and mice, *which must be performed in the following order:*

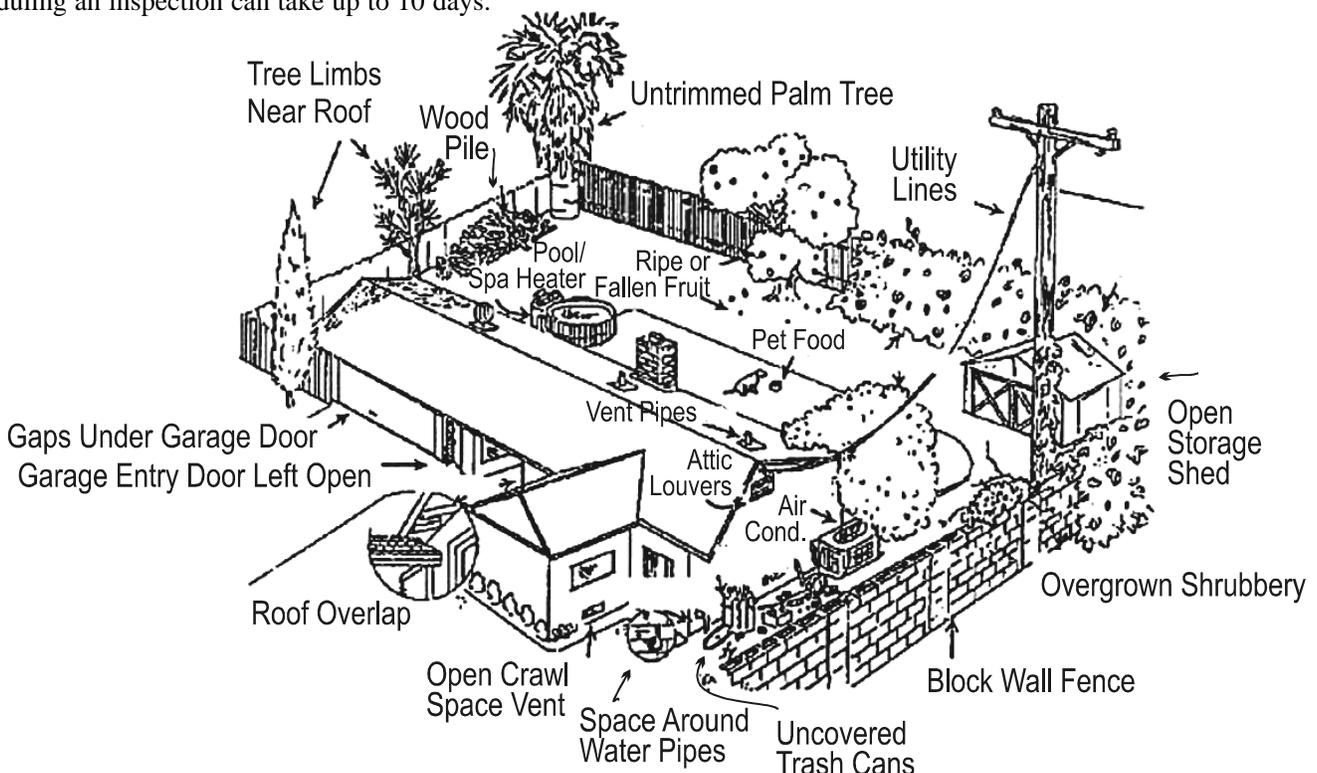
1. Exclusion: Seal off all possible points of entry

This can be as simple as sealing a hole in the wall, or adding a screen to a utility duct, or as complex as replacing your roof or removing trees. Be sure to check soffit vents and around cables entering the building, gable vent screens, turbine and box vents on roofs and entry from the garage. Seal up all openings the size of a quarter or larger that may grant access to your home by rats; and any hole or crack larger than 1/4 of an inch if your problem is mice. Large holes or cracks should be stuffed with steel wool or wire mesh before sealing with caulk or foam, otherwise rodents can chew through to enter. Install good, thick weatherstrip on the bottom of all exterior doors to prevent rodents from entering.

2. Eliminate them inside

Use snap traps or glue traps to eliminate them. Many feel glue traps are more effective and less messy, but be aware if you choose this that you will have to dispose of a living animal, and this is not for everybody. Placing newspaper under your traps can make disposal easier. Place traps in rooms where

Continued on next page



RODENTS, continued from previous page

you have seen rodent evidence; they prefer to travel along walls and under or behind cabinets and furniture for cover, so place traps appropriately. Remember they are now trapped inside and like to stay hidden, so never use poisons inside your house, or you will have a very smelly home resulting from hidden bodies.

3. Control them outside

Remove attractive nuisances and remember, the closer to near the foundation of your home, the easier for them to enter the building itself. Do not leave out pet food, and keep trash covered. Store firewood store off the ground, as far from buildings as possible. If possible, remove any piles of leaves, debris, stones, bricks, etc. A bait feeding station will enable you to help control the population with poison, without endangering pets and wildlife. County Vector Control will recommend the safest rodenticide and instruct you on its proper use. Rat bait can be purchased from the Department of Agriculture Weights & Measures at 5555 Overland Ave., Building #3 in Kearney Mesa, tel. (858) 694-2739.▲

Estrella Park Update

As reported in previous editions of this newsletter, an ad hoc community committee is working on a project with the mission to improve and beautify the currently barren land south of Estrella Ave. which in reality is the County owned "Estrella Park." The committee, under the leadership of Joan Tweed, has now generated its proposed overall design plan for improving and landscaping this heretofore neglected parcel, that will when implemented transform this parkland into a beautiful and usable County Park property.



Walking trails, landscaping, and grass covered areas are intended to make this park property usable by community residents while at the same time transforming it into a beautiful appearing property asset in our GMIA community. By the time you read this newsletter, a meeting will have been held on April 1 to present the project design plan to all interested community residents.

GMIA fully supports this community park project, and will provide members with updated information regarding subsequent developments and status on this important community project in future editions of this newsletter. ▲

TRAFFIC, continued from page 1

speed in the immediate vicinity of the stop sign, they quickly resume their previous speed a short distance beyond the stop control."

Furthermore, your GMIA Board believes that even if additional stop signs/stop controls were allowed to go in, they would only serve to create more traffic congestion on Fuerte and impact negatively the residents whose driveway directly abut the street.

However, GMIA recognizes that this does not mean that our members must simply sit and wait for the ramps to be completed and also for signals to be adjusted. The County of San Diego has a Residential Traffic Program which addresses and assists residents' concern

regarding the excessive speed and/or volume of traffic on the streets adjacent to their homes. To address this concern, the Department of Public Works (DPW), in conjunction with the California Highway Patrol, has developed the Residential Traffic Program in an attempt to improve the quality of life on neighborhood streets. This evolving program is designed to calm traffic on local streets so residents will feel more secure in their Neighborhoods. The program focuses on reducing speeds and cut-through traffic on residential streets by using the three Es.

Education

Residents receive the information and tools to become active participants in addressing their neighborhood traffic concerns.

Engineering

Engineering principles are used to develop traffic calming strategies that address community-identified traffic issues. Solutions can include traffic control devices ranging from the least restrictive (signing and striping) to the more restrictive (one-way streets and barricades).

Enforcement

Targeted police enforcement supports the traffic-calming plan developed by residents and DPW.

GMIA urges all residents to become involved in this program and to implement it on parts of Fuerte and its associated streets. For further information on this program, please call Maria Rubio-Lopez (858) 874-4030 at the Traffic Advisory Committee. ▲



Fire Barrier Gardens

Here are some general suggestions from the County of San Diego, for creating a garden that can also act as a fire barrier. Summer is our traditional fire season and it never hurts to plant in a manner that is also helpful to fire safety. It is suggested that brush be cleared within 30 feet of buildings and limit brush height to 18 inches within 70 feet of buildings. A limited number of specimen shrubs and trees can be allowed within 30 feet of a building. In this area, it is advised to select plants that grow close to the ground, have a low sap or resin content, grow without

Planting for Garden Beauty and Safety

With Spring here and the Annual Art and Garden Tour next month, many of us are thinking of planting. The following is a list of Native California plants that should do well in our climate and best of all are known to attract butterflies and/or hummingbirds. This is by no means every plant that can be planted to attract these wonderful garden creatures, but it is a start. There are several Native Plant Nurseries and Societies in San Diego that can also get you started on a butterfly and hummingbird friendly garden. Happy planting!

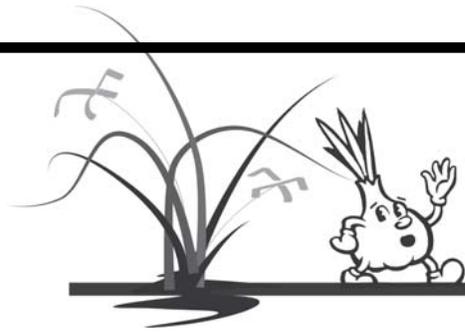
Plants, Shrubs and Trees Known to Attract ...

Plants, Shrubs and Trees Known to Attract ...				
Butterflies	Common Yarrow	Lemon Balm	Rock Cress	Wallflower
Arroyo Willow	Coyote Brush	Lilac	Sages	Wallflower
Barberry	Dogbane	Lily of the Nile	Sea Holly	Wild Buckwheat
Basket of Gold	Field Mustard	Lippia	Sea Pink	Yerba Santa
Black Knapweed	Fleabane	Michaelmas Daisy	Silk Tree	Zinnia
Blue Elderberry	Flossflower	Milkweed	Silver Lace Vine	Hummingbirds
Bluebeard	Forget-me-not	Mint	Sneeze Weed	Narrow-Leaf Milkweed
Bouncing Bet	French Marigold	Mock Orange	Speedwell	Sticky Monkey Flower
Buckeye	Garden Heliotrope	Money Plant	Spotted Gayfeather	Hummingbird Sage
Butterfly Bush	Garden Verbena	Onions	Sweet Alyssum	Fuchsia-Flowering
Buttonwillow	Globe Thistle	Pearly Everlasting	Sweet Candytuft	Gooseberry
California Lilac	Goldenrod	Pincushion Flower	Sweet Marjoram	Liveforever
Catnip	Grape Hyacinth	Pride of Madeira	Sweet Rocket	Western Redbud
Chrysanthemum	Hounds Tongue	Purple Coneflower	Sweet William	
Cineraria	Joe Pye Weed	Pussypaws	Thistles	
Citrus	Lantana	Rabbit Brush	Tower of Jewels	
Common Aubrieta	Lavender	Red Clover	Valerian	

accumulating dead branches, needles or leaves, are easily maintained and pruned and are drought-tolerant. Plants to avoid in this area include trees such as pines, cypresses, junipers and eucalyptus and shrubs including, ornamental grasses, acacias, hopseed and all berry vines.

Further information can be found at the County of San Diego, Department of Planning and Land Use website at www.co.san-diego.ca.us/cnty/cntydepts/landuse or by calling (858) 694-2960. ▲

Helpful Telephone Numbers	County of San Diego	City of La Mesa	City of El Cajon
ROADS Resurfacing, closures, potholes, etc.	Department of Public Works 1-877-684-8000 or www.co.san-diego.ca.us Dept. of Public Works section online road service request	619-667-1450	619-441-1658
LAND USE Zoning violations and other illegal land use	Code Enforcement 619-441-4264	Code Enforcement 619-667-1177	Code Enforcement 619-441-1716
LAW ENFORCEMENT	911 if Emergency or Sheriff's Dept. (Lemon Grove) 619-337-2000	911 if Emergency or La Mesa Police Department 619-667-1400	911 if Emergency or El Cajon Police 619-579-3311
ANIMAL SITUATIONS Animal Control	619-236-2341	619-667-1436	619-441-1580
HAZARDOUS MATERIAL DISPOSAL	877-713-2784 for guidance & information 619-596-5100 to make an appt. for disposal	619-287-5696 to make an appt. for disposal	619-596-5100 to make an appt. for disposal
GENERAL INFORMATION For categories not listed above	858-694-3900	619-436-6611	619-441-1776



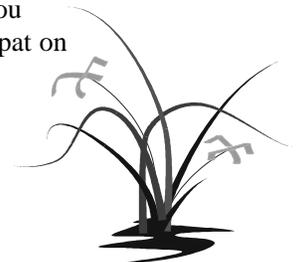
Orchids & Onions in Our GMIA Area!

Your GMIA Board of Directors has decided that there are a few great improvements to our community and a few not so great improvements. Therefore, we decided that it was time for some GMIA “Orchids and Onions.”



ORCHID #1

The first Orchid goes to the community members who cleaned up and updated the sign and entrance to Mt. Helix at the intersection of Fuerte Drive and Grossmont Blvd. It looks great. This effort is a great example of community members taking pride in their neighborhood and making things better. These community members are anonymous to your GMIA Board, if you know who they are – give them a big pat on the back from us.



ORCHID #2

The second Orchid goes to Kaiser Permanente for their lovely facility on Avocado Blvd. at Fury Lane. Kaiser worked closely with the Valle de Oro Planning Group to achieve a building that fits with our community. It looks great...we believe it is the best looking medical facility in San Diego. Kudos to you, Kaiser, for providing our community with a needed medical facility and also a great building.

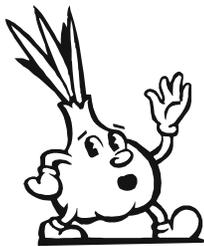


Photos by Kristine Alessio



ONION #1

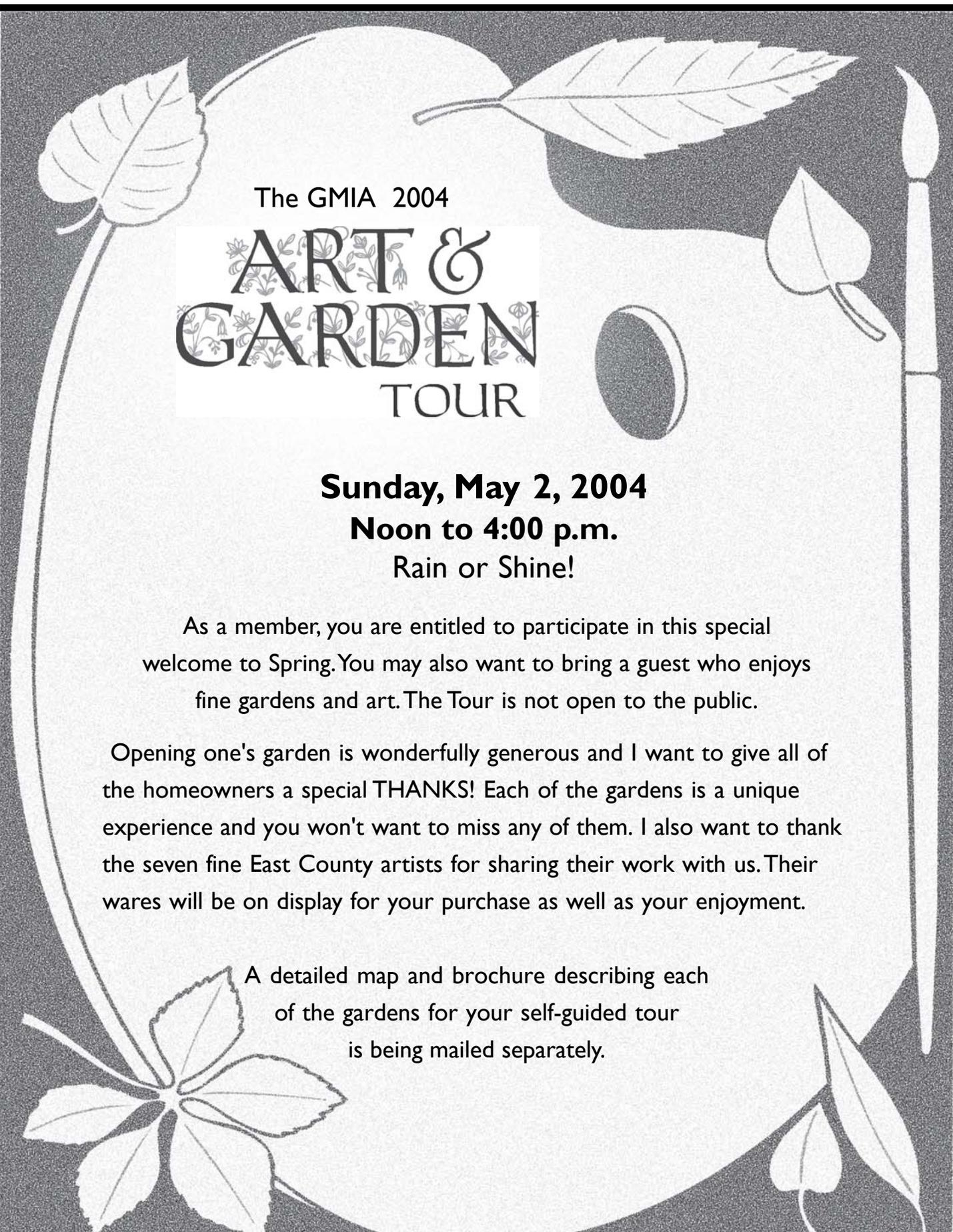
The first Onion goes to Parent-Solendi Development. Their new housing project called Leilani Drive is located on Fury Lane. This development had massive grading and significantly changed the terrain of the site. GMIA is not opposed to new construction, but the grading associated with this is an eyesore.



ONION #2

The second Onion goes to the half finished house located on Alto Drive. Come on folks, this has been an eyesore for years and needs to be fixed up. It is also hazardous to neighborhood children. Trash, partially built walls and a broken down backhoe in the front yard among other things are not appreciated by local residents or by the City of La Mesa which has been attempting to get the owners to clean up this place. GMIA sincerely hopes that the owners will do the right thing before they end up with a lawsuit against them by the City of La Mesa!





The GMIA 2004

**ART &
GARDEN
TOUR**

Sunday, May 2, 2004
Noon to 4:00 p.m.
Rain or Shine!

As a member, you are entitled to participate in this special welcome to Spring. You may also want to bring a guest who enjoys fine gardens and art. The Tour is not open to the public.

Opening one's garden is wonderfully generous and I want to give all of the homeowners a special THANKS! Each of the gardens is a unique experience and you won't want to miss any of them. I also want to thank the seven fine East County artists for sharing their work with us. Their wares will be on display for your purchase as well as your enjoyment.

A detailed map and brochure describing each of the gardens for your self-guided tour is being mailed separately.



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About GMIA ... And What We Do

The Grossmont- Mt. Helix Improvement Association (GMIA) is the oldest and largest association of its type in San Diego County, if not the entire State of California. It was formed in 1938 as a result of community concern for the lack of adequate land use planning and zoning type requirements. It is a non-profit public benefit corporation that represents thousands of families residing in single family residences in the large unincorporated area of the County that is east of the city of La Mesa, south of the city of El Cajon and generally north of SR94. The GMIA membership area consists of over 5,000 single-family owner occupied residences with a population approximating 20,000 people.

The primary mission of GMIA is to work on behalf of all GMIA community members to ensure that the quality and character of our community is preserved and enhanced.



Unlike a typical “homeowners association,” GMIA does not own any property or facilities, nor is it responsible for any property maintenance. GMIA is served by an elected, unpaid Board of Directors and has no paid officers or employees. The GMIA Board works with County and regional governmental entities to help resolve issues that impact our community such as transportation systems, traffic

control, planning and land use, zoning, code enforcement, as well as crime prevention and law enforcement.

GMIA invites and encourages all residents in our membership area to become active members and to support the efforts of the GMIA Board to preserve and enhance the character and lifestyle that are currently enjoyed in our wonderful community.

For more information on GMIA, please visit our website at www.GMIA.net ■