

A Community
Newsletter
from the
Grossmont –
Mt. Helix
Improvement
Association



viewpoints

Spring 2010

Volume 40 Issue 4



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Upcoming Art & Garden Tour

Saturday
May 2nd
Noon to 4 pm

Helix Water Rate Update

Helix Water District has announced that our rates have to go up again to keep up with their increasing costs. A rate study will be completed in June and a public hearing regarding the next rate increase is set for August. The amount and exact date of the increases will be determined at that time.

On the positive side, Helix Water District has publicly acknowledged that the basic water requirement of large lots is different than that of small lots. The existing tiered pricing system that charges a higher price per gallon for higher usage unfairly penalizes those of us with larger lots. The District is now studying the feasibility of changing the tiered pricing system for larger lots to a “domestic water budget” structure to be applied to lots greater than one-quarter acre.

Lower, non-punitive rates would be based on each lot’s basic requirements with punitive pricing allocated only to excessive water use. This system would be designed so that larger lots will not be unfairly charged a higher price per gallon just because of their higher basic needs. The domestic “need-based” budgets could result in more fairly priced water and still meet the mandated conservation requirements placed on the District. If the water budgets are implemented as presented, our water bills should decrease.

GMIA supports the concept of domestic water budgets for the larger lots, but the actual pricing is still undetermined and the potential implementation of a new system is more than a year away. Visit our web page at GMIA.net for continued updates on rate increases and the potential water budgets within our area. ▲

Mt. Helix Nature Walk and Plant Exchange

Thanks to Bruce Wolitz who served as our naturalist guide for GMIA’s 2nd annual Nature Walk on March 13th. Participants enjoyed an informative walk in Damon Lane Park and learned about the value of native plants to provide habitat for our important local wildlife. Bruce

See PLANTS on page 2



PLANTS continued from page 1

emphasized the importance of omitting invasive plants from our landscape, as they can overrun our fragile environment.

Thanks also to Dagmar Miller, GMIA Board Member, who coordinated our first ever Plant Exchange and brought two truckloads of plants that she propagated for the event. Great job Dagmar! ▲



73rd Annual Dinner: Monday, May 11, 2010

La Mesa Community Center, 4975 Memorial Drive, La Mesa

PROGRAM

5:00-5:45 pm	Social Hour – No Host Bar
5:45-7:00 pm	Dinner
7:00-7:30 pm	Welcome Presentation of the Flag (Troop 335, Rafael Lopez Ferrar Memorial Color Guard) GMIA Business Meeting; Election of Board Al Platt Award Presentation
7:30-7:45 pm	County Supervisor Dianne Jacob – Updates on Local Issues
7:45-8:45 pm	“Go Green” Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Gardener Association • California Native Plant Society • Edco Recycling
8:45 pm	Adjournment

For questions about the dinner, go to www.gmia.net and click “Contact GMIA”

Detach this section and mail it along with your check to: GMIA, PO Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943-2751
Please respond promptly as seating for dinner is limited. Your reservation will be held at the door.

Name(s) (for name tag) _____

Number of Reservations

Total Enclosed
(\$25/person by May 3; \$28/person thereafter)

\$

PLEASE RSVP BY MAY 3, 2010.

Reservations received by Mon., 5/3 are \$25/person. After 5/3, \$28/person (necessary for catering estimates).

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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Message from the President

GMIA continues to have an effective role in the preservation of our community's character. We recently sponsored our Damon Lane Nature Walk and First Annual Plant Exchange, and we will continue to plan similar events. Our Annual Garden Tour is always a huge success and is set for the first Sunday in May with our Annual Dinner planned for the following week on Monday, May 10th. GMIA Directors will attend the final hearing on the proposed Chicken Ranch Development at the Board of Supervisors Meeting on May 19th and we encourage attendance by our members to ensure that our community's concerns are heard. We have recently attended public meetings on police and safety issues that impact our area as well as meetings on our increasing water rates. We will keep members informed of these pressing issues through the continuation of our Viewpoints, our Web Site (GMIA.net), and our developing email capabilities. Please contact the web site or any Board Member with your community concerns and we will try to be helpful.

Thank all of you for your memberships that allow us to have such a strong collective voice and special thanks to those who have made added contributions. The continued community involvement by our members helps maintain the quality of life that makes our community special.

We sincerely thank you, *Mark Schuppert* ▲

Viewpoints Via Email

A list of current emails is being compiled in order to send Viewpoints electronically to all who have indicated on their membership envelope or sign-ups at events that they wish to receive it that way. The treasurer has been keeping track of those emails so if you have changed yours recently, please give Larry Nichols a call. Distribution will be by snail mail for a while longer until we work out the kinks. ▲

Earth Day, April 25th

On Sunday, April 25th, The Jarrett Meeker Foundation and Mt. Helix Park Foundation will co-host a free event at the Mt. Helix Amphitheatre from 11:00AM to 3:00PM. Parking and shuttles will be available next to the fire station on Vivera Drive and from Grossmont High School. Sponsored by the Barona Band of Mission Indians, the event will feature environmental and wildlife presentations, educational speakers, music, food and children's activities. Many vendors and groups will be represented so there should be something for everyone to enjoy. ▲

Septic Genie to the Rescue

We've been getting inquiries about the 2008 article we ran on the "Pirana" system, an Aerobic Bacteria Generator that could help solve your septic system problems but could only be professionally installed. Because many potential customers were too far from an installation center, they asked for a do-it-yourself product. The company has now developed the system into one that can be sold directly to homeowners nationwide. There is an installation procedure and a homeowner maintenance and support program. This new system is called "Septic Genie." For more information and a free consultation, please contact the Septic Genie pros at septicgenie.com or call 877-994-3643. ▲

**Chicken Ranch FINAL HEARING
Slated for Wed., May 19th**

The final hearing for the development proposed to significantly increase the zoning density on the “Chicken Ranch” agricultural property at Fuerte and Damon Lane has been set for May 19th, 2010. We need your help in stopping this attack on our Mt. Helix area General Plan. To get your speaker slips in on time, please be in the County Administration Building, 1600 Pacific Highway, on the third floor by 8:45 AM. Parking can be limited, so please leave early and carpool if possible. This will be the last hearing, so polish your speeches and keep them succinct – about 2 minutes max unless you’re part of an organized presentation. Just remember, keeping to a time schedule is very important in these formal hearings and the board chairperson has been known to cut people off in mid sentence if they run over the allotted time. For more information, contact Susan Brownlee at (619)588-5855 or Jack Phillips at (619)670-0986.

2010
**ART &
GARDEN
TOUR**

and Annual Dinner Meeting

Mark your calendars for Sunday, May 2 to enjoy the GMIA Art & Garden Tour, and Monday, May 11 for the GMIA Annual Dinner Meeting.

Inside this issue you will find the Art & Garden Tour Brochure and Map. Be sure to bring this with you on May 2nd as you visit 5 amazing gardens in our neighborhood.

You will also find a reservation form for the Annual Dinner Meeting. Please complete the form and mail with your check to the address shown on the form. ▲