

**A Community
Newsletter**

from the

**Grossmont –
Mt. Helix
Improvement
Association**



viewpoints

June 2002

Volume 33, Issue 2



In This Issue:

- **Traffic in Our Community**
- **2002 Art & Garden Tour**
- **Mt. Helix Park**
- **Helpful Telephone Numbers & Contacts**
- **Hazardous Material Disposal**



2002 Annual Dinner Meeting

A Most Enjoyable and Rewarding Evening

If you failed to join us for the GMIA Annual Dinner Meeting on May 13, 2002, you missed one of the most interesting and enjoyable Dinner Meetings we have experienced in recent years! This annual and official GMIA event was again held at the La Mesa Community Center. Using a combined Historic/Patriotic theme, this event turned out to be a very enjoyable evening for the over 200 people in attendance. After the customary social hour starting at 5:30 p.m. and the buffet dinner, pre-meeting entertainment was provided by the Christian Youth Theater (CYT) who presented a selection of songs from their "American Pop" program.

Then opening ceremonies for our Annual Meeting included a full military Color Guard and Cub Scout Pack 51 joining in to recognize attendees who were veterans, active, and/or retired personnel from any military, law enforcement, or public safety organization. After introduction of our several special guests, we took time for our County Supervisor Dianne Jacob to give us an update on several matters of importance to our GMIA community, including on-line access to locations of registered sex offenders, the impact of the updating of the County general Plan on the GMIA area, and locations of hazardous waste disposal sites.

GMIA Treasurer, Clint Smith, submitted the unaudited Treasurer's Report showing a bank account balance of \$17,242. The required election of GMIA Directors with expiring terms was conducted, with the following Directors elected to continue to serve for a three year term expiring June 30, 2005: Kristine Alessio, Guy Halgren,



Above, GMIA President Al Platt with [name], [name], and [name] (l. to r).



GROSSMONT - MT. HELIX

**Officers**

Alvin W. Platt 660-0232	President
Jon Fulgham 440-1048	1st V.P.
Tom LeDuc 697-8884	2nd V.P.
Clinton Smith 698-0839	Treasurer
Jan Bement 670-4279	Secretary
Ellen Phillips 670-0986	Secretary

Directors

Kristine Alessio	Guy Halgren
Brian Arnold	Rosemary Heweker
Gordon Austin	Kristin Kjaero
Bob Ball	Dan Mitrovich
Jackie Burden	Jack Phillips

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

The GMIA 2002 Fiscal Year ends on June 30, 2002. As announced at the GMIA Annual Dinner Meeting held on May 13, GMIA is in sound financial condition, and your Board of Directors is fully motivated to serve our association for another year! Most of the active projects and issues requiring immediate focus by your Board are covered by the various articles contained in this edition of our newsletter. We encourage you to carefully read each edition of our newsletter, as it is our primary means of communicating what your Board is doing and the issues we face, as well as documenting the results we have achieved (or are unable to achieve). As always, we encourage you to share your copy of this newsletter with one or more of your neighbors, as a way of introducing them to our GMIA community improvement association.

Please take the time to review the names of current GMIA Directors in the recitals adjacent to this column. You will note that there has been one addition to your Board since the previous newsletter edition: our newest Director accessed to your Board on June 10 is Jackie Burden. Please welcome her to her new position as a GMIA Director. And as previously recommended, please take every opportunity available to give a special word of thanks to those Directors with whom you are acquainted, and for those with whom you are not acquainted, please make an attempt to get to know them and render a word of thanks.

One last thought: as pointed out in previous editions of this newsletter, your GMIA membership does count! Please read the article in this edition regarding Membership, which hopefully will cause a new zeal for

you to assist your Board in recruiting additional GMIA members. The size of our membership is most often a gauge of how much attention your Board receives from elected officials and government entities. So once again, please remember, Membership Does Count!

Best wishes to all GMIA families for an enjoyable summer! ■

Land Use

County General Plan 2020 Update

Progress has been unbelievably slow in obtaining approval for our area which should have no significant changes in land uses. If all goes as planned, our updated community plan (the one produced and managed by the Valle de Oro Community Planning Group) will continue to preserve the life-style that we cherish.

Old Fire Station Property

The building that formerly housed the Casa de Oro fire station at the corner of Casa de Oro Blvd. and Ramona is being used as a private garage. We requested County Code Enforcement officers to look into the blight that has grown there. The officers have examined the unsightly property with its many vehicles and found it to be in compliance with County Ordinances and Zoning Regulations. However, we are still not convinced that neighborhood blight is acceptable. We would welcome any suggestions. ■



Photo by Bob Cederdahl

Traffic in Our Community

General Traffic Conditions (Dorothy said it wasn't like this in the Land Of Oz!)

And neither was it like this when the earlier developers of our current GMIA community, like Ed Fletcher, initiated residential real estate development in this area. One only has to look at the layout of roads like Fuerte Drive, Resmar Road, and Lemon Avenue to realize that heavy vehicular traffic on these roads was never anticipated. However, with the ultimate development of almost the entire GMIA community area, and the extensive and dense development of much of the area east and south of our GMIA community, all of our secondary community roads are experiencing never anticipated traffic volume. It is unfortunate that the County area to the east and south of our GMIA community was approved and developed long before an adequate freeway infrastructure was authorized and constructed. Our GMIA community is still suffering, and will continue to suffer, until an adequate traffic flow infrastructure is approved and constructed.

Your GMIA Board of Directors has been, and is still addressing this situation as a top priority. Our entire membership is solicited and encouraged to take a positive position to support and demand that all of our elected officials do whatever is necessary to get the vehicular traffic problem fixed!

94/125 Transition Ramps (No, the intersection of SR94/SR125 mess isn't from a tornado!)

For the past several years, it seems like all we have seen at the SR94/SR125 intersection is one massive, tangled upheaval of land, streets, and buildings. Sometimes it is hard to believe that all of this is leading to "progress" in resolving the often unbearable traffic congestion currently experienced in our GMIA community. In addition to the major SR125 South extension, part of the massive traffic infrastructure project at SR94/SR125 involves the two critical, but still-missing, Transition Ramps between those two freeways. Following is the status on those ramps as discussed at our GMIA Annual Dinner Meeting.

SR94 West To SR125 North Transition Ramp

As you drive north on SR125 past SR94 you have been noticing, and still notice, construction work in-progress for the new SR94 West to SR125 North Transition Ramp. It seems that this new ramp has taken a long, long time to finally achieve its now recognized "final stage"! However, this ramp, a vital part of the total plan to relieve the current traffic congestion caused mainly by commuters using the various secondary feeder streets through our GMIA community to get from SR94 to I8, and vice versa, is

now scheduled to be completed and open for operation by the end of this July! This addition to our traffic infrastructure certainly merits a loud Hurray! CALTRANS now estimates the July operational date for this ramp as realistic. As previously reported and also announced at the GMIA Annual Dinner Meeting on May 13, CALTRANS is trying to coordinate some type of celebration to recognize the opening of this ramp. GMIA strongly supports such a celebration, including a possible "walk through" by community residents and elected officials. We'll try to keep you posted on this pending event, but watch the newspapers for details about it.

SR125 South To SR94 East Transition Ramp (If anyone sees Dorothy, please ask her to get the Wizard of Oz to help on this one!).

There is no noticeable evidence of the construction of this critical ramp, simply because there is none. This ramp project was not approved, and did not exist in CALTRANS' plans, two years ago. As previously reported, it is now an approved CALTRANS project, and is in progress, including the necessary design, environmental impact analysis, and identification of right-of-way property to be acquired. Adequate total funding for this entire ramp project remains tenuous, but we all hope and pray that it survives the current State budget crunch.

CALTRANS has a current forecast for this ramp to be ready for operational use in CY2007. Your GMIA Board of Directors regards this ramp project as a top priority, and encourages our entire membership to take a positive position with all of our elected officials to do whatever is necessary to ensure continued funding to complete this ramp project through construction, since it is a critical element in resolving the current vehicular traffic problems in our community! ■

2002 Garden Tour the Best Yet!



California Entertaining



English Rose Cottage



The annual GMIA Art & Garden Tour, conducted on Sunday May 5, 2002, turned out to be a wonderful experience for everyone who attended this traditional GMIA event! This annual springtime tour has become so enjoyable and popular that a new attendance record was set with more than 650 members and their friends visiting one or more of the four gardens open for the 2002 production of this fabulous show of flowers, landscaping, and art.

We thank our members and the Grossmont/Cuyamaca College District for opening their gardens as hosts for this year's tour, and the artists who appeared at each garden location:

<u>Garden Hosts & Address</u>	<u>Artists</u>
John & Becky McMullen 9433 La Cuesta Drive	Barbara Keeler
Bill & Pat Allen 9840 Grosalia	Richard Trumbull Charlotte Lewis
Bob & Joanie Birkett Sundstrom 11735 Shadow Glen Road	Sandra Hayden
The Water Conservation Garden 12122 Cuyamaca College Dr.	Maic

And, once again we extend our heartfelt thanks to GMIA Director Guy Halgren and his son Matthew, who served as Co-Chairmen for this event and did a superb job in arranging for a most outstanding garden tour this year!

For next year, the garden tour event is scheduled for **Sunday May 4, 2003**. Mark your calendar now! If you have any recommendations for candidate gardens to be on the 2003 garden tour, please contact Guy Halgren at the GMIA mailing address listed on this newsletter. ■



Whimsical Botanical Garden



Bamboo Paradise



Mt. Helix Park

The Mt. Helix Park Foundation, serving as Successor Trustee to San Diego County for the Yawkey Trust under which Mt. Helix Park is provided for public use and enjoyment, reports they are busily keeping the Park maintained and open for use by San Diego County residents, as well as the general public, in keeping with provisions of the original Trust.

You may have noted that the complete Cross was recently cleaned and entirely repainted. This project was accomplished by volunteers as an Eagle Scout Project undertaken by Kevin Carroll, (brother of Sean Carroll whose own Eagle Scout Project in the '90's resulted in designation of Mt. Helix Park as a County Historical Site).

Some of the trees around the Cross have also been trimmed to improve visibility of the Cross. There was a plan to also trim and perhaps top some of the Eucalyptus trees on the amphitheater property, but fear of permanent damage to the trees due to current drought conditions, as well as concern that some of the trees are suffering from a disease that is affecting many trees in our entire community, has caused that landscaping project to be temporarily deferred.

The Foundation has developed an integrated plan to accomplish overdue major maintenance for the Park, as well as enhance it for enjoyment by all who visit and use this beautiful and historic landmark in our GMIA community. Wedding ceremonies and many church and community events are still going strong year round in the Park. The Summer 2002 Broadway



musicals staged by the Christian Community Theater (CCT) are already in progress by the time you receive this newsletter. The Park is available for use for community, personal, or family events, but must be reserved and an application processed for all organized events (see contact information below).

The Foundation also reports they are in the preliminary stages of a major fund raising project. This fund raising campaign is necessary since the Foundation is a non-profit organization with no outside financial resources other than the small amount of residual funds available from the original Trust Fund established by the Yawkey family.

A significant infusion of funds is required to allow the Foundation the resources to accomplish the long overdue major maintenance required for the Park, as well as to provide for the ability to make the planned enhancements to the Park (including improved landscaping and nature trails, new architecturally compatible and attractive stone and iron gates to the Park, addition of permanent restroom facilities, provision for picnic tables and benches, as well as other enhancements).

For further information regarding Mt. Helix Park, the Mt. Helix Park Foundation may be contacted by postal mail at: P. O. Box 2733, La Mesa, CA 91943, or by calling phone number (619) 588-4901. ■

MEETING, continued from page 1

Rosemary Hewicker; Dan Mitrovich; Ellen Phillips and Al Platt. President Al Platt gave a summary of the accomplishments and the issues on which GMIA has been focused during the last year, with particular emphasis on vehicular traffic congestion experienced on our community roads, and then closed the formal Annual Meeting.

Following the business meeting, a most interesting and enjoyable phase of the evening started. Eldonna Lay of the El Cajon Historical Society gave a most interesting and often humorous accounting of some of the history of the first settlers in the San Diego and East County areas. Wow, what a unique and interesting time it was for those early pioneers and settlers who preceded the current residents of our east county communities - wheat farming at what is now the corner of Chase and Avocado Avenues, the irrigation water flume from Lake Cuyamaca and associated flat-bottomed boat rides thereon, a significant raisin industry including the El Cajon Raisin Company cooperative (yes, lots of grapes were once grown in the El Cajon Valley), etc. If you missed the presentation by Eldonna and/or are interested in more details about the early history of the east county and the El Cajon Valley in particular, you may want to obtain a copy of Eldonna's new book, "Valley of Opportunity", available through the El Cajon Historical Society.

In keeping with the overall historical theme of the evening, the La Mesa and El Cajon Historical Societies as well as the Hubert Guy Family displayed books on local history and had copies available for purchase. Our customary award of door prizes continued throughout the evening. Special thanks to those businesses and individuals who donated door prizes for this event: Steven A. & Kristine Alessio; Alessio Leasing, Inc.; Christian Youth Theater; El Cajon Historical Society; Home Depot; The Hubert Guy Family; KSWB-TV; La Mesa Historical Society; Tom and Sandy LeDuc; Long's Drug Store- La Mesa; Al and Judy Platt; Simpson's Nursery; and Village Garden Restaurant & Bakery. Additional

Belonging Has Its Advantages

Some Thoughts Regarding Membership

Most GMIA members are aware of the role that GMIA continues to play in our community's efforts to preserve its character and maintain its quality of life. However, many may not realize that in the unincorporated East County area it serves it represents the interests of approximately 7000 owner-occupied single family residences, with a population approaching 20,000 people.

Although the work of GMIA has been very challenging, to date it has been able to effectively carry out its mission with the dedicated support from a membership that includes only a portion of those whom it represents. However, things are changing! In the face of ever increasing trends toward such things as higher density residential development, vehicular traffic congestion, and the encroachment of commercial developments into residential areas, GMIA is under increasing pressure to work more and more with elected officials and government entities to help preserve the rural, uncongested nature of our community. To continue to respond effectively to



such issues, GMIA needs even broader membership support than it has had in the past. To put it bluntly, elected officials and government entities respond to numbers – obviously the larger our active membership the more influence we can bring to bear.

Your GMIA Board now needs your help in expanding our membership. As you talk to neighbors and friends who live in our area, please ask if they are members of GMIA, share with them the importance of belonging and let us know of their interest so that we can send them more information and a membership application.

As you are aware, for the modest annual dues of \$15, a GMIA membership can be activated for an entire

household. And, since GMIA has no paid Board of Directors, officers or employees and is not involved in property management like a traditional homeowners association, 100% of the annual dues money is used to benefit our community and to keep our members informed of important developments and issues related to its preservation.

Remember belonging to GMIA has its advantages, the most important of which is the opportunity it provides for members to join together in the strong support of our community. Without the active work of GMIA and the support of its members, our community would not be what is today.

Your GMIA Board thanks you for your membership and continued support and looks forward to receiving information from you regarding potential members. You can provide us with this information by calling (619)660-2032 . If desired, you can also refer potential members to GMIA's website, www.gmia.net, where they will be able to learn more about GMIA, review previous newsletters, and download a copy of our membership application. ■

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	Zoning Complaints 619-441-1716
LAW ENFORCEMENT	911 If emergency or Sheriff 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 appointment for disposal	619-596-5100 to make an appointment for disposal
GENERAL INFORMATION For categories not listed above	858-694-3900	619-463-6611	619-441-1776

Hazardous Material Disposal

Believe it or not, many of the common substances and liquids we keep and use in our homes are actually classified as “hazardous materials”, in that they have some component or ingredient that can cause damage or injury if not properly used. That being the case, it is logical to recognize that disposal of such hazardous materials cannot be accomplished in the same manner used for substances and liquids not considered hazardous materials. For example, disposal of any type of paint should not be through your residential sewer system, discard with your household trash, and above all not by pouring it down a storm drain! To assist our members in a better understanding of what is classified as “hazardous material”, we are reprinting the following information contained in the County published pamphlet titled, “Guidelines For Using Household Hazardous Material”, a copy of which you may have already received.



appointment only. Call 877-713-2784. **Elderly and/or Disabled Residents** are eligible for free pick up of Hazardous Waste - call 877-713-2784. Up to 15 gallons or 125 pounds of waste will be accepted.

CITY OF LA MESA

The City of La Mesa holds regular collection events for its residents. Please see their website www.cityoflamesa.com for scheduled events or call EDCO at 619-287-5696, ext.4270. Hazardous materials can also be dropped off at EDCO. You must call first to set up an appointment. 619-287-5696, ext.4270.

CITY OF EL CAJON

The City of El Cajon also offers Hazardous Waste Disposal through Waste Management at 1001 Bradley Avenue, El Cajon, CA 92021. As with the County of San Diego, you **must call and set up an appointment prior to dropping off the materials.** Call Waste Management at 619-596-5100. Additionally, El Cajon residents are eligible for curbside pickup of oil and filters. Call Waste Management at 619-596-5100 for more information. ■

What Are Household Hazardous Materials?

Hazardous Materials are those products that are labeled: DANGER, WARNING, CAUTION, POISON, TOXIC, FLAMMABLE, CORROSIVE, REACTIVE, and EXPLOSIVE. Common household products that contain hazardous chemicals are all-purpose cleaners, solvents, automotive products, paint (latex and oil), pesticides, pool and spa chemicals, aerosols, fluorescent light tubes and ballasts, batteries (home and car), and fuels. Household Hazardous Wastes are leftover unused portions of the above cited products.

If you have a question regarding what is, or might be, classified as hazardous material, we recommend you call the San Diego County Hotline, (877) 713-2784.

Several members have come to your GMIA Board with questions regarding disposal of “Hazardous Waste” - i.e. – motor oil, paint, etc. The following information and phone numbers are provided to assist you in proper disposal of these materials.

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

General Information Line: 877-713-2784 or www.SDCDEH.org. The nearest facility is operated by Waste Management and is located at 1001 Bradley Avenue, El Cajon, CA 92021. **It is open every Saturday, but YOU MUST call 619-596-5100 to make an appointment first.** The per trip limit is 5 gallons or 50 pounds. The alternate site is in Kearney Mesa and is operated by the City of San Diego. It is also open Saturdays only and by

MEETING, continued from page 5

thanks must go to your GMIA Annual Dinner Co-Chairs, Kristine Alessio and Kristin Kjaero for their efforts and planning to make this a most memorable and enjoyable Annual Dinner Meeting, and Treasurer Clint Smith for handling the entire reservation and attendance assignment for this large event! And last but not least, we sincerely appreciate the valuable contribution made by the following Directors and members who assisted in the check-in procedure and the award of door prizes: Rosemary and John Hewicker, Carol Hobbs, Judy Platt, Clint Smith and Steve Alessio.

And, as an item of significant interest to all prospective attendees to our Annual Dinner Meeting next year, in keeping with our new policy, the meeting concluded within a few minutes of our 8:30 p.m. self-imposed deadline – we did it! We truly recognize that this annual event is conducted on a week night, with attendant requirements to relieve baby sitters and/or prepare for the next work/school day, and thus we have a renewed commitment to ensure that each Annual Dinner Meeting is concluded on or before the 8:30 p.m. time limit! How about that! So, please mark your calendars and plan to attend the next GMIA Annual Dinner Meeting, scheduled for **Monday May 12, 2003**. See you there next year lease don't miss it. ■



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Calendar of Events

2002

- Wednesday, July 3, 7 p.m.**
"God Bless America" Service, Mt. Helix Park
Shuttle starts at 5:30 p.m. Hot dogs/beverages at 6 p.m..
Sponsor: La Mesa Christ Lutheran Church. Call 462-5211 for details.
- Wednesday, September 11, 7 p.m.**
9-11 Remembrance Service, Mt. Helix Park
Shuttle starts at 6 p.m.
Sponsor: Foothills United Methodist Church. Call 670-4009 for details.
- Sunday, December 22, 7 p.m.**
Annual "Caroling On Mt. Helix," Mt. Helix Park
No shuttle – candlelight walk up starting at 6:45 p.m. Cookies and hot beverages served all evening. Sponsor: Mt. Helix Park Foundation

2003

- Sunday, April 13, 6:30 a.m.**
Easter Sunrise Service, Mt. Helix Park
Shuttle starts at 5:30 a.m. Pastries and beverages served starting 6 a.m.
Sponsor: Foothills United Methodist Church
- Sunday, May 4, Noon to 4 p.m.**
GMIA Annual Art & Garden Tour
Four gardens (to be announced). Sponsor: GMIA
- Monday, May 12, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.**
GMIA Annual Dinner Meeting, La Mesa Cmty Cntr
Sponsor: GMIA

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW FOR THESE IMPORTANT EVENTS!