



SUMMER 2017

Volume 47 Issue 3

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



Join Us for a Phil's BBQ Dinner

Take a night off from cooking, enjoy mouth-watering fare from Phil's BBQ (along with soft drinks, locally produced craft beer and wine), plus get the latest information about our community.

DATE: June 25th • **TIME:** 5:30 - 8:00 pm

WHERE: Cuyamaca Water Conservation Garden

COST: Just \$12 per member, \$20 for non-members

Our informal buffet style dinner and annual meeting will be at the magnificent Cuyamaca Water Conservation Garden. Last year over 200 people attended! We hope you will show your support for GMIA's advocacy and attend this event.

Do you have community issues you would like to see addressed or need information about our region? County Supervisor Dianne Jacob will be there to answer your questions and hear your concerns. Please include your question/comment on your reservation form. We will also have question/comment cards available at the dinner.

Please be sure to invite your neighbors and encourage them to become GMIA members. Note: reservations are required. Our Annual Meeting is designed for GMIA members, but nonmembers may attend for \$20 per person. As a special bonus, complimentary tours of the Garden will precede the Annual Meeting. For those who wish to participate in a complimentary tour, please be sure to note that on your reservation. Tour time is 4:30 p.m.

Get to know your neighbors and enjoy an evening under the stars. This is a great opportunity to connect with old friends, meet new friends, voice your concerns, and hear what's going on in our area. Reserve online at www.gmia.net or return the enclosed form. Don't delay, we want to be sure to have an ample quantity of Phil's yummy cooking. 🌱

July is GMIA Renewal Time

Check Your Mailing Label

Numbers count! In order for GMIA to advocate for our community, we need a robust membership. That's why your membership support for GMIA makes a difference. Please check your mailing label on this newsletter. On the label you will find the expiration date of your membership.

Time to renew? We encourage our members to renew for multiple years. Annual dues are just \$18 per household. Your payment of \$36 for 2 years or \$54 for 3 years will help us by reducing paperwork and ensure your membership is current. Please remit your dues to GMIA, P.O. Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943. You may also renew online at our secure website www.gmia.net.

Please renew today and encourage your neighbors to join. Questions? Contact Larry Nichols, Treasurer, (619)440-1607. 🌱



GROSSMONT-MT. HELIX
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Krista Bishop Powers	

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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MISSION

GMIA is a 75+ year old nonprofit 501(c)4 public benefit membership organization. Our mission is to preserve and enhance the character and quality of the community and foster pride in the area. We do not employ a paid staff and are served by an all-volunteer board.

President's Message

Our great community didn't happen by chance. Many of the most beloved aspects of life in our semi-rural neighborhood are the result of the unwavering commitment to our community by Jack Phillips. We owe so much to his personal involvement, and that of his wife Ellen Phillips.

Just a year or so after moving into the Mt. Helix area in 1980, the Phillips were alarmed to learn that the General Plan for our region was about to be significantly altered with new zoning proposed to reduce parcel size and thereby dramatically increase density. At that time, County Supervisor Lucille Moore advised Jack to "get involved" and he took her advice to heart. With Ellen doing a lot of leg work to learn about the issues and process, the Phillips, along with GMIA, spearheaded a petition-signing effort to stop the changes that would have forever ruined our large lot, semi-rural community.

Jack's stature as stubborn advocate and tough negotiator for our region led him to Chair the Valle de Oro Planning Group for 34 years and he served on the Board of GMIA for more than 30 years. Here are just a few of his countless accomplishments that impacted our community:

- ◆ Jack led the Planning Group's effort that resulted in a Community Plan Update drafted in the late 1980's and early 1990's. This important document serves as the essential template to preserve the character of our region.
- ◆ The San Diego National Wildlife Refuge in the Sweetwater River valley (behind Target in Rancho San Diego) was a project that Jack championed in the early '90's. Along with Supervisor Dianne Jacob and other members of the VDO Planning Group, Jack fought hard for this cause and successfully convinced U.S. Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt to purchase land for the vital refuge.
- ◆ When Spring Valley (twice) tried to annex Mt. Helix, Jack and Ellen were quick to see the downside of that action. They knew that annexation presented a real threat to land use and zoning, since the 65,000 or so Spring Valley residents could easily outvote our much smaller community and make changes that would be damaging to our community quality and character. Worried that condos and high density housing would follow annexation, GMIA along with the Valle de Oro Planning Group with Jack at the helm, undertook a mammoth endeavor. They acquired voter registration information for all residents in our area north of SR 94; volunteers then polled a large number of those residents; GMIA members Bob Cedardahl, Larry Jackman, Joe Walsh and others took that information and crunched the data to figure out what community consensus was on the issue. With that critical information in hand, they were able to launch an initiative to defeat annexation.

This is just a tiny snapshot of Jack Phillips' achievements. In recognition of his lifetime of service, the County of San Diego designated a "Jack Phillips Day" in 2014. GMIA knows that our lives are better for his contributions and we acknowledge that his influence continues to benefit us. I hope you will join me in celebrating his life and commitment to our community. 🌱

Susan Nichols



**JACK PHILLIPS
IN MEMORIAM**

**AUGUST 21, 1937
TO MARCH 31, 2017**



Calling All Young Families

Are you a young family, or do you have young families on your street? GMIA is actively reaching out to connect with our younger population, particularly those new to our community. In the design stage, we have a plan for a new family-friendly event: a GMIA Family Meet Up. We are working on a suitable date and location.

As members, you've told us that you value GMIA's ongoing efforts to bring neighbors together to celebrate our wonderful region. With this in mind, our newest GMIA board member, Krista Bishop Powers, has envisioned our new event. A working mother with one child and one on the way, Krista is organizing a fun-filled time with live music, kid-friendly food, and age appropriate activities. Volunteers are needed, so please contact Krista if you would like to help us welcome and celebrate with families who have fallen in love with the Grossmont-Mt. Helix region. Krista can be reached at krista@businessofinfluence.com or 619-985-1445.

We hope our event will introduce GMIA to many new supporters. We treasure our region and want to ensure our unique semi-rural life style will be safeguarded by the next generation of residents. To make that happen, we need a robust membership to be sure our voice is heard with the County and other entities. Please spread the word about GMIA. Pass this newsletter on to a new neighbor! 🌱

AlertSanDiego

Get signed up. Get notified.

Get the Message with AlertSanDiego

We are fortunate that San Diego County has a system to send telephone notifications to residents and businesses who may be in danger of being impacted by an emergency or disaster. However, the system automatically calls land lines only unless you register your cell phone.

Because many of our members no longer have land lines, GMIA encourages everyone to register their cell phone numbers with ReadySanDiego.org/AlertSanDiego. Landline phone numbers are already included in the database and don't need to be registered.

Thanks to GMIA Board member Mike Valley for providing this important information. 🌱

Keeping Our Neighborhood's Front Porch Tidy

Look for our GMIA volunteers on the third Saturday of each month at 9:00 am – you will see them at work pulling weeds and clearing litter at the Fuerte/I-8 Park & Ride. GMIA adopted this project four years ago, along with the triangle monument sign at the entrance to our community. Our Green Machine Team assembles each month to spruce up our "community front porch."

You may have noticed that the bark mulch at the Park & Ride was getting thin. CalTrans responded to our request to renew the weed suppressing cover and delivered two truckloads of new mulch. Hardworking volunteers spread the material.

GMIA welcomes members to join us in keeping our neighborhood looking good. If you would like to lend a hand, please contact Tom O'Steen at yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com.



Ryan O'Carroll, Chris Becker, Rocco Becker, Wendy Tinsley Becker, Tnita Dutro, Kay Bickley, Michael Sciulli, Pete Camana, Holly Yarris, Larry Nichols, Tom O'Steen, Tom Huffman. Check out our youngest volunteer, 4 year old Rocco Becker Not pictured: Chris Becker, Susan Nichols, Larry Nichols, Holly Yarris.



CASA DE ORO: It's a Marathon ... Not a Sprint

by Jay Steiger

The Casa De Oro Community Alliance (CDOCA) continues to move forward with projects to improve our neighborhood on the southern boundary of GMIA. Here's a progress report.

Beautification: Following the successes of last year's Spring Community Clean Up and Fall Festival, our CDOCA Beautification Committee has been hard at work. Among our initial goals:

- ◆ Replace worn benches with bus shelters which are both useful and visually appealing
- ◆ Repair damaged sidewalks
- ◆ Increase trash collection
- ◆ Remove or ensure oversight of donation bins

POLICY COMMITTEE: The Policy Committee is preparing a presentation to increase County regulatory oversight of adult-type businesses (liquor stores, smoke shops, etc.). The intent is to ensure that they behave as good operators showing respect for the quality of life in the community and also place limits on where they can locate to keep them away from schools, churches, and similar entities. These changes will require both public support and a majority vote from the County Board of Supervisors. To further this effort, the Policy Committee will engage in formal outreach to help residents and businesses understand the benefits of these plans.

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE:

After many discussions and some day-long visioning sessions, our Strategic Planning Committee endorsed a formal plan to seek County support for assigning or hiring an urban planner/consultant to provide a workable and attainable plan to improve and transform the Casa De Oro corridor. We are slated to make an initial presentation to Supervisor Jacob in June. We hope to enlist her support to secure a funding commitment from the Board of Supervisors.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

The Business Development Committee has been working closely with Supervisor Jacob to move through the extensive County permitting process so that a family-owned Italian bakery can locate at the corner of South Barcelona and Campo Road (formerly Diego's Thrift Shop). Our thanks to Supervisor Jacob who has been instrumental in helping streamline County regulations and site improvement. This is a significant step toward our goal to attract family friendly specialty businesses to revitalize Campo Road.

While it is frustrating that there are still blighted storefronts and illegal businesses in Casa De Oro, this is most definitely a community on the rise. Meaningful and lasting positive change takes time. Government agencies rarely move quickly, but the perseverance of members of this neighborhood has resulted in improvements. There is a new Code

Enforcement supervisor for our area committed to ensuring code compliance; in May the Alliance met him to walk the length of Campo Road so that he could see which areas are in most need of attention. Additionally, CDOCA has strengthened ties with our Sheriff's Department to ensure safety and reduce vagrancy.

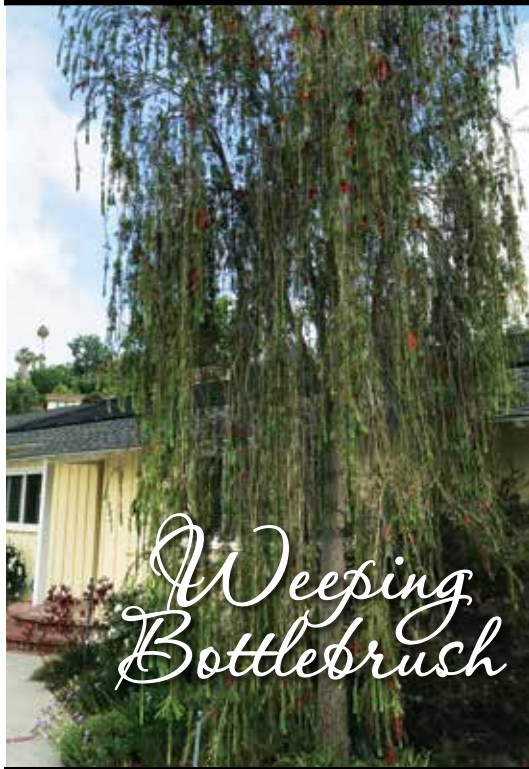
The CDOCA is a grassroots group of volunteers. We invite you to get involved and to take action to make a better community. This is how change happens and we are excited about the future. ▲

Jay Steiger is the Media and Community Outreach co-chair for the CDOCA.

The Casa de Oro Community Alliance meets the third Thursday of every month at 6:00 p.m. at Faith Chapel, 9400 Campo Rd in Spring Valley. For more information, please contact Chair Bob Yarris at 619.813.2164.

Follow the Casa de Oro Alliance at www.facebook.com/CasadeOroCommunityAlliance to keep up to date on what is happening in Casa de Oro.

Join us for our next Community Clean Up on June 10th at 8:00 am. Meet across the street from Butler's Coffee Shop on Campo Road. See you there!



*Weeping
Bottlebrush*

Trees of Mt. Helix

Callistemon viminalis – Weeping Bottlebrush

by Jeff Rule

Members are encouraged to share their favorite or special tree with others through these articles.

The Weeping Bottlebrush tree featured is located in the front yard of GMIA board members Larry and Susan Nichols. Planted from a 24" box container in 2009 when they renovated their front yard, the tree has provided seedlings that the Nichols transplanted to screen their fence line – they now have a dozen new trees that have reached 8' tall in just 2 or 3 years. What makes this Weeping Bottlebrush tree special to the homeowners is its graceful weeping form and brilliant red flowers that bloom nearly all year long attracting hummingbirds. The drought tolerant tree is fast growing to 20-30' tall with a 15' width. The tree does need some selective thinning to prevent top-heavy growth and tangled branches. If you have a tree that you would like to share with fellow members, please call Jeffrey Rule (Director) at (619) 466-0362, and he can schedule a site visit. Thank you for your interest. 🌱

Pothole Patrol

We need to know what needs fixing – so please take the time to tell us. For potholes, contact GMIA Board Member Mike Valley. Mike will take the information (street and cross street) and work with the County to get those potholes filled. He's experienced and gets results.

Mike is eager to hear from you – email yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com and he'll get your message. Your car's tires, suspension and shocks will thank you. You may also request repairs by directly contacting the Department of Public Works, Road Maintenance, at 858-694-3850. Thanks for looking out for our neighborhood! 🌱

VOLUNTEERS EXTRAORDINAIRE

Thank You

Mike Atkinson & Pam Coe

Two special members have stepped up to help GMIA. Thank you to Pam Coe who assists our Treasurer with technical support, data entry, database design and the generation of financial reports. Thank you to Mike Atkinson who responded to our plea for help with all things internet. Mike now expertly manages and updates both our website and email system. Their assistance is really appreciated because we have no paid staff or paid officers. We are grateful for their help! 🌱

Wildfire Danger Approaches

Weeds, weeds, weeds! Great growing conditions this year have yielded an abundant crop of tall weeds and brush. GMIA encourages everyone to reduce fire risk by mowing or fully clearing dry grass to remove this dangerous destroyer of property. Especially at risk are dry cedar fences surrounded by tall dead weed growth.

You can also file a "Weed Abatement Complaint" if needed at www.sanmiguelfire.org. Your complaint will remain anonymous. Fire prevention services will contact the property owner and issue a 30 day notice; be aware that results can take up to 2 months.

For more info: ReadyForWildfire.org 🌱



2018 Art & Garden Tour

This year's unprecedented storm, which happened on our originally scheduled Art & Garden Tour date, was a doozy that really rained on our parade. None of us can recall a time when GMIA has had to postpone our most popular event, but due to the (accurate) forecast of in excess of 1" of rain, along with thunder and lightning, your GMIA Directors made the tough decision to postpone the Tour. Tipping the scale were the miserable and possibly dangerous conditions.

It was a full court press to get the word out to our members on the day prior to our postponed event. Fortunately we were able to reach about 800 member households who have provided their email addresses. For those for whom we didn't have email, our volunteers made nearly 300 phone calls. Sadly, on such short notice we couldn't reach those for whom we only had a postal mailing address, and we apologize for any inconvenience.

GMIA is grateful to our generous garden owners who accommodated our event postponement. These members generously worked with us so that the rescheduled Tour could take place. Thanks to Richard & Cheri Sparhawk, Margaret Matarese, Bryan & Jora Vess and the Betsy Brown family. Thanks also Jay & Kathleen Rains who were on our originally scheduled date but unable to host on the revised date. To all of these garden owners: we appreciate all that you did. We understand that getting your garden ready is a huge investment in time and energy – and doing that twice in one month is a monumental undertaking.

Truly a team effort, our Art & Garden Tour is a massive project that requires a year of planning. A special thank you to Garden Co-Directors Pat Ryan and Jeff Rule. Thanks also to Volunteer Coordinator Sue Creveling, Artist Coordinator and Pre-Event Reception Director Kay Bickley, Mike Sciulli for his fundraising efforts, and all our Board members who helped out.

We were fortunate to have outstanding volunteers on the day of our event. Thanks to these generous members who stepped up to lend a hand and make the day special: Barbara Sciulli, Linda Craddock, Karibia Baillargeon, MJ Tanquary, Stephen Bickley, Shirley Valley, Christine Leefeldt, Hilda Leefeldt, Laura Tosatto, Diane Bernal, Bob Yarris, Paulette Newcom, Nancy Bailey, Vince McGrath, Kay McGrath, Joan O'Steen, and Carol Darrow. We couldn't do it without you! ▲



Bryan & Jora Vess



Betsy Brown



Margaret Matarese



Rick & Cheri Sparhawk

We discovered that many members have changed their email addresses and telephone numbers. As you can imagine, we can't contact you without current info. (Hopefully we will never have to cancel an event again.) However, to stay connected: please update your email or phone information. GMIA will never sell or share your contact information. To update your contact information or check to see what we have on file, please call Larry Nichols, Treasurer at 619-440-1607 or email us at yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com.

Occasional Architecture: Tudor Revival Homes of Mt. Helix

by Wendy Tinsley Becker

As detailed in previous editions of this column, the development of our community is characterized by two periods with three corresponding architectural styles: the 1920s – 1940s and the Spanish Revival style and the 1940s – 1960s with Modernistic and Ranch styles. One anomaly is the Tudor Revival style. My observations reveal at least three Tudor Revival homes local to Mt. Helix: two along Fuerte Drive and one on Calavo Drive. The English Tudor Revival style emerged from the Eclectic movement in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries and remained in favor through approximately 1940. This quasi-historicist style was loosely based on the bucolic homes and associated outbuildings constructed in 16th Century England with adaptations suited to modern times. The revival style was initiated by English architect Richard Norman Shaw and William Morris, a promoter of the British Arts and Crafts movement. In America the Tudor Revival was a continuation of a long anglophile tradition of appropriating ideas from England. It was a conscious effort at recreating English architecture in new American suburban settings. Demonstrating the style's success, Sears offered Tudor Revival



kit homes. In the 1935 Modern Homes catalogue Sears described one of its five room English bungalows as “Americanized English” with an exterior in English roots and an interior firmly American in plan, features, and technology. Architectural and building trade publications widely described the style as “rambling, its low profile and broad front conveying the impression that the [English] bungalow had been there for a long time. Stone, stucco, brick, timber, and shingles are

employed as cladding.”

Our local examples were originally constructed in the late 1930s and early 1940s: two larger homes with steeply pitched and cross-gabled roofs, stucco exterior walls with decorative timbers, and shake roofing, and also a quaint cottage with a principal side gable roof, twin peaked dormers on the front facade, and an elongated chimney that projects above the steeply pitched roof.

Keep an eye out for those sharp-pitched roofs and timber details. If you see those features you've likely found one of the few Tudor Revival style homes in Mt. Helix! ▲

Succulent Swap Success

We can't say a big enough THANK YOU to Tere Trout and Jonathan Becker for generously hosting our 4th Annual Succulent Swap on May 13th. Their magnificent garden is always an inspiration. We are grateful that they invited us to bring our event to their home for our fourth year.

Our mild weather was just perfect to bring out a great crowd of gardeners. Everyone brought enormous quantities of cuttings as well as potted plants to share with neighbors. We estimate that about 200 people participated. One happy participant told us, “Last year I got some great succulents at this GMIA event, and this year I made cuttings of those plants to share.” We consider this a perfect circle of success.

This year we had some wonderful partners participate at our event. GMIA member and plumeria aficionado Mike Atkinson brought his wealth of knowledge and samples of plumeria plants to spread the word about these great drought tolerant blooming beauties. Garden designer Laura Eubanks of Designs for Serenity gave a delightful educational presentation about creating a succulent tapestry. Members of the Succulent and Cactus Society shared their knowledge and lots of cuttings. Thanks to all of these volunteers for enriching our event.

Special thanks to GMIA Directors Paul Geldbach and Don Newcom who organized this year's event. A shout out to Butler's Coffee in Casa de Oro who provided a big urn of their

special brew. Of course, we couldn't do this event without the hard work of your entire GMIA Board of Directors who pitched in to make the morning perfect.

GMIA is proud to have created our signature Succulent Swap to help our community remain lush while encouraging water-wise gardening. Because we treasure our unique semi-rural neighborhood, we know it is important that our landscapes remain attractive and welcoming while respecting the need for careful conservation. Hope to see you for our 2018 Succulent Swap! ▲



Tere Trout & Jonathan Becker



To ensure your membership is current: please look at your mailing label on this newsletter. On it you will find the expiration date of your membership. Annual membership is just \$18 (2 years - \$36; 3 years - \$54). You may renew online at our secure website www.gmia.net or mail your payment to GMIA, P.O. Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943-2751.

Note: if the date is June 2018 or later, your dues are paid in full, but you are welcome to renew in advance.



Annual Dinner Volunteers Needed

We could use some extra hands at our Annual Dinner on June 25th to help with set up and day of the event logistics. If you would like to help, please contact Sue Creveling, Volunteer Coordinator at screv@yahoo.com. Thanks!

Thank You Donors!

Special thanks to the following members who donated a gift of \$25 or greater in excess of their dues.

Jim and Geri Bollman • Arthur Raybold & Suzanne Cadwallader • Tarbel & Vina Martin
John & Becky McMullen • Dean & Judith Allen • Lou & Peggy Botte
Jim & Nina Galloway • Leslie Gardner • Guy & Laura Halgren
Denise Botticelli & Peter Pickslay • Leo & Adrienne Culp • Signa Wilcox

CALENDAR

