



viewpoints

SUMMER 2018

Volume 48 Issue 2

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

It's Our 80th Anniversary and You're Invited

Date: June 24th • **Time:** 5:30 -8:00pm

Where: Cuyamaca Water Conservation Garden

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

There are not many organizations who can boast they have an 80 year track record working nonstop on behalf of a community. Help us celebrate our eight decades! Please join us for our popular Annual Dinner Meeting. At our informal event, you will enjoy a tasty buffet dinner, hear an update about what's going on in our neighborhood, and have an opportunity to ask our County Supervisor Dianne Jacob about issues or concerns. Here are the highlights:

- ◆ Phil's BBQ (yum!) | Ballast Point Beer | Wine & soft drinks
- ◆ Live music
- ◆ A great opportunity to meet and mingle with your neighbors!
- ◆ Enjoy the beautiful Cuyamaca Water Conservation Garden (docent led tours available)
- ◆ Plus an informative Q&A with Supervisor Dianne Jacob to address community concerns

Please show your support for our community. Reserve using the enclosed form or online at www.gmia.net.



AL PLATT AWARD

Each year we take great pride in recognizing important contributions to the welfare of our region with our Al Platt Memorial Award for service to our community. This year we are pleased to present our award to Supervisor Dianne Jacob, who has been a steadfast partner helping us protect the character of our community. Dianne has championed our efforts throughout the years. It is our honor to acknowledge her dedication and hard work.

Please Renew – Your Membership Counts

Note: GMIA annual membership is from July 1 – June 30th – (fiscal year)

We count on your support to be sure our voice is heard about issues that are important to our community. We are at work for you, advocating for fair water rates, improved roadways and intersections, and a myriad of local issues that impact us every day.

We are all volunteers and don't have the resources and manpower to send invoices. We'd rather use our energy to accomplish our many events that bring neighbors together! GMIA events each year include our Art & Garden

Tour, Succulent Swap, Annual Dinner Meeting, Family Fest, Halloween Harvest Festival and Walk Up Mt. Helix to Welcome the New Year.

Your support is critical to ensure GMIA can continue to work on your behalf. Annual membership is just \$18 per household (\$36 – 2 years, \$54 – 3 years). Please renew today. Please check the mailing label on this newsletter for the expiration date of your membership. Questions? Contact Larry Nichols, Treasurer at (619) 440-1607. 🌱



GROSSMONT-MT. HELIX
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Officers

Susan Nichols, President
(619) 440-1607

Pat Ryan, First Vice President
(619) 248-1619

Dave Zimmerman,
Second Vice President

Larry Nichols, Treasurer/Membership
(619) 440-1607

Kay Bickley, Secretary
(619) 318-5260

Directors

Wendy Tinsley Becker	Tom O'Steen
Peter Camana	Krista Bishop Powers
Pam Coe	John Richardson
Dania Conde	Mike Valley
Paul Geldbach	Holly Yarris
Kathleen Hedberg	Dave Zimmerman
Tom Huffman	

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.

Editor: Susan Nichols
Design & Layout: Victoria Vinton,
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www.gmia.net

Email us at:
yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com

MISSION

GMIA is a 79-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

Happy 80th Anniversary to Us!

I hope you'll agree with me that GMIA has a lot to celebrate as we recognize eight decades of our volunteers safeguarding our wonderful semi-rural lifestyle.

Looking to our future, your GMIA Board of Directors is in the process of creating a new strategic plan to guide our efforts for the next three years. Last produced in 2015, it's time for us to review and reinvigorate our vision.

In tandem with our new strategic plan, our Improvement Committee is in the midst of fine tuning a project list to enhance our neighborhood. We evaluate projects and move forward where we have the time, resources, and ability to make a difference. We invite all our GMIA members to send us suggestions for consideration to our email yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com.

Membership matters! GMIA has always been an all-volunteer organization, and thanks to your support we have been a force for good. Your membership enables GMIA to be heard when we advocate with the county and other governmental agencies on behalf of our region. Please be sure to check the expiration date of your membership located next to the mailing label on this newsletter. For those who receive this newsletter by email, please note the expiration date on your email message. Renew today and encourage your neighbors to join (just \$18 per household) online at www.gmia.net or by postal mail at GMIA, P.O. Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943-2751.

Over the years, GMIA has been responsible for some very important landmark accomplishments. Here are a few highlights:

- ◆ Since 1938, we've worked with the county to prevent developers from spoiling the natural beauty of our hillside geography ensuring they were not permitted to carve up the slopes and produce cookie cutter homes on postage stamp lots.
- ◆ In 1957 when GMIA organized a fire protection district which led to building three fire stations, including our local Station #21 on Vivera Drive. I've heard unfortunate stories of local homes burning to the ground prior to GMIA's efforts because there was no local fire department.
- ◆ In 1973, GMIA sponsored elections to bring sewer service to the area.
- ◆ Critical half-acre minimum zoning was enacted in 1979, along with the formation of the Valle de Oro Planning Group. Both initiatives were spearheaded by GMIA.
- ◆ In 1999, GMIA led efforts to found the Mt. Helix Park Foundation to replace the County as the entity responsible for park operations at the summit.
- ◆ Over the years, GMIA has twice defeated annexation by Spring Valley.
- ◆ In 2016, because of concerns about governance of the agency that manages the previous commodity of water in our region, we organized a committee which led to the successful election of two contested seats on the Helix Water District board.

Thank you for your valued membership and vital support – you are the heart and soul of GMIA. Please join me at our Annual Dinner where we will celebrate our 80th year and this special place we call home. 🌱

Susan Nichols



Thank You Donors!

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

Anonymous | Donald & Leona Flowers | Paul & Joyce Phillips | Richard & Nancy Fassett

Can You Operate a Business In Your Home?

Over the last few years, GMIA has had complaints from members about businesses conducted out of residences in our community. Examples have been car sales, car repair, and construction companies. We've helped members resolve problems by working with County Code Enforcement officers to address concerns.

However, not all businesses present a problem. The County of San Diego, Planning and Development Services Zoning Division regulates home occupations. Complete information is found at www.sdcounty.ca.gov/pds. Home occupations, including in-home offices, are permitted in compliance with the following conditions:

- ◆ There shall be no exterior evidence of the conduct of a home occupation.
- ◆ Home occupation shall be conducted entirely within a dwelling or an attached garage.
- ◆ No more than one non-resident employee may be engage in the home occupation.
- ◆ Limited indoor storage of goods or supplies (125cubic feet maximum) may take place within no more than one room of the dwelling and/or attached garage.
- ◆ There shall be no on-premise sale of goods except as allowed for a Cottage Food Operation by Health and Safety Code and with a valid permit from the Department of Environmental Health.
- ◆ Internet sales are not considered on-premise sale of goods.
- ◆ There shall be no signs or advertising the home occupation other than those permitted by Section 6252 of the zoning ordinance.
- ◆ No more than six non-resident students at one time, and no more than 18 students during any one day may be given tutoring in music, academics, dance, sports or other subjects at a residence. No student instruction between the hours of 9:00pm and 8:00am.

If you have concerns about a business in your area, you can easily report it by using the Tell Us Now app on your smart phone. It is a simple form to complete and will alert the County to investigate the problem. GMIA thanks Brent Panas, Code Compliance Chief for the County of San Diego for providing this information and for the timely response of his department to previous complaints. 🏡



2nd Annual Family Fest and Ice Cream Social

When: August 12th 2:00 - 5:00 pm
Where: 10805 Melva Rd, La Mesa 91941
Cost: Free for GMIA member families
 \$10 for non-member families

Celebrate summer and our wonderful community! Join us for our second annual summer Family Fest—meet your neighbors, play games, make crafts and enjoy refreshing ice cream. We'll be in the gorgeous garden of GMIA members Tere Trout and Jonathan Becker. Come meet the resident miniature horse and African tortoise. Activities include making your favorite paper bag hat, rock painting, lawn bowling, hula hoops, ball toss and more.

Thanks to GMIA Board member Krista Bishop Powers who chairs this outreach event for our young families. Have questions or like to volunteer to help? Contact Krista at 619-985-1445.

Casa de Oro Library

A much needed new Casa de Oro library remains a priority for our community. Beginning in 2014, GMIA has been asking the county for a larger facility to serve our neighborhood on the southern boundary.

Supervisor Dianne Jacob and the county staff have spent several years working to locate a land parcel to accommodate a proposed 13,500-square library that would include teen and children's spaces and a community room. Finding a suitable parcel has been a challenge.

We are happy to report that the county is in talks with the La Mesa Spring Valley School District to consider building on the east side of the school district operations hub and immediately south of the Spring Valley Academy middle school on Conrad Drive. Along with the library, staff is also proposing a 40- to 45-space parking lot. We are hopeful this project will move forward.

Our thanks to Supervisor Jacob, her staff, the Casa de Oro Alliance and the Valle de Oro Planning Group for efforts to bring about this important community asset to serve our residents and help revitalize the Casa de Oro region. 🌱

GMIA Joins Airport Noise Advisory Committee

At the request of Supervisor Dianne Jacob, GMIA will join the Airport Noise Advisory Committee as a voting member. Formed in 1981, the Committee is composed of 14 members and provides a forum for collaborative discussion of airport noise issues and other related matters.

As of June, GMIA will provide new representation for the East County as a result of an increase in noise complaints that followed a change in flight paths by the FAA. Flight path changes were implemented to improve navigational technology to increase efficiency, flight path predictability, and reduce required controller-pilot voice communication for safer and more efficient air travel and a reduction in fuel consumption and pollution. Since that time, community members in our area report a noticeable increase in noise as well as concerns about increased pollution from more jets flying over our region.

For more information about the Airport Noise Advisory Committee, check out www.san.org/Airport-Noise/Initiatives. The Complaint Hotline is (619) 400-2799. You may also register a complaint using <http://flighttracker.casper.aero/san>. To contact GMIA about airport noise concerns, please call Susan Nichols at (619) 440-1607 or reach us online at yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com. We welcome your input and want to hear from you. 🌱



Spring Cleaning in Casa de Oro

by Jay Steiger

Our local diamond in the rough, Casa de Oro, got some polishing when over 100 local volunteers showed up on a beautiful April morning to participate in the 3rd community clean up, sponsored by the Casa de Oro Alliance. After complementary snacks and words of welcome from CDO Alliance chairperson Bob Yarris, volunteers joined together and headed off to clean along the Campo Road business corridor. Trash and weeds were the primary focus; results of the cleaning efforts made for a very productive event. Beautification committee chair Don Powell plans an additional cleanup later in the year. Special thanks to donors Treebeard Landscape, Dixieline, Grocery Outlet, Smart and

Final, Edco, and to the San Diego County Sheriffs for helping with traffic safety.

Mark your calendars for our 3rd annual Casa de Oro Fall Festival on Saturday October 6 from 10am to 3pm at the Spring Valley Academy, 3900 Conrad Dr. There will be entertainment, food, craft vendors, and family friendly fun for all. We invite interested vendors to contact casadeoroalliance@gmail.com for information.

To learn more about our efforts, please visit our Facebook page [CasadeOroAlliance](https://www.facebook.com/CasadeOroAlliance) or visit our website www.casadeoroalliance.org. We welcome all to our bi-monthly General Assembly meetings (upcoming on July 19th and September 20th).



Keith and Judy Meeker



Dieter and Susan Fischer



Ron and Kathy Buser



Art and Lynn Patoff

2018 Art & Garden Tour

On April 22nd, a perfect warm spring day, GMIA welcomed over 400 members and guests to four unique and delightful private gardens. From spacious properties to smaller spaces, each garden displayed a vast array of succulents and drought tolerant plantings in various stages of growth, serving as notable models for our members to envision future ideas for their own garden updates.

Truly a team effort, the Art & Garden Tour is an enormous project that requires an entire year of planning. A special thank you to Co-Tour Directors Pat Ryan and Kay Bickley who produced the tour, along with Vol-

unteer Coordinator Sue Creveling, Artist Coordinator Kay Bickley and Logistics Coordinator Paul Geldbach. Special thanks to Pat Ryan who secured the gardens and wrote the engaging descriptions for the garden brochure. We genuinely appreciate all the board members who devoted their time in volunteering to ensure the success of the tour.

GMIA is deeply grateful to our garden owners pictured here, who so generously shared their gardens. Thanks to Art and Lynn Patoff, Ron and Kathy Buser, Keith and Judy Meeker, and Dieter and Susan Fischer.

We were fortunate to have outstanding GMIA member volunteers on the day of the event. Thanks to these members who stepped up to lend a hand and make the day special: Craig Anderson, Stephen Bickley, Joan Camana, Mark Creveling, Carol Darrow, Christine Leefeldt, Beverly Little, Vince and Kay McGrath, Kelly Porter, Chris and Betsy Quinn, Valerie Richardson, Jeff Rule, Melvina Selfani, Mary Ann Stepnowski, MJ Tanquary, Frank and Laura Tosatto, Darlene Trochanowski, Jocelyn Zimmerman, and Lidia Chang Wilner. We couldn't do it without you! ▲



Look for Us in SD Home & Garden Magazine

We are pleased to partner with San Diego Home & Garden Magazine to spread the word about our innovative Succulent Swap. We want to provide a template so that other neighborhoods can replicate our popular community event, bringing neighbors together to promote water wise gardening. With more than 200 attendees, we are pretty much maxed out for capacity for our venue and volunteers but want to encourage other regions to hold their own Succulent Swaps. Look for an article touting GMIA's innovative Succulent Swap in the September edition of San Diego Home & Garden Magazine. ▲

Meet Your Board of Directors

By Pat Ryan

Your GMIA Board of Directors is made up of 18 dedicated, hardworking residents of our community who contribute their professional expertise, experience and active participation to advocate for our semi-rural way of life. In this continuing series, we introduce members of our board and highlight their professional skills, interests, years of service, some recollections from the past, and committees on which they participate. In this issue, GMIA welcomes two of our newest Board members, Pete Camana and John Richardson.

Pete Camana: “Our neighborhood is rural, but close to town, and we should keep it that way.” Newly elected to our board in 2018, Pete has been an active volunteer involved with the clean-up of the Park and Ride, Curb Appeal Award, and the Garden Tour, including participating with his own garden three years ago. Pete helps to spearhead our Outreach Committee and builds and restocks the new Neighborhood News Stands. (15 so far!). The Camanas have lived in the area since 2009, relocating from their ranch in Ramona. Pete’s career as an electrical engineer provides “a science and engineering view of what can be done with new and emerging technology,” he says. “At the same time, at home I am a gardener and Do It Yourselfer. I hope to bring both these perspectives to GMIA.” He cites “Keeping our roads repaired and accessible to walkers, bikers, and auto traffic” as important. He also adds, that “we should encourage the plan to transition to underground utilities both for beauty and better reliability at a faster pace.”



John Richardson: “I feel that I can be useful to the community and GMIA to use my organizational management and real estate background to assist in making our community a safer and better place to live in a balanced and progressive way,” says John Richardson. A native San Diegan born in Lemon Grove, John was raised in the North Park area. After graduating from Hoover High and San Diego State University, he worked in Northern California, Texas and Washington in the banking, real estate and mortgage banking industry. Upon his return to San Diego in 2001, John moved to the Mt. Helix area, “a place I always wanted to live.” Now retired, he currently volunteers for the American Red Cross and San Miguel CERT Team. John joined the board in November 2017 and has been active on the Garden Tour and Annual Dinner committees and helps with the Neighborhood News Stands. He adds, “I have a strong desire to give back to this amazing and unique community where I live.” 🌱



2018 SUCCULENT SWAP



Look for more photos on Facebook page.

Photos by Bob Cederdahl


Pied Piper Strategies

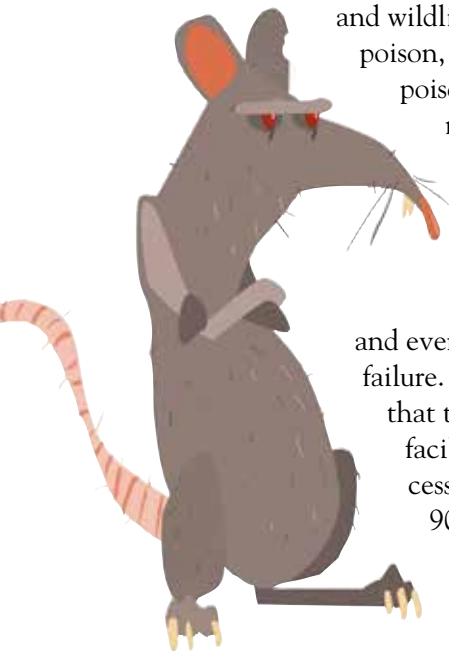
Note: This article is for information purposes only and not intended as a product endorsement. Let us know if you have had success with this or other rodent reduction/extermination methods.

For those of us who live on large lots with abundant foliage and fruit trees, rodent populations can be a problem. Methods to reduce rat and mouse populations include removing food sources such as outdoor pet feeding stations, reducing habitat by raising wood piles off the ground, removing debris piles, and picking up fallen fruit.

One pair of rats can produce 2,000 descendants in one year. Rats and mice can spread disease as well as ruin homes and gardens. Rodent borne diseases transmittable to humans include hantavirus pulmonary syndrome, hemorrhagic fever, Lassa fever, leptospirosis, lymphocytic choriomeningitis, omk hemorrhagic fever, plague and rat bite fever.

Snap traps and poison are the primary means of rodent extermination. However, many rodent poisons result in a secondary kill when wild predators such as hawks or domestic cats and dogs ingest the dead rodent. Responsible homeowners should not use poisons that can result in secondary kill.

RatX pellets are designed to work only on the digestive systems of mice and rats. The product is advertised as non-toxic for people, pets, livestock and wildlife. Because Rat contains no poison, there is no risk of secondary poisoning. The formula attracts rodents and once ingested, coats of the stomach thereby blocking all messages to the brain telling the rodent to drink water. Dehydration sets in and eventually leads to circulatory failure. The manufacturer advises that the ingredients in RatX also facilitate a mummification process reducing odor by as much as 90% and can be used indoors and outdoors. It is available online and at local home supply stores. 



Helpful Contact Info for the Unincorporated County Clip and Save

Animal Control.....	619-767-2675
Abandoned Vehicles.....	619-401-2000
California Highway Patrol	858-637-3800
Code Violations Hotline.....	858-694-2705 (Building & Grading, etc.)
Dead Animal Pickup.....	888-299-9905
Dig Alert.....	800-227-2600 (Call 2 days before you dig near any underground utility or pipe)
Environmental Health Code	619-338-2222
Graffiti Hotline/Caltrans.....	858-688-6699
Graffiti/County Property	858-694-2705
Hazardous Materials Disposal:	
Information Hotline.....	877-713-2784
To schedule a drop off	619-596-5100
Helix Water District	619-466-0585
Mail Theft Complaints (USPS).....	877-876-2455
Mt. Helix Park Foundation.....	619-741+4363 (Operates Nature Theatre at top of Park)
Noise Enforcement.....	858-694-3741
Potholes/Road Maintenance	858-694-3850
San Miguel Fire District	619-670-7090 (Business & Administration)
SDG&E	1-800-411-7343
Sheriff for Emergencies	911
Non-Emergency Dispatch	858-565-5200
Rancho SD Sheriff Station.....	619-660-7090
Vector Control	858-694-2888 (Rodents, Mosquitoes, Flies, etc.)

Other Important Numbers:



P. O. Box 2751
La Mesa CA 91943-2751

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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.

About GMIA ...And What We Do

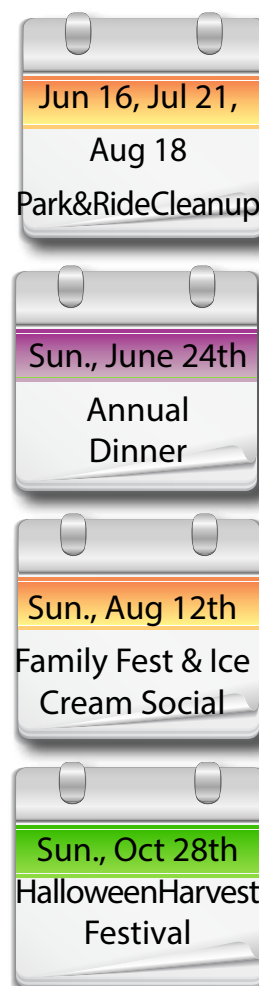
The Grossmont- Mt. Helix Improvement Association (GMIA) is the oldest and largest association of its type in San Diego County, if not the entire State of California. Formed in 1938 as a result of community concern for the lack of adequate land use planning and zoning type requirements, GMIA is a non-profit public benefit corporation (501c4) that represents approximately 7,000 families 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 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, and to foster pride in the area.

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 also sponsors an annual cycle of member events to build and unify our community by bringing neighbors together. Events includes: Art & Garden Tour, Succulent Swap, Annual Dinner Meeting, Summer Family Fest/Ice Cream Social, Halloween Harvest Festival, and a Walk Up Mt. Helix to Welcome the New Year.

GMIA invites and encourages all residents in our membership area to become active members to support the efforts of GMIA 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





The Grossmont-Mt. Helix Improvement Association
Board of Directors cordially invite you to our

80TH ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

Sunday, June 24th, 2018

5:30 – 8:00 pm

Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College.

Complimentary guided tour of the garden at
4:30 (reservation required).

Admission: members \$12 each | Non members \$20

Dinner includes BBQ buffet,
beer, wine, soft drinks.

PROGRAM

- 4:30 Complimentary garden tour (by reservation)
- 5:30 Social/Dinner/Program
 - Election of Board of Directors
 - Presentation of the Al Platt Memorial Award for Community Service
 - Supervisor Dianne Jacob Q&A
- 7:30 Social, enjoy the garden

PLEASE RSVP BY JUNE 23, 2018

Questions? Contact Holly Yarris,
Annual Meeting Chairperson 619-813-2165.

You may reserve by returning the form below with your check (GMIA, PO Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943-2751), or reserve online at our secure web-site, www.gmia.net. Your reservation will be held at the door. ****Please write your question for Supervisor Jacob on the back of this form.****

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

☐

Members
at \$12 each

☐

Non-members
at \$20 each

☐

Vegetarian
Menu Options

☐

Attending Complimentary
4:30 pm Garden Tour

