



viewpoints

WINTER 2018

Volume 49 Issue 1

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

Urgent Alert

Grossmont-Mt. Helix Threatened

We are stunned that an Adult Parole Operations facility is planned for the new building adjacent to the Brigantine complex at 9400 Grossmont Summit Drive. We can't have that in our residential community!

The parole office for the State of California will house 65 staff, of which 52 are Parole Agents who will handle half of the parolees in the entire county including violent and sexual offenders. According to the Sacramento office of State of California Department of Corrections, the caseload for each Parole Agent is an astonishing 43 - 80 offenders.

GMIA is working hard to oppose this Parole Operations facility, but we need your help to stop this major threat to our safety and to our property values. Please do everything you can – call or email:

Secretary Ralph Diaz

California Department of Corrections
916-445-4950 (external affairs)
cal_externalaffairs@cdcr.ca.gov

Senator Brian Jones

619-596-3136
senator.jones@sen.ca.gov

Assemblywoman Shirley Weber

619-531-7913
assemblymember.weber@assembly.ca.gov

Mayor Mark Arapostathis, City of La Mesa

619-667-1105
marapostathis@ci.la-mesa.ca.us

This Parole Operation facility will bring thousands of offenders to our neighborhood. Each offender must check in at this office within 72 hours of release. Thereafter, the Parole Agent

See **ALERT** on page 3

Welcome the New Year at our 11th Annual Walk to the Top!

Saturday, January 5th • 10:00 am

Meet at the Fire Station at 10105 Vivera Drive

Join us on Saturday January 5th for one of our most popular activities — the 11th annual Walk to the Top to Welcome the New Year.

This event has grown each year as word spreads about the family and dog friendly walk, which starts at 10 am at the fire station at 10105 Vivera. Walking distance is 2/3 mile each way.

Stroll up Mt. Helix Drive behind our big yellow banner with friends and neighbors! At the top, complimentary refreshments including coffee, tea, and water, breakfast treats and fresh fruit will be provided by GMIA. Co-sponsor Mt. Helix Park Foundation provides our magnificent location and volunteer assistance. Plus, meet other local nonprofit partners sharing information about what they are doing to benefit our community.

Don't miss this opportunity to join old friends, meet new neighbors and enjoy the celebration of our great community at the top. As always, children and well-behaved dogs are welcome at this complimentary event. Questions? Contact us at yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com.



If you would like to volunteer to assist with day-of-the-event tasks, please contact Co-Director Pat Ryan at 619-248-1619. We can use your help with set-up, picking up supplies, and clean-up.



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

Pam Coe, Treasurer/Membership

Kay Bickley, Secretary
(619) 318-5260

Directors

Wendy Tinsley Becker	Jim Marshall
Peter Camana	Larry Nichols
Dania Barroso-Conde	Krista Bishop Powers
Paul Geldbach	John Richardson
Kathleen Hedberg	Mike Valley
Tom Huffman	Holly Yarris

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,
Coyote Press Graphic
Communications

www.gmia.net

Email us at:
yourgmianeighbor@gmail.com

MISSION

GMIA is an 80-year-old non-profit 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

Spreading the Word

Our GMIA members are doing a great job getting the word out that our organization is working hard to safeguard our wonderful, family-friendly, semi-rural oasis. Thank you!



You've been sharing our newsletter, forwarding our monthly emails, and inviting neighbors to participate in our many community activities. Increasing our public visibility was one of the important goals we identified at our recent Strategic Planning Retreat. As an all-volunteer (no paid staff or directors) membership organization, we rely on you to help us spread the word about why membership counts.

Today, please give this newsletter, chock-full of valuable local information, to a neighbor and encourage them to support our efforts. Please invite them to be a part of our 11th Annual Walk to the Top to Welcome the New Year to enjoy live music, complimentary refreshments and meet your neighbors.

Building community by hosting local events has been an important way that GMIA serves our area. Bringing neighbors together helps us to maintain a robust membership, which in turn is critical to ensure we can effectively advocate for our region with government and other entities. Our current fight to stop the Department of Corrections from opening a Parole Operations center in our community is the latest example of the important work we have done for over 80 years.

That's why your GMIA directors identified a focus to boost our public "face" in the community. Our affordable dues and many benefits are designed to ensure that every household can readily join and make their voice heard. Thank you for being a GMIA ambassador and for encouraging others to join—we appreciate your support. 🌱

Susan Nichols

Thank You Donors!

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

Gary King & Cindy Rambis

Lemon-Bancroft Development Rears Its Ugly Head Again

Once again, our Lemon Avenue/Bancroft Drive gateway to Mt. Helix is threatened with development. In 2013, this issue was at the forefront of civic efforts by many concerned residents of the City of La Mesa and GMIA when a property owner requested rezoning for commercial use. After a huge public outcry, the City of La Mesa turned down the request.



Now we have a collection of five separate lots grouped together and advertised as a single unit for sale. They comprise the northwest and northeast corners of Lemon and Bancroft, which together total 1¼ acres. The agent's description notes "Possible re-zoning for commercial or multi-units. Ideal location for convenience store/gas station, drive thru, park, residential and many more possibilities."

GMIA is steadfastly against rezoning these parcels. Potential change in land use is important to the character of our community. The current land use designation for the subject properties is for single-family detached homes. A re-designation of this site for commercial or multi-family use will do irreparable harm to the surrounding neighbors and to this residential neighborhood. We will keep you apprised of any new re-zoning requests. 🌱

Can You Help with Artificial Grass Repair?

You may have noticed the damaged section of the artificial turf on the base of the triangle monument on Grossmont Blvd./Fuerte Drive. A vehicle apparently jumped the curb and plowed it up. GMIA maintains this historic gateway monument and we've been unable to find a company that will tackle this small repair job.



Can you help us either 1) recommend an installer to do this work, or 2) if you have some expertise – lend a hand to get it repaired? Please contact our Green Machine Co-Chair Pete Camana at (760) 476-2659.

Any help will be appreciated. We want to keep our neighborhood looking good! 🌱

ALERT from page 1

will check in with the offender monthly, either at this office or the offender's residence (at the Agent's discretion).

It is inconceivable to bring this operation to our community. The only public transportation is a bus stop located by Grossmont High School. The closest trolley stop at Severin/Amaya is across the street from Mt. Helix Academy, and down the street from Parkway Middle School. There is very limited parking at the proposed location. Placing this facility in our neighborhood will bring scores of convicted felons to our streets and near our schools.

Our thanks to Supervisor Dianne Jacob who alerted us to this issue. Dianne supports our position opposing this Adult Parole Operation facility. However, the proposed action falls under the authority of the State of California and the Board of Supervisors doesn't have jurisdiction over the proposed placement or land use matters in the City of La Mesa. Be sure to address your concerns to those listed on page one. 🌱



Meet Your Board of Directors

Your GMIA Board of Directors is made up of 18 dedicated, hardworking residents of our community who contribute their professional expertise and active participation to advocate for our semi-rural way of life.



Paul Geldbach: Before my wife and I married, we began the daunting task of finding our perfect first home together in San Diego County. A year later, after a wedding, expecting a child, and no closer to our dream home, my wife asked me one day, “Have you ever been to Mount Helix?” I gave her a side-long look and replied suspiciously: “Isn’t that East County?” Later that afternoon, we took the Severin/Fuerte exit and I felt instantly that this is where we wanted to live. The winding roads and rock walls,

the density of trees and the gracious yards and homes—it converted two beach people into eager La Mesa residents. In 2011, we bought a neglected, but beautiful 1930’s Spanish ranch on the south facing slopes of Mount Helix. Seven years and a lot of sweat equity later, we are in love with our home. It was in fact a passion for developing our landscape and planting trees that initially drew us to GMIA in 2012. We were guests at a GMIA Garden Tour and Succulent Swap—both of which we were so impressed with—I now help organize and work at these and other events. I’ve been serving on the GMIA board for 2 ½ years now, co-chairing both the Walk-Up Mount Helix and Succulent Swap Committees, as well as contributing to a number of others. Like GMIA, my wife and I love and support the semi-rural character and unique history of our mountain, always proud to say, “We live in Mount Helix.”



Krista Bishop Powers: I was honored when invited to join the GMIA Board in 2016. I have fond memories of growing up on Mt Helix and all the many nooks and crannies a child can play and be free to explore nature. Having lived all over San Diego after college, I recognize how blessed we are to have great neighbors and a semi-rural culture that is protected, yet so close to all the necessities of modern life. My husband grew up on a similar mountain, graced with a monument park, on the

coast in New England. Returning to Mt Helix, and now having two young boys, we value the childhood they will have here. Giving back to the community is deep in my DNA. I recognized a way in which I could utilize the skills I learned as a marketing, brand, and organizational culture consultant with brands like MillerCoors, Monster Energy, Vans Warped Tour, MusicDealers, and several tech starts ups, and now as an adjunct professor, to reach families in our area and get them involved with GMIA. My goal is to bring young families together in our community and ensure our area continues to be an incredible place to grow up.

We all know it takes a village. 🌱



Back to Square One Avocado-Fuerte Intersection

After a four year effort to get the County to improve this intersection (along with Fuerte/Calavo and Avocado/Puebla), GMIA has hit the proverbial wall.

Starting in 2014, GMIA focused on enhancing these dangerous and unsightly cross roads. We’ve met with County staff and engaged Supervisor Jacob as a supporter in our struggle to get this done. Most recently we were led to believe that the project would finally be funded as a tag-along with the Fuerte straightening plan, utilizing funds from that endeavor. However, the County now has advised that the entire budget for the Fuerte road improvement has been committed and no funds are available. Argh!!!!

We will go back to the table because we know how much this project means to our community. The current median is not to code. The ugly “candlestick” delineators that define these intersections are neither safe nor aesthetic – we need an actual raised curb to ensure that vehicles remain safely in their lanes. 🌱



Are You Bothered By Airplane Noise?

by Susan Nichols

GMIA President and Airport Noise Advisory Committee Member

Changes to Lindbergh Field flight paths have resulted in increased noise levels for certain neighborhoods in our area. If you are bothered by airplane noise, I strongly encourage you to file a complaint. Noise mitigation is complaint driven – your complaint matters!

As your representative on the Airport Noise Advisory Committee, my role is to advocate on behalf of the East County residents impacted by Lindbergh Field air traffic noise. In conjunction with that responsibility, and

along with the Airport Noise Program Manager, we have organized an East County Working Group of residents to study the issues and make recommendations for FAA consideration to address noise issues.

As you might imagine, the FAA is chiefly concerned with safety. It is a huge federal agency and the wheels move slowly. Most likely it will be a long haul to effect change. However, if we want to reduce air traffic noise in the future we must take action today. ▲

Here are five ways to make an effective complaint:

1

Provide a written comment by email or postal mail, and request that it be included in the Airport Noise Advisory Committee meeting packet. Direct written comment to Sjohnna Knack, Program Manager, Airport Noise Mitigation at sknack@san.org or by postal mail at P.O. Box 82776, San Diego, CA 92138.

2

Any member of the public may speak for 3 minutes at the quarterly meetings of the Airport Noise Advisory Committee. Meetings are held at Holiday Inn Bayside, 4875 N. Harbor Drive, San Diego, 92106. FYI, residents from other neighborhoods speak up at most meetings.

The next ANAC meeting is December 19, 2018. Detailed (free) parking information and the meeting schedule are posted online at the San Diego Airport Authority website <https://www.san.org/Airport-Noise/Initiatives#405494-meeting-schedule>.

I encourage residents to attend and speak up about their experience with airport noise and its effect on your quality of life.

3

Call the airport noise hotline at 619-400-2799 to file a complaint (recorded message).

4

Online, go to www.san.org/Flights/Flight-Tracker to file a complaint.

5

Install the Airport Noise App on your phone or mobile device. With the app, you can easily log complaints when a noisy plane passes overhead. Please contact me directly at nichols.susan.lamesa@gmail.com and I will email you instructions on how to install this free app.

Halloween Harvest Festival Happiness

Many thanks to Co-Chairs Krista Bishop Powers (GMIA) and Caroline Harrod (Mt. Helix Park Foundation), who devoted hundreds of hours organizing this special afternoon for our community. On Sunday, October 28, we welcomed nearly 800 people to our Halloween Harvest Family Festival at Mt Helix Park.

In conjunction with the Mt Helix Park Foundation, GMIA members enjoyed live music by The Responders, a delectable food truck named Quick Stop Grill, face painting, and photo wall along with crafts and giveaways from Heritage of the Americas Museum, San Diego Las Hermanas, Cooking 4 Life, Coldwell Banker Real Estates' Jim Moran, Dixieline, YMCA McGrath, The Hills Local Pub, Jiu Jitsu Foundation, Move Fitness & Dance, Sandy & Deirdre Bramberg Real Estate, The Lunch Box, and Cami's Home Painting Parties.

This year's attendance nearly doubled the size of our first (2017) festival, and we are grateful to our many volunteers who stepped up to help make the event a success. We couldn't do it without you! Thanks to Steve Rotsart, Mike Harrod, Mike Valley, Kathleen Hedberg, Jon Hedberg, Anna Hedberg, Cristin George, Leslie Gardner, Natalie Fernkes, Larry Nichols, Susan Nichols, Pam Coe, Kay McGrath, Dania Barroso-Conde, Paul Geldbach, Tom Osteen, Jason Kardos, West Hills High students, Helix High students, Pat Ryan, Christine Leefeldt, Lawrence Powers, Carole Caparas, Allyson Kinnard, Holly Yarris, Kay Bickley, and members of the Sprites.

GMIA also hosted a popular craft table where kids created original paper bag hats to wear and take home. Our volunteers made and served over 200 bags of piping hot popcorn to festival guests.

We were pleased to present a \$50 Costco gift card to Nick and Catherine Zundel, selected as winners of a contest for new members who joined at our Halloween Harvest Festival event. Thanks to all who joined to support GMIA. 🌱



THIS IS THE SECOND ARTICLE IN A SERIES TO INFORM OUR MEMBERS ABOUT SERVICES PROVIDED BY OUR LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT RESOURCE, THE RANCHO SAN DIEGO SHERIFF'S STATION. THANK YOU TO GMIA MEMBER CARLOS ARIAS FOR PROVIDING THIS INFORMATION.

PERSONALIZED HOME CONSULT Invite the Sheriff for Security Tips

Sheriff's Crime Prevention Specialists have been trained to evaluate your home (or business, church or school) through the eyes of a burglar. Their training allows them to provide practical, cost effective security recommendations to strengthen areas vulnerable to crime. They will offer suggestions to enhance security by reviewing lighting, landscaping, access points, and the natural surveillance that exists on properties.

Burglary is one of the most common and widespread crimes that has a measurable impact on the quality of life in our community. To schedule a free consultation, contact Jose Ortiz, Crime Prevention Specialist at jose.ortiz@sdsheriff.org or call him at 858-285-6020.

Here are just a few ideas to help prevent a burglary:

- Safety coat or frost all garage windows. Don't let criminals see when your car is gone.
- Make sure your garage side door is made of solid-core wood, reinforced steel, or fiberglass, and has a deadbolt lock.
- Plant rose bushes or other thorny plants in front of all vulnerable windows.

Valle de Oro Community Planning Group (VDOCPG)

NOVEMBER 2018 UPDATE

by Mark Schuppert

Our community planning group (VDOCPG) is made up of 15 board members elected by the residents of the community we serve: Mount Helix, Casa de Oro, Rancho San Diego, and parts of Singing Hills and Horizon Hills.

Within the GMIA area, we will soon be hearing a presentation by the Casa de Oro Alliance and the VDOCPG subcommittee on High Risk businesses along Campo Road. This presentation is tentatively set for February 2019. Our findings and recommendations will be incorporated into the recently funded Specific Plan that will be created for the Campo Road Corridor of Casa de Oro. The Specific Plan will set zoning related guidelines and serve as a road map for new and revitalized land uses within this business community. 🌱

VDO meetings are on the first Tuesday of every month at 7:00 P.M. at the Otay Water District Headquarters located at 2554 Sweetwater Springs Boulevard. The public has the opportunity to bring up potential concerns and to comment on agenda items during our meetings. Please contact Board Member Mark Schuppert at (619) 749-2464 for any questions.



Casa de Oro Alliance Seeks Non-Profit Status

Congratulations are in order for the Casa de Oro Alliance. The Alliance has recently been approved by the State of California to become a non-profit community benefit corporation. They are also completing a lengthy application to submit to the IRS to become a non profit 501c3 organization. Working hard to revitalize the Casa de Oro business district, this pivotal step will enable the organization to move forward with improvements to the business district and improve the quality of life in Casa de Oro. Their new designation will provide them non-profit eligibility, thus permitting private tax deductible donations, as well as seeking grant funding from a variety of government, private and corporate sources. Way to go Alliance! 🌱

Nominations Now Open for GMIA Curb Appeal Award

by Dania Barroso-Conde and Carey Hultgren

Attractive front yards say a lot about the pride we take in our community. Realtors tell us that curb appeal adds beauty and value. Equally important, a well-groomed and thoughtfully designed landscaping sends a clear message to everyone that homeowners care about their neighborhood. We invite you to nominate a Mt. Helix candidate (yourself or a neighbor) for the GMIA Curb Appeal Award. This award recognizes front yards that display outstanding maintenance, distinctive design, and climate appropriate landscaping. The winner will be featured in our newsletter, gifted a year's paid membership to GMIA, and recognized at our Annual Dinner. Nominations can be mailed in using the form below, or go online to complete and submit the form directly at our website www.gmia.net. You may also nominate online at www.gmia.net. Deadline to apply is April 30, 2019! 🌱

GMIA Curb Appeal Award Nomination Form (Deadline April 30, 2019)

Location (Address) _____

Homeowner's Name _____

Person nominating (optional) _____

Comments:

Please submit to GMIA, P.O. Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943-2751. You may also go online to www.gmia.net



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

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
San Diego, CA
Permit No. 17

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. Family 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 2019 or later, your dues are paid in full, but you are welcome to renew in advance.

Know a Special Garden?

by Pat Ryan

We count on our members to be our scouts. Next Spring's Annual GMIA Art & Garden Tour is Sunday April 7, 2019. We depend on our members to suggest possible gardens or, of course, to include their own. We're lining up gardens and hope you will consider suggesting a garden, large or small, which you think our members would enjoy seeing. So thanks in advance. Please contact Pat Ryan, Garden Tour Director, with any suggestions you have for our 2019 tour: patrice46@gmail.com or 619-248-1619. 🌱

Follow GMIA on Instagram

by Dania Barroso-Conde

GMIA is now on Instagram! Come follow us on Instagram @gmia_neighbor. Check out what GMIA is up to and see our events highlighted. Share your pictures of GMIA events by tagging your photos on Instagram with #gmia_neighbor. You can also find our Instagram account by going to www.Instagram.com/gmia_neighbor.

Unlike Facebook, Instagram is exclusively for sharing photos & brief videos called "stories." This photo sharing app will make it quick and easy for GMIA to share images that feature the character of our community while highlighting GMIA at work in the community. Look for photos of our Halloween Harvest Festival and other activities. 🌱



CALENDAR

Sat., Jan 5

Walk Up
Mt. Helix

Sun., April 7

Art & Garden
Tour

Jan 19, Feb 16,

March 16

Park & Ride Cleanup