



Join Your Neighbors for the 17th Annual Walk to the Top *Get Ready to Walk!*

As the holiday season approaches, it's time to indulge a little—go ahead and treat yourself to those festive feasts and sweet treats! But fear not, because we have the perfect way to kick start a healthy New Year: the 17th annual Walk to the Top of Mt. Helix on Saturday, January 4.

Our popular community event promises to be a fantastic way to welcome 2025. Grab your friends, family, and your pups for a 3/4-mile stroll that takes you up to the stunning views of our beautiful area.

What You Need to Know

When: January 4th at 10 AM

Participants will be led by the sounds of the Grossmont High School Marching Band as we set off together.

Where: San Miguel Fire Station 21, 10105 Vivera Drive

Community Connections

In addition to breathtaking views, fresh air and complimentary refreshments, you'll have the chance to connect with local organizations committed to our community, including:

- Casa de Oro Alliance
- La Mesa Historical Society

- Senior Gleaners
- SDG&E Vegetation Management
- The Water Conservation Garden
- Helix Water District

Give Back While You Walk

We're holding a dog food can drive to benefit The Animal Pad, our local shelter. Bring a can or two to donate and help support our furry friends. Many of their adoptable pups will be joining the walk!

A Special Invitation

Before we hit the pavement, don't miss the open house at Fire Station 21! Take a tour of the apparatus and chat with our local heroes. It's a great opportunity to learn more about the vital services they provide.

A special shout-out goes to the Mt. Helix Park Foundation for their unwavering support in making this event happen year after year.

Mark your calendars, lace up those sneakers, and prepare for an unforgettable New Year's tradition. Let's start 2025 with a step in the right direction—together! 🏔️



GROSSMONT-MT. HELIX
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Viewpoints is a community newsletter published by the Grossmont – Mt. Helix Improvement Association.

This newsletter reflects the efforts of your entire Board of Directors.

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MISSION

GMIA is an 86-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.

Meet New GMIA Board Member *Buzz Lisk*

“**B**uzz” Delevan Lisk is an avid sports fan. “I don’t like going out for a run but if you roll a ball, I will chase it,” he laughed recently. These days he plays tennis and is beginning to try out pickleball. He was on his college baseball team at Sonoma State University.

He acquired the nickname “Buzz” years ago when his baby sister couldn’t pronounce “Delevan.”

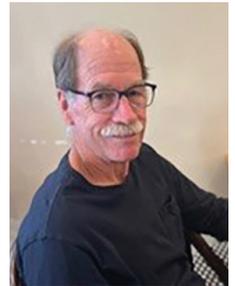
Buzz and his wife, Michele Goetz, have lived on Mt. Helix for 29 years and they have two adult sons who live nearby.

A lifelong San Diegan, Buzz’s father was part-owner of a Cessna airplane dealership where the San Diego Airport Terminal 1 is now. Buzz learned to ride his bike on the tarmac. He had to be careful to move when a plane was taxiing on the runway. Homeland Security might not approve of such shenanigans today!

Today, Buzz is semi-retired and a proud house husband who makes “nice dinners” for his wife who is still working. They also own an apartment building in downtown La Mesa, so Buzz takes an active interest in La Mesa politics.

Before he retired, Buzz was involved in fleet safety. He helped start the company that first put video technology in company vehicles to improve driver safety and defend against false claims if an accident occurred.

He is an avid Californian. “I grew up in California. I love it. I believe in it,” he said. “It’s the best place to live. I’ll do whatever I can to foster it. “How lucky we are to live here.” 🌱



GMIA Dues to Increase in July 2025

[Still a bargain for our community]

GMIA dues have always been a bargain. Since 2022, membership dues have been \$20 per household, offering access to the Annual Art & Garden Tour, the Succulent Swap and Share, and GMIA’s annual dinner. GMIA is also your voice to preserve and protect the semi-rural nature of our community.

The GMIA board has decided to increase dues to \$25 beginning July 1, 2025. This helps to cover the cost for GMIA events, the Viewpoints newsletter, and other expenses. It’s still a great deal for all that GMIA provides to our community.

If you renew your membership before July 1, you will still be charged \$20 per household. You can also renew for multiple years to save even more. Check the address label on Viewpoints to see when your membership expires, or check your membership the next time you get an email from GMIA.

GMIA’s strength comes from community support. We appreciate your membership and hope you will urge your neighbors to join GMIA. 🌱

Thank You Donors!

Special thanks to these members who donated \$25 or greater in excess of their dues.

Keith Clements
Lucy Burni
Mark Durazo and Rob Moore
Jon & Kathleen Hedberg
Gary King and Cindy Rambis

Paula Kay LeMenager
Del Lisk
Audra McCulloch
Kay & Vincent McGrath

Friends of the Casa de Oro Library NEWS

The dream becomes a reality! Renderings for the final design of our new library were unveiled at the Friends Annual Meeting in October, with groundbreaking slated for end of this year. The new state-of-the-art facility will feature a 2,000-square foot community room, 49 parking spaces, a “poet’s patio” outdoor space, study rooms, dedicated children’s and teen areas, and a host of other features. Of special note, the much-needed community room will be available for community groups to reserve for meetings and events, subject to availability. The grand opening is slated for 2026.

The current location, next to the post office on Campo Road, continues to provide high quality services while awaiting the new branch. Friends of the Casa de Oro Library is busy working with staff to fill our 2025 calendar with excellent programming for children, teens and adults. Our all-volunteer non-profit raises funds through memberships, special events, and used-book sales to provide programs beyond the ordinary budget. In 2023, thanks to generous donors, we sponsored over \$8,000 in programs to benefit our community.

Check out fun-filled children’s programming including Toddler Playtime, Kids in Action Storytime, Sewing with Marty & Friends, STEAM activities, and Storytime with Mr. Dave. Teens enjoy Afterschool Hangout, Video Game Hour, and Game Night. For adults, there is Book Club, Adult Crafternoon, Crochet Club, and Laubach Literacy ESL classes. Special events, music performances and new programs are in the works. We welcome your suggestions for considering additional programs.

When you stop by the library, pick up the calendar detailing monthly activities. You may also go online to www.sdcl.org, click events, and then search for the Casa de Oro Library. For more information about the Friends of the Casa de Oro Library, go to www.casadeorolibrary.org. We invite you to join and make a difference! 🌱

Fires, Floods, and Earthquakes *Insurance Companies Are Leaving California*

by Kathleen Hedberg, Rancho Helix de Oro Fire Safe Council

Insurance is meant to be a guarantee of compensation for specified losses—whether it's damage, illness, or death—in exchange for paying a premium. But in California, many insurance companies are starting to pull out of the market, or are now requiring more scrutiny before offering coverage.

Last year, for the first time, I received a request from my insurance company for photos of both the exterior and interior of my home. I feared my policy might be canceled. It was renewed—though my premium increased by a few hundred dollars. If I had been denied, securing coverage through the State of California’s Fair Plan would have been a long and expensive process, with premiums likely rising by thousands of dollars.

While I can’t guarantee that you’ll be renewed each year, I can tell you that taking simple, proactive steps—like maintaining defensible space around your home and implementing structural hardening—can significantly increase your chances of surviving a wildfire.

For more information, visit the San Miguel Fire and Rescue website at www.SanMiguelFire.gov. And be sure to stop by the Fire Safe Council booth at the GMIA Walk to the Top Event for local resources and information! 🌱

A Successful Succulent Swap and Share

More than 120 people turned out for the Succulent Swap & Share held at the home of Wendy and Ron Caragher. GMIA members brought trimmings from their garden and picked up some succulents to plant. A new feature this year was a pottery pop-up featuring unique planters by local artist PK Pottery. About two dozen people suggested names for the Caraghers’ young calf. After a family vote, the name “Moonshine,” suggested by GMIA member Dave Mays, was selected by the Caraghers.

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the event a success and thanks to everyone who attended. 🌱



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 \$20 (2 years - \$40; 3 years - \$60). You may renew online at our secure website www.gmia.net or mail your payment in the attached envelope to GMIA, P.O. Box 2751, La Mesa, CA 91943-2751.

Note: if the date is June 2025 or later, your dues are paid in full, but you are welcome to renew in advance.



Save the Date: Art & Garden Tour on April 6

Mark your calendars—the GMIA annual Art and Garden Tour will be on April 6, 2025. We plan to feature five gardens this year. All the gardens were volunteered by their owners. Most of them have been landscaped by the owners over the years and they represent all corners of our organization’s boundary. The gardens range from landscaped trails along a river with hidden artifacts, to tract homes with quirky and clever yard art and manicured gardens.

The gardens include drought-tolerant natives, while saving older mature plants (citrus grove, cereus cactus, trumpet vines, azaleas and camellias) which are hard to come by in a new housing tract. Most are on a half-acre or more and have been built within the last 40 to 60 years.

In addition, we plan to feature local musicians and artists at each property. We hope you can join us. 🌱

CALENDAR

