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SSA Calendar

Coming This Fall...

Official FEMA CERT
(Community Emergency
Response Team) Training
for South Skyline Residents

Pick up a flyer at the Fair.

SSA General Meeting Summer Potluck and Emergency Preparedness Fair Sunday, July 22 11:00 AM- 4:00 PM At Dick and Ami Jaqua's Ranch

Featured Speaker – USGS Scientist, Dr. David Howell “Earthquakes and Landslides in the Santa Cruz Mountain Region”

Dick and Ami Jaqua invite you to enjoy the amenities of their ranch and beautiful pond. Bring your family for a fun day with your neighbors, and learn about the latest ways to be better prepared for natural disasters. *See program schedule on page 2.*

Bring a favorite dish to share; SSA will provide soft drinks, plates and utensils.



The Jaqua Pond by Ami Jaqua

Directions to the Jaqua Ranch:

Located 4.5 miles South on Skyline from Rte.84, or 1.5 miles North on Skyline from Page Mill.

- Turn West at Yerba Buena Nursery sign onto Rapley Rd. (across from Fogarty Winery).
- After 1.5 miles at Langley Hill Quarry the name changes to Langley Hill Road.
- Leave Quarry to left; continue about 2.5 miles, passing Nursery on the right.
- Continue for another 1/2 mile on middle drive to the end of the road. Look for directional signs.



Please, no smoking and leave your pets at home.

Meet Your SSA Speaker

David Howell, Ph.D. will speak at the SSA General Meeting on July 22



(Photo by Mike Diggles, USGS)

By nature and training geologists are explorers. Artist as well as scientist, Dr. David Howell presents his discoveries of near and far lands and its peoples in graphic form, in paintings and sketches and photographs and innovative geological

maps, articles and many books. Come to a meeting of the Explorers Club of Northern California, of which Dave is a Fellow, to hear him talk of Chinese water politics where demands for drinking water clash: drinking versus irrigation, versus transportation, versus hydroelectric power, all against environmental concerns-which have lost out, as witness the great dam now in progress on the Yangtze river.

David summarizes: As a geologist I try to understand how the Earth works, and as an artist I strive to capture its beauty and power and landscapes and people.

David received his doctorate in geology from U.C.S.B. He is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and of the Geological Society of America, a member of the American Geophysical Union, the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, Director for the Circum Pacific Council, and President for the International Landslide Research Group. He has been investigating what are the physical manifestations that reflect the growth and shaping of continents that in turn evince the origin and distribution of oil and gas. The rains of El Nino transformed Howell into "Dr. Mud" as he became the principal media contact person for landslides in the San Francisco Bay area. His expertise is plate tectonics, the crashing together of floating portions of the earth's crust, the uplifting of mountain ranges-like the Himalayas, or the making of crustal downwarps like Napa Valley. His terrane (not to be confused with terrain) analyses may also tell you

Emergency Preparedness Fair Schedule

Sunday July 22

11:00 AM Sign In and Fair Booths Open

- First Aid - Red Cross information and course signups.
- Fire Protection – Saratoga Summit CDF and Skylonda CDF and South Skyline Fire and Rescue Volunteers show how to protect your home from wildfires, and help you to check your listing on their maps. Volunteer signups.
- Radio Communications - Demonstration of family, neighborhood, and area-wide radio equipment for use when 911 and cell phones do not operate; in cooperation with the Los Altos Rod and Gun Club.
- Products & Services – REI and Anderson-Niswander, local retrofit, and Fire Safe Roof contractors.
- KMEP-Kids demonstrate their method of cribbing and levering to release a person trapped under debris.

12:00 noon Lunch (*see pg 1 for details*)

1:30 PM – until questions run out

Dr. David Howell and interns from the US Geological Survey present an interactive program on local geology.

After the speaker, there will be swimming in the pond. (Children must be accompanied by a parent.)

4:00 PM Fair Ends

the why and what makes for creating good wine. His interests are currently directed towards the Crowding The Rim initiative, an effort to understand risk and how disasters from natural hazards can have cascading effects, affecting the lives and economics of some 1.5 billion people who live within 100 miles of the Pacific. One of the goals of the initiative is to introduce scientific tools and technology to support effective risk-reduction decisions.

Globetrotter David was raised in Cragmoor, New York, a small rural community, much like our own in its outlook on life. He and his wife Susan live in Palo Alto. Their dog Nellie watches over them.

~ Eva Blum



SSA Is For The Birds!

There was tremendous enthusiasm expressed on the topic of birds at our recent Spring SSA meeting at Fogarty Winery. Craig Breon of Santa Clara Valley Audubon showed slides to lots of "oohs and aahs" from the crowd, and it seemed that everyone was smiling over the subject matter!

We are fortunate to live in a region that is home to western bluebirds, golden eagles, California thrashers, red-breasted nuthatches, pileated woodpeckers, lazuli buntings, ruby-crowned kinglets and many more too numerous to list here.

We are also fortunate in that many studies have been done and are planned for the future, by both professionals and dedicated hobbyists.

Many residents, including the author of this article, maintain "home lists" for their property. Keeping a bird list allows for tracking trends, and to simply enjoy "new" birds as they appear.

Generally, local bird populations may be increased by the use of native plants and nest boxes to replace lost habitat. For example, our land naturally supports at least one pair of breeding Western bluebirds because we have cavities in old trees and snags. However, the addition of bluebird houses seems to have increased the population by at least one pair. This year there are three juveniles along with their parents.

By putting up simple posts using material we already had, we provided them with their favorite perches - they utilize fence posts on the edge of mowed areas - and we benefit by getting to watch them in action. They spend many hours a day flying between the perches and the ground in the course of "bugging". Let's just say it can be a little distracting when one is at work in a home office!

There are many online resources for those interested in birds - look for links to bird information on the SSA web site within the next few weeks. Future issues of Skylines will include additional bird-related articles. Submissions from you are welcome!

If you are interested in sharing home bird lists with other SSA residents, please send email to gstigall@aol.com.

~Georgia Stigall

Water Trucking Companies May Be Hard to Find In an Emergency

A neighbor of mine was off to France and his house sitter called to say that he was out of water. I went over to see what I could do. It appears the tank got "dumped" and to add insult to injury the well pump decided to go "south". It was producing less than a gallon a minute. I suggested they get the redwood tank refilled ASAP as it was going to open up if left too long without water. I phoned the well service company that installed the well pump and told them of the situation. Good thing I did, the warranty for the \$600 pump was a week from termination!

After the Loma Prieta earthquake, water trucking companies were not too difficult to find. But this time it became fairly obvious that there were not as many choices of companies that haul potable water. Eventually I did locate one. I thought I would pass along the sources in the event that others find themselves in a similar situation.

- Rice Trucking and Materials in Half Moon Bay (650-726-4354). Charges are a 4-hour minimum at \$70/hr and a \$25 fee for the load of water. They can legally haul about 3500 gallons.
- J&J Trucking in Boulder Creek (831-458-9931) will respond to crisis situations if they can. They charge about \$180-\$200 to go to the Gap area and probably at \$280 to Skyline & Page Mill; the farthest north they go.

(Continued on page 5)

Editor's note: Any commercial companies, services or products mentioned in the Skylines are listed only as possible resources for local residents, and are not endorsed by the South Skyline Association.

Take a Hike . . .

A Trail With a View



When friends come to visit we often like to take them on an easy walk to watch the sunset, and a place where we can show off the remarkable mountain range. One of our favorite sunset walks is atop Boreal Hill.

Many SSA members live near the Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve, but for those not familiar with this area, it is a 1,580-acre preserve with eight miles of trails. This area is one of the five best places in the Bay Area to see wildflowers in the spring. The diverse plant community, the forest, and numerous springs make this an excellent habitat for wildlife. This preserve is one of the best places in the Bay Area to observe raptors such as red-tailed hawks and golden eagles.

To reach Boreal Hill for that dramatic sunset, take the Bay Area Ridge Trail that starts at the parking area. This trail is an uphill walk, but it is only .8 of a mile from the parking area. The trail is used for hiking, bicycling, and equestrian.

The highest named point in San Mateo County, this point offers a spectacular 360-degree view. The view expands from the ocean to the San Francisco Bay, across the valley and over the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Bring binoculars to take advantage of the views and the opportunities to observe birds and other wildlife.

You can't always be guaranteed clear skies, but even on those days when there is fog, it can sail in from the ocean so quickly and so dense, it is truly impressive. It is worth the walk just to experience that feeling of being enveloped in a cool moist cloud.

Remember, the park closes a half-hour after sunset, so if you go for the sunset don't linger too long. On your way down, look up at the power lines along Skyline Boulevard. There is a good chance

you may see some hawks or owls perched on the lines or poles.

Location: The parking area is located at the intersection of Skyline Boulevard and Alpine Road.

Hours: The preserve is open from dawn until one half-hour after sunset

Note: This walk is fine for children of all ages, but not as well suited for toddlers because of the uphill walk and the need to stay on the trail. A child backpack is recommended. Also, at times it can be foggy and windy so be prepared with warm clothes, especially if your walk is in the late afternoon.

~Patti Begley

We would like to hear from others about favorite walks in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Send us your articles or suggested trails to Skylines Editor 26160 Highway 9, Los Gatos, CA 95033, or email TheBegleys@msn.com.

MROSD and State Parks Are Aggressively Trapping Wild Pigs

As of mid June Mr. Dick Seever, the trapper for MidPeninsula Regional Open Space District, has trapped 67 wild boar since April 1 (start of their new fiscal year) on his contract for 150 through next March. This is in addition to the 81 he trapped in the half year before. Nearly all of the take has been on the Long Ridge Open Space Preserve. Pig sightings by locals appear to have fallen way off (please keep reporting significant sightings and kills to me, see below).

Now, State Parks of Portola Redwoods, Big Basin, and Wilder are trapping wild pigs; more than 42 in Big Basin, and about 100 in Wilder (north of Santa Cruz). San Mateo Parks (Memorial Park) continues their efforts towards a trapping program. THANK YOU parks and open space districts, for your good work!

We locals have fallen behind, I believe, in our part of the regional pig control program. Keep hunting those pigs, and borrow a community trap from me. I also have bait. Contact: Dick Schwind, 408/867-9422; email: dschwind@aol.com.

~Dick Schwind

Hawkweed Swoops Down Santa Cruz Mountains



White-flowered hawkweed (*Hieracium albiflorum*) grows 1 ½ to 3 feet high on shaded woodland slopes of the Pacific coastal mountains. The perennial composite especially prefers moss-covered road cuts with filtered light, and blooms from June through August.

The single stem rises from a basal rosette of long, elliptical leaves all covered with short, bristly hairs. The number and size of the bristles diminish further up the stem. The smaller and fewer stem leaves have bristles only or mainly along the margins. Both the stem and leaves have milky white sap.

The stem branches at the inflorescence, where there are a number of small flowers in various stages of blooming, from bud to seed. Yellow anthers accompany the white, miniature dandelion-like ray flowers, but there are no disk flowers. The spherical seed heads are also reminiscent of small dandelions. The individual brown to red-brown seeds (achenes) disperse as small parachutes on the slightest breeze.

Although white-flowered hawkweed is the only member of *Hieracium* in the Santa Cruz Mountains, hawkweeds are well-represented world wide with approximately 250 species. A yellow-flowered species, shaggy hawkweed (*H. horridum*) blooms in the Sierra Nevada from July to August.

The genus *Hieracium* gets its name from the Greek for hawk, *hierex*. The name is based on the old world belief that the sharp eyesight of hawks was due to their practice of swooping down on the plants and eating the flowers or leaves.

~Sarah Schoen

SPUG Quarterly Report

Thankfully propane prices have eased off from an all time high in early January. It still is wise to CONSERVE! Recent SPUG prices are:

January (beginning)	\$1.789/gallon
January 19	\$1.659
February	\$1.559
March (beginning)	\$1.509
April	\$1.279
April 20	\$1.299
May	\$1.299
June	\$1.299
June 22	\$1.199

Early in January 2001 the price reached its all time high of \$1.789/gallon. Since then the price has dropped, until late April when the price increased \$0.02/gallon. This increased is due to some refineries in southern California stopping production of propane and diverting the raw material to produce more gasoline. On June 22, the price dropped to \$1.199/gallon.

Prices are subject to changes each Friday. Reported here are usually prices for the first week of the month. See www.southskyline.org for recent updates. Members 55 years of age or older qualify for a 5% discount in addition to the SPUG group price.

For information about joining the Skyline Propane Users Group (SPUG), or for members wishing to have correct information on the Amerigas contract with us, please send a self-addressed stamped envelope with your request to Ruth Waldhauer, SSA Membership Chairperson, 22400 Skyline Boulevard, Box 35, La Honda, CA 94020.

~Ruth Waldhauer

Water Trucking Cont. from pg. 3

It is extremely important to be sure that the tanker has carried only potable water, usually taken from hydrants, not industrial water, which is often used at construction sites. Serious health consequences could result from using water hauled in previously contaminated tankers.

~ Steve Wolf

News and Tips From CDF

A 911 Reminder:

When you call 911 for assistance, help is on the way. If you are safe, remain at the location from which you made the call. Many times the dispatcher will need to give you a call back for additional information such as a condition update, gate combination, driveway identification, etc. If you are in a hard to find location, send a friend to meet the emergency vehicle and lead them to the scene. It will take you far longer to self-transport then it will take for help to arrive.

One time a person called 911 for help and was in a private vehicle being driven south and went past the emergency vehicle that was traveling north. This resulted in a lot of confusion and lost time. In another case, a person that was home alone called 911 and then drove himself down the hill. When the emergency team arrived, they broke down the door and searched the house looking for an unconscious patient.

Other News:

One of our South Skyline Volunteer members has joined CDF as a summer firefighter. Dale Johnson reported for duty, June 25, and will be working in the Santa Cruz ranger unit. This will give our team a member with additional skill and experience. Unfortunately during the time he is employed with CDF he is unable to participate as a volunteer firefighter due to CDF policy.

As always we would like to thank the members of the South Skyline Association for your great support.

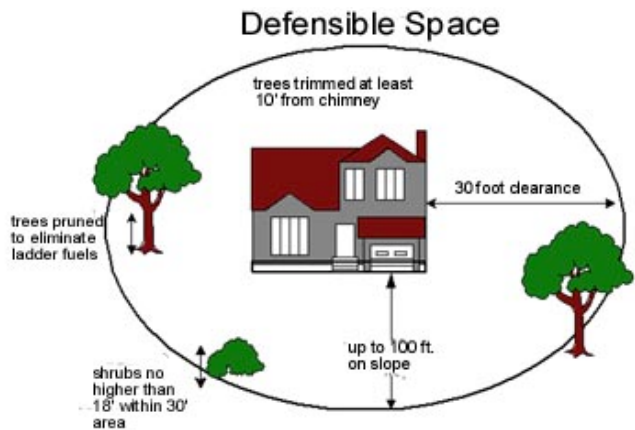
~George Johnson, South Skyline Volunteer Fire and Rescue



Be Fire Wise

July is here. Meadows in the Santa Cruz Mountains are golden. Are you ready for the fire season? Have you followed the CDF guidelines set up to create a defensible space around your home?

- The law requires maintaining a firebreak for a distance of not less than 30 feet around any building on level ground.
- In situations of extra hazardous conditions clearing to 100 feet may be required.
- On slopes of 40 degrees, clear to 200 feet.
- Trim trees at least 10 feet from chimney



To make defensible space, remove and clear away all flammable vegetation or other combustible growth. This does not apply to single specimens of trees, ornamental shrubbery, or similar plants if they do not form a means of rapidly transmitting fire from the native growth. Clear access to fire hydrants and propane tanks.

Space surrounding your home should be defensible if you expect fire crews to make a stand there in the case of triage, i.e., deciding which structures have a chance of being saved during a wildfire and which will be given up as lost even before the flames arrive!

CDF personnel will have more information, diagrams and useful suggestions available at the July SSA summer meeting at the Jaqua's on July 22.

~Ruth Waldhauer

Selling Mountain Property Can Be a Challenge

As much as most of us love and appreciate our homes in the mountains, the time may come when we need to move on. Property value is always a concern, even if we don't plan on moving anytime soon. I think we all know that mountain property has its unique advantages as well as drawbacks that can cause a great deal of frustration. Below, a property owner, and three mountain realtors offer some advice and opinions based on their personal experiences that may help local residents when it comes time to market their own "Fabulous Mountain Home".

Location, Location, Location!

In the process of selling our Skyline property, I have discovered some interesting facts that are affecting our property prices. We are in a realtors' no man's land! We are outside the traditional area of the Saratoga realty offices, way too far south for the Woodside and Portola Valley offices, and the Summit Road and Boulder Creek realtors are completely unfamiliar with our area. Agents show local properties to their clients long before they drive all the way up to South Skyline. We are too far out they will say.

What this means is that our property prices are suppressed, compared with equally "far out" properties that are closer to the realty offices. Skylonda, Kings Mountain, Summit Road, and other areas that have adequate representation, all command higher prices, yet are farther, some significantly, away from most Silicon Valley employers. Most of our homes are 15 minutes from Saratoga, 25-30 to Palo Alto, Sunnyvale, Cupertino, and others.

I am writing this to urge any of you that decide to sell your properties, to personally take a good, careful, look at "comparables" and decide on a price based on this. Resist an agent's reduced assessment. Do your homework! Look at every property you can find, whether it's

currently on the market or has recently sold, if at all possible. You may find, like I did twice in the past, that the price that a realtor or appraiser suggests is 20% or more BELOW what you can get!

Ask your agent how many ads, in what newspapers, black and white or color, what size, etc. How many brochures will they distribute? Where will they distribute them? How many will they mail and to whom? What will they do to set your property apart from others? And MOST IMPORTANTLY, what will they do to get buyers to come up to our "far out" area to even begin to appreciate the beauty and splendor that surrounds us.

~Bobbie Piety

The Piety's have resided in the SSA area for over 20 years.

Marketing Your Mountain Property

Three real estate agents, each with several years experience selling mountain property, and live in the mountains, share their insight into the current market.

Mike Scherer of Mountain Mike Summit Properties says the real estate market is very different now that it was 1 year ago. "Prices are generally 10% lower than last year's peak prices. I don't think home prices in the Skyline area should be much different than in parts of the Summit Area. Commute time is what counts." He says that although not everyone wants to live

in the mountains some will drive the distance to use the Los Gatos-Saratoga schools and pay half the price of a home in town.

Finding good agents:

Barbara Fishman of Windermere Silicon Valley Properties agrees that this is a difficult market for sellers. "Selecting a listing real estate agent is crucial in our mountain areas." She recommends that the seller find someone a neighbor or friend has used, or look for someone who has signs in your area.

Greg Wynne of Alain Pinel also cautions sellers to be prudent when choosing a broker. "Mountain properties are harder to sell, and more challenging. Part of the charm of [the Skyline] area is the low density. Because of the necessity of a greater understanding of acreage and other unique issues, other agents would rather remain in more urban environments."

Mike Scherer recommends that a homeowner interview 2 or 3 agents and have some questions prepared to ask. For example:

1. Besides the MLS and real estate Internet listings, what other ways are you going to market my home? Where, what and how often?
2. Do you have a personal website that will list all the features and amenities of my home that won't fit the in MLS description? *(continued on pg. 8)*

Selling Mountain Property

(cont. from pg. 7)

3. If you were to take our listing, how would you encourage other agents to show our property?
4. How would you price my property if I need to sell in 90 days? 60 days? 300 days?

What about pricing?

Greg Wynne feels that pricing is not a science, but an art. "I highly encourage sellers to tour many properties in the immediate area to not only educate themselves as to

value, but also to get a sense of what factors are considered. Realtors are bound to a written code of ethics and part of the code is to protect the sanctity and value of real property ownership. "Better to work in partnership with a good marketer /realtor to come to a realistic offering price. A well priced home will sell for more than an overpriced comparable home."

Regarding comparables, Barbara Fishman says, "We rarely, if ever,

have comparable houses in our South Skyline Association region." She says it is not just a matter of size and the usual criteria used in a typical valley market analysis. An agent or appraiser needs to evaluate other factors such as age, style, view, terrain, percentage of usable land, access, shade or sun, etc. "We need to be inventive in this tougher market. When we put our heads together – good things happen".

~Patti Begley

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE

WOODSTOVE: Airtight with built-in damper & regulator! Two small glass, arched doors. Large side door. \$295
650-851-3181

SERVICES

Con's Backhoe Service

Percs, septic both new and repair, Drilling, Trenching, General tractor work. License # 766597 650-747-0736.

SERVICES

Alice's Resturant dinners from our chef Rusfino served Thurs. thru Sun. 5:00-9:00. Also avail: To Go, private parties, breakfast & lunch 7 days. 851-0303.

FREE

Fire Fittings Convert 1 1/2 inch pipe thread to fire thread. Blue reflectors included. South Skyline Fire & Rescue. George. 408-354-1401

Wanted

Need the following:

1. **Occasional cat sitter** - morning & evening feedings/meds for 2 great indoor senior kitties.
2. **Maid** – General Cleaning Upkeep every other wk – 700 sq ft cabin
3. **Yard Work Help** – Brush clearing, perhaps gen. maintenance, depending on cost. 1 mile from Russian Ridge, Alpine/ Skyline. Please call if avail, or have a recommendation. Call Don (650) 941- 8382

Policy on Classified Ads: Ads are free to SSA members. No continuing ads will be accepted. They must be resubmitted for each issue during the month before the deadline. Deadline dates are generally July 1, October 1, January 1, and April 1.

Skylines News Articles: The deadline for submitting articles for the next issue is September 24, 2001.

Send all ads and articles to: Patti Begley 26160 Highway 9, Los Gatos, CA 95033, or TheBegleys@msn.com

SOUTH SKYLINE ASSOCIATION

Box 400, Star Route 2
La Honda, CA 94020

President Larry Myers 408-354-5830
Editor Patti Begley 408-867-3973

SSA CALENDAR

General Meeting July 22, 11:00 am Summer Pot Luck at Jaqua's

Business Meetings at 7:15 pm

Thurs. July 12 - Cliff Jenkins

Thurs. August 9 - Eva Blum

Thurs September 13 - Ruth Waldhauer

(Call Larry Meyers for location and directions)