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South Skyline Association General Meeting

Fire-Resistant Landscaping: The Basics

Guest Speaker – Suzanne Schettler

Sunday January 24, 2010

2:00 – Refreshments

2:30 - SSA Board Elections and
Featured Presentation

CDF Saratoga Summit Fire Station
12900 Skyline Blvd.



*Please bring a dessert to share.
SSA will provide hot beverages and soft drinks*

Fire is a natural force in a Mediterranean climate, where rain falls only during the cool part of the year. Our ecosystems are adapted to fire, and we must adapt to fire. Fires often generate wind-blown embers that are the strongest force in the spread of a fire. In the face of a powerful firestorm, there is no such thing as a fire-proof plant, or a fire-proof landscape, or a fire-proof structure. Evacuation may be the only option.

We can take some steps, however, to improve the survivability of lives, homes possessions and landscaping. Suzanne Schettler, the owner of Greening Associates, a consulting and habitat restoration firm in Ben Lomond, will give us some recommendations and information about “firescaping”. There are many ways to achieve a balance of defensibility, aesthetics and ecological value. With good information, we can each make individual decisions about our particular site.

**HAPPY
NEW YEAR**

Directions:

The CDF Saratoga Summit Fire Station is located on the west side of Skyline Blvd. approximately 1 mile north of the intersection of Skyline and Highway 9.

What Is Your SSA Board Doing?

By Judy Grote

What Is Your SSA Board Doing?

- The SSA October **General Meeting** was held at the Las Cumbres Community Center on Sunday, October 25th. The featured speaker was Garth Harwood, Director of the Hidden Villa Environmental Education Program, who talked about owls in our area and how to better co-exist with them. The **next General Meeting** will be held on Sunday, January 24th, and will feature Suzanne Schettler, a botanist extraordinaire, who will present a program on Fire Resistant Native Plants.
- The fall **Skylines Newsletter** was published to the Community. The next newsletter is being developed for distribution on Sunday, January 10th, 2010.
- **SSA Roster Update:** This is in the works and should be out to members in Q1 2010.
- **SSA Community Communications Enhancements:** And in an effort to keep with the times, a new communication resource is the SSA Facebook page. If you have a Facebook account, you can become a 'fan' and get info pushed to your Facebook 'wall'. Or you could post comments for the other fans to receive.
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/South-Skyline-Association/148607836587>
- **Fire Safe Council:** The Council is still working on its 501c3. The Council is going to reimburse for chipping up to \$200 instead of organizing it directly due to liability issues. It also is working to get more \$s from other grants received in the area for our Community. These \$s could be used for more chipping and trying to get Emergency Evacuation routes in order.
- **Firesafe corridor on Old Haul Rd in Alpine-Portola Neighborhood.** The Old Haul Bridge was completed at the end of October, thanks for the contractor for taking 5 weeks instead of 8 weeks. Please see Patti's article in this newsletter.
- **South Skyline Emergency Preparedness Organization (SSEPO):** SSEPO is finalizing an Emergency Communication system that it will recommend to the SSA Community—the neighborhoods in the community.
- **Land Use Planning & Building Permits:** The Board committee is developing an inventory of all open space, county and state park units, water sheds in the SSA Community area. The focus is on 1) Identifying the physical attributes, management, public use, and public safety interfaces for each, and 2) identifying the common use access points. The committee will initially focus on the topics which our community needs to be aware of: watersheds, planning, and building permits
- **Public Works:** This Board committee is looking into several issues: 1) Undergrounding power and telephone lines along the Highway 35 scenic corridor, 2) Better bicycle safety on Highway 35 (Skyline Blvd) by getting pathways on each side of the road as a long term objective, and 3) vegetation clearance on Highway 35 to increase visibility, avoid encroachment on bicycle lanes, and possibly provide more of a fire break.
- **Public Safety:** This committee is focused on 2 areas: 1) Getting more volunteers for the South Skyline Fire and Rescue, and 2) Finding a central location for an Emergency trailer for SSEPO.

Visitors are welcome at Board meetings. Please check the website for meeting dates. Meeting minutes and agendas are also on www.southskyline.org.

The current SSA Board is as follows:

| Name | Neighborhood | Board Responsibility |
|-------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Patti Begley | Highway 9 | Communications Committee; Skylines Editor |
| Martin Bligh | Rosemary Lane | Public Safety; SSFSC |
| Ken Broome | Crazy Pete's, Rocky Creek | Adopt-a-Highway program; SSEPO Treasurer; Public Works |
| Noelle Cosentino | Indian Trails | Traffic Safety & Motorcycles |
| Bo Gimbal | Highway 9 | Treasurer; Parks |
| Fred Glover | Southern part of Skyline | President; Land Use policies |
| Gary Gechlik | Highway 35 | Vice President; Programs Chair; BAAQMD |
| Jer Granucci | Skylonda | Secretary; Membership Services |
| Judy Grote | Alpine-Portola | Parks, Land Use policies; Fire Safety – Old Haul Rd Fire Safe Corridor; SSFSC |
| Kim Hamilton | Oakridge | Public Works |
| Hertha Harrington | Skylonda | CalTrans, Trucks on Hwy 84 |
| Larry Myers | Las Cumbres | Public Safety |
| Ruth Waldhauer | Portola Heights | Membership; SPUG; Communications; Hwy 35 Fire Safe Corridor |



Quarterly Report

By Ruth Waldhauer

Skyline Propane Users Group (SPUG) was formed to benefit SSA members. For information about joining, or for members wishing current information on the agreement with Amerigas, Kamps Propane, or Suburban Propane, please contact Ruth Waldhauer at ruth_waldhauer@yahoo.com, or 650-948-1466. Information is also available on our website at www.southskyline.org.

Recent SPUG prices with Amerigas are:

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| September | \$1.64/gal |
| October | \$1.64 |
| November | \$1.93 |
| December | \$2.02 |
| January 2010 | \$2.29 |

Recent SPUG prices with Suburban are:

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| September | \$1.49/gal |
| October | \$1.63 |
| November | \$1.93 |
| December | \$2.02 |
| January 2010 | \$2.29 |

Recent SPUG prices with Kamps Propane are:

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| September | \$1.53/gal |
| October | \$1.67 |
| November | \$2.07 |
| December | \$2.12 |
| January 2010 | \$2.48 |

Do what you can to conserve! The open market price is about \$1.00/gallon higher than the SPUG price.

Prices are subject to change as frequently as wholesale prices change. The prices we post are for the first of the month. Our SPUG rate is based on automatic regular route deliveries on a keep-full basis, not "will-call" service. Some propane suppliers offer members 55 years of age or older a 2 cent/gallon discount in addition to the SPUG group price.

Those whose membership in SSA has lapsed will be disqualified from receiving the benefit of SPUG price for propane.

For more information visit the website: www.southskyline.org, or contact Ruth at ruth_waldhauer@yahoo.com or 650-948-1466.

SSA Is On Facebook!

You can now become a fan on the South Skyline Association Facebook page!

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/South-Skyline-Association/148607836587>

This is a great way to receive Quarterly meeting reminders and other timely info in addition to the southskyline.org website.

Become a fan today!

SSA Board Elections

At the SSA General Meeting in January we will be voting for two new board members and four board members for re-election. Many thanks to our out-going board members Hertha Harrington and Noelle Consentino.

Current board members running for another term are Bo Gimbal, Ken Broome, Gary Gechlik, and Ruth Waldhauer. The two new candidates on the ballot are Karim Khalid and Frances Mann-Craik.

Karim Khalid

I fell in love with the Santa Cruz Mountains when I first came to the US in 2004; I visited friends living on Skyline and wanted to live here since then. My dream came true when I had the chance to move into a lovely little house on Charcoal Road, within the Saratoga Gap Open Space Preserve (managed by MROSD).

I am originally from France, and I work as an engineer in the semiconductor industry. I am an expert at building transistors, though I enjoy building and fixing most anything. I have recently joined the South Skyline Fire & Rescue as a volunteer Firefighter and I am planning to take an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) training in 2010. I am also a foster parent helping teens stabilize and achieve their goals. I work as an emergency placement for foster kids transitioning out of the youth shelters.

I am solution driven and optimistic, and I would be honored to serve the community as a member of the SSA Board.

Frances Mann-Craik

My husband, Jim Craik, and I have lived on Skyline for seven years. We both enjoy the beautiful mountains and the wonderful friends we have made here. I grew up in Palo Alto and had always dreamed of living in the Skyline area -- this is truly a dream come true. I own and operate a high tech marketing firm from my home office. I would be honored to serve the community as a member of the South Skyline Association Board.

Owls in the Skyline Area

By Garth Harwood, Director of Environmental Education at Hidden Villa (www.hiddenvilla.org)

First, a story. Then, some information on how you can be a friend to the owls – or at least, not kill them by accident!

One night last month, I visited a favorite spot of mine at Monte Bello Open Space Preserve. My homeward commute often coincides nicely with the ‘day shift’ of bird life yielding to the ‘night shift’. So it was, that I stopped in just as the first hints of dusk asserted themselves. Songbirds went through a little bit of commotion before quieting for good onto their night roosts. Soon, it was as if there were no birds about at all. I knew better however, and as the shadowed light still held sway, I continued looking and listening with care, knowing from experience that owls would become active any moment now and that their utterly silent flight would require keen attention on my part to detect them.

Suddenly, in the midst of the deep quiet, I spooked a group of quail from deep within the scrubby live oak where this covey usually sleeps. Their panicky calls and clumsy crashing through the foliage seemed an excessive response to the situation, but as I soon as I felt a pang of irritation about that, I remembered that I wouldn’t be the only one paying attention – quail distracted by one danger might be all the easier for a real hunter to grab from the other direction. Looking up, I saw that it was all too true, and a Great Horned Owl with a wingspan of nearly 5 feet was gliding at warp speed straight toward the tree. It smashed into the foliage with seeming disregard for its own safety, causing even more racket from the quail, but emerged a moment later with empty talons.

What followed was one of my best owl interactions ever. This owl perched on a nearby willow and allowed me to stand quietly nearby as it dove after voles and the like in the nearby grasslands, with some success. Later, it began to exchange calls with a second, hidden owl higher on the ridge. By this time it was getting rather dark, so I approached the exit. But the first owl remained close by, on various perches, so I took a chance and imitated its call as closely as I could. It called back, and we exchanged a few more calls. The second owl had clammed up as soon as I began ‘talking’, but I tried to remain alert for it all the same – angry owls have been known to strike humans, and I had, after all, inserted myself into a courtship duet!

As it happened, predictably, I never heard it coming. My good fortune was that this second owl was a forgiving soul and perched on a shrubby young tree just a few feet from the back of my head, letting rip with a particularly loud rendition of its booming song, *Who-huh-HOO, Hoo-hoo!* Looking around I looked into its big, perpetually ferocious yellow eyes as it called once or twice more and then, evidently assessing me as not worthy of much trouble, dove onto a target of opportunity a few feet away, and then back to the cover of its original stand of trees. I called once more in farewell to the original bird and took my leave.

As you can see, I feel a special connection with owls and I’ve made it my business to know all that I can about them.

Recently, I had the pleasure of presenting a talk on the various owls of our region at a regular meeting of the SSA. One of my motivations in accepting the invitation to speak was to do something positive for the local owls that have enriched my own life. In this follow-up article as well, my hope is that some of you might also develop a personal connection to owls, and an appreciation for what they do. With luck, you’ll choose to avoid the most common mistake – rat poison - which results in many unnecessary owl deaths, and find ways to help keep owls going strong in our area for generations to come.

Most owl populations are holding on quite well in our part of the Santa Cruz Mountains. In rough order of prevalence, our local owls include the smallish Western Screech-owl, the Great Horned Owl, Barn Owls, Northern Saw-whet Owls, Northern Pygmy-owls, and Long-eared Owls. Short-eared Owls and Burrowing Owls also occur in our region, but almost never in the well-forested Skyline area. (Note that birders prefer to capitalize bird names so that you can tell what is just an adjective, and what is part of the actual name.)

Owls are generally shy and hard to see, but in the fall courting season, and on certain special nights throughout the year, they may be quite vocal, giving you a great chance to know what types you have in your neighborhood. To get to know them, it is best to learn their sounds first, as the pictures in your field guide will only rarely be useful. Fortunately, many internet resources now make this a relatively easy learning adventure. My personal favorite is called Xeno-canto (“everything sings”), at www.xeno-canto.org, which collects amateur and professional recordings for every bird species worldwide. Type in any of the owl names above, and you’ll have a plethora of recordings to choose from. Chances are that you’ll recognize a few from your neighborhood!

Another site worth visiting is The Hungry Owl Project, at www.hungryowl.org. At this site you can also find links to California owl sounds, and a whole lot more. Of particular note is the attention this site pays to owls’ value as nontoxic rodent control agents. Of all of our local owls, Barn Owls are the most beneficial to humans, for two reasons: first, they eat rodents by the bucketful. If you struggle with mice, rats, or gophers, you want these guys around! A single family (2 parents, an average of 4 young) can consume up to 3,000 rodents a year, EVERY year, free of charge. Second, Barn Owls like to live close to humans and especially, as the name implies, in tall or lightly used buildings such as barns. Lucky us!

Now the problem: we are dangerous to be around. People who wish to control rodents often get desperate and take toxic shortcuts. The most common poisons on the market now use an active ingredient called brodifacoum, found in such products as D-Con, Talon, and Havoc. This product is extremely toxic to owls. [Continued on page 5]

Shooting Stars Streak Across Skyline

By Sarah Schoen

Shooting stars are a happy signal of spring. On a March outing, one man's goal was just to see some of these flowers. When they came into view around the trail's bend and tucked into the wet hillside, his expression was like a child's on Christmas morning.

Shooting stars are all members of the genus *Dodecatheon*, named because they are under protection of all 12 Olympian gods. Our species along Skyline is Henderson's shooting star (*D. hendersonii*), also known as sailor caps and mosquito bills.

Henderson's shooting star is a perennial, underground and out of site for almost half the year. After the season's first good rains, it emerges as a rosette of basal leaves. The leaves are elliptical to oval, 3/4 to 6 inches long, with the blade narrowing abruptly into the leaf stem (petiole). The reddish or purplish naked stems grow from 5 to 16", ending in umbels of flowers, from 3 to 17 per stem.

The flowers are what draw our attention – unusual and beautiful – blooming from February to April or May. They have 4 or 5 lavender or magenta petals, swept back like a comet's tail. Moving toward the flower's center, there are bands of white, yellow, then dark purple. At the very center, dark purple stamens are fused and go in the opposite direction of the petals. The narrow style is surrounded by the stamens and extends beyond them. The stigma is not much wider than the style.

Fruits ripen by midsummer. They are upright, reddish capsules, opening at the top, splitting into several downward-turning teeth and producing abundant seeds.

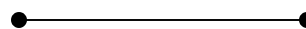
After producing the seeds, the plants die back to below ground, re-emerging the following winter. Roots of this species are fleshy and fibrous with rice-like bulblets. The bulblets can become detached or the plants can reproduce from underground stems, both producing new plants, part of the densely clumped shooting star colony.

At least 2 tribes of California Indians hung flowers of Henderson's shooting stars above the baby baskets to make the babies sleep. Roots and leaves were also cooked and eaten as an emergency food supply.



Henderson's shooting star is found in the West from British Columbia to Southern California below 4000 feet. It grows in moist areas of woodlands and grasslands.

A related species, Padre's shooting star (*D. clevelandii*) is found nearby to east and west of us. There are white-petalled varieties, but also varieties similar in appearance to Henderson's. These can be (imperfectly) distinguished from Henderson's by the presence of a yellow spot at the base of the stamens' anthers.



Owls [Continued from page 4]

Poisoned rodents take several days to die, during which they often become easy prey to various predators including owls, introducing the poison to their systems. Barn Owls are the one local owl species that, while still fairly common here, is in sharp decline all over the world. One survey in the 1990s found that they had declined by more than 80% in California over the previous 30 years!

If you wish to control rodents, please avoid poisons at all costs. Nontoxic alternatives include snap traps (it pays to read up on effective strategies before trying this), or baits made of 3 parts flour, 2 parts lime, and 1 part sugar. These will cause fatal blockages in rodent's digestive systems, without harming any predators (including pets) that scavenge them. Other nontoxic pest control methods can be found at many internet sites such as Richard Fagerlund's "askthebugman.com".

In the 1980s, I often helped out in the apple orchard where I now live. Pruning season occurs in winter when the days are short, so I'd often knock off when it got a little too dark to see what I was doing – in other words, during owl time. In those days Barn Owls nested at the orchard and I encountered them every night. One night, as I packed up, I saw one standing on the ground nearby, regarding me implacably. I stayed there for a long time but it never moved. Returning the next morning, it was lying dead at the same spot. At the time, I did not put it all together, but I recall now that my father used rodent poisons as a matter of routine, as almost every farmer did then. From that day to this, Barn Owls have not returned to live at our orchard, although I hear them fly over and call from time to time. We've been toxin-free for over a decade now, and 5 other owl species spend time here already. I truly look forward to the day when the Barn Owls finally come back.

There's History in our Place

Names - part 5

By Janet Schwind

When I drove south on Skyline Boulevard to meet Bear Creek Road I wondered why there is a clearing at the intersection, but no signs of human activity. The history buff in me wanted to solve this mystery.

I found out that this crossroads once known as Van Lone Gap, Browns summit, and Bear Creek Summit does indeed have a human history. The gap and nearby high point high point known as Mount Van Lone were named after the William Van Lone family who arrived in California from Missouri by wagon train in the 1850s. They established a fruit orchard on Bear Creek Road and also established a business making wooden boxes for shipping fruit.

William's wife, Romelia, was a strong and capable woman whom neighbors turned to in any medical emergency. According to local lore, she once rode on horseback for miles through a raging storm to help deliver a baby, when her own pregnancy was near term.

In the 1870s the site was known as Browns Summit, presumably for Gustavo (or Augustus) Brown a fruit grower from Bavaria who settled nearby. Mrs. Brown started teaching a few children in her apple shed before the Brown School house was built at the crossroads in 1875. It was a busy year for the little community, as lumber wagons began using the Bear Creek Toll Road to deliver their products the Santa Clara Valley.

The Brown School served the children of local ranchers until it was suspended in 1950. That year three young people graduated, and the remaining four pupils continued their education in Boulder Creek or at Central School near Black Road. The wide spot in the road contained the school and its playground. As with many abandoned buildings on the mountain, in 1964 the old school building met its demise in a fire suspected to be the work of an arsonist. The remains were subsequently bulldozed by a neighbor leaving only a wide spot in the road. Mystery solved.

Vandalism on Skyline

On November 7th, residents on Skyline (between the CDF station and Rhys Winery) noticed that a substantial portion of the paint on top of their water holding tank had suddenly peeled off. On closer inspection they found the remains of several cigarettes (possibly marijuana) and some pretty clear footprints. It appeared that the vandals made a project of trying to burn as much of the tank as they could. A police report was filed.

If anyone has information regarding any vandalism or burglaries in the area please contact the Sheriff's Department. Also by sending information to *Skylines*, we can help keep residents informed.

Take a Hike . .



Montebello

By Ruth Waldhauer

On a clear, crisp winter day, a hike on Montebello will offer you spectacular views. The name of this preserve speaks of a time in the nineteenth century when Italian farmers and winemakers settled on the flanks of a ridge they named Montebello or "beautiful mountain."

Start at the parking lot on Page Mill Road, and short walk will lead you through the remnants of an orchard to the Canyon Trail where you soon will pass a sag pond associated with the San Andreas earthquake fault. The San Andreas fault runs along the base of Montebello Ridge, and bisects the preserve. Continue on, then turn left onto the Bella Vista Trail. The trail goes gently up through grasslands with grand views. At times, the fog hangs in the valleys between the ridges; often fog blankets them. The trail will meet Montebello Road. Turn right and follow Montebello Road to the trail camp. Here you will find a few tables, a nice spot for a short break. Near this spot once stood the red barn of the mountaintop cattle ranch, and the houses that belonged to the Morell family.

Continue on Montebello Road to the Indian Creek Trail. Turn right, and start down hill. Trees are widely spaced. Looking to the west one can see the series of mountain ridges stretching to the ocean. To the south one can see all the way to Mt. Umunhum, and to the north to San Bruno Mountain and Mt. Tamalpais.

Indian Creek Trail will meet the Canyon Trail. Here turn right and head back to the parking lot.

Trail maps are available at the parking lot. Total distance of this hike is about 4.5 miles with an elevation gain of 840 feet. Should you attempt this hike on a warm summer's day, be sure to make an early start. This sunny route could be uncomfortably hot.

Fuel Reduction along Skyline Blvd

By Dick Schwind

Cal Fire and Caltrans are presently removing brush, dead trees, and limbing up along Skyline Blvd in a 30day fuels reduction program. They have started at Rte 9 and plan to go in both directions on Skyline Blvd. Cal Fire is using a 15-man CDC crew from the Ben Lomond Conservation Camp, and Caltrans is providing a tree trimmer in an extending arm truck, the chipper, and traffic control. Crews will not work when the weather is not safe for conducting traffic control (i.e. heavy rain and fog).

The crews are working within the 100 ft highway easement south to Black Road. South of that there is no easement off to the road sides, so CalFire has sent all the homeowners south to Bear Creek Road a letter asking for their permission to perform fuels reduction. In the first week about 25% had responded positively. Contact the project coordinator, CalFire Angela Bernheisel <angela.bernheisel@fire.ca.gov> if you have not responded but have questions.

THIS IS A SMALL START on the vitally important work of eventually clearing to make the length of Skyline Blvd a safer exit road in a bad wildland fire and probably the only defensible line for such a wildfire from the Santa Clara County foothills all the way to the redwoods (or vice versa). Such a wildfire has occurred in the past!

A Big Thank You to the Saratoga Summit CDF Crew

By Lynne Penek-Holder



The day the big storm was about to hit (October 12th) my elderly 33 year old burro, Honky Tonk (who many of you know) tottered down to her favorite rolling spot and rolled right over the side of the hill. By the time I discovered her she had struggled her way down about 100' and was sweaty, cut and exhausted, unable to stand. My neighbors Shanna and Troy Corriere, who share in her care, and my son Hunt and I tried to make a switch back path but, though she got up with help she was too weak to take a step and sank back down. Shanna had the brilliant idea to call CDF for help.

CDF's Tiffany Tracy and her crew of 8-10 strong men arrived shortly with rescue gear. Honky Tonk was placed onto a folded tarp which Troy had rolled into a point like the bow of a ship and after tying Honky Tonk's feet together and placing 2 fire hoses around her body, the crew, Troy and Hunt hauled her up the hill to the flat spot. From there Shanna towed her with her jeep to the barn gate. Again the crew picked her up in her tarp-sling and carried her completely into her stall. She still looked dazed and stunned but as they drove out the driveway, Honky Tonk rose again and started to eat, drink and wander around her stall like nothing had happened! What a gal! -and what a wonderful crew to help when help was desperately needed. Thanks, again and again!



How to Communicate in Emergencies

By Sherry Niswander

South Skyline Emergency Preparedness Organization (SSEPO) presented their "Emergency Communications Procedure" (ECP) template on December 6, 2009, at the Open Space Ranger Station. Several neighborhoods were represented and voiced strong interest in adopting the new procedures. The plan itself will be available on the SSA website and the Skylines Yahoo group email for download use by anyone interested. Members of SSEPO will be available to meet with neighborhood groups to help them get started on developing their specific ECP's. SSEPO also announced that they have established an Emergency Communications Equipment Grant of up to \$750 for each neighborhood to help them with equipment needs. The procedure for requesting this grant will also be posted on the SSA website and Skylines Yahoo Group.

If you are interested in Emergency Communications for your neighborhood and have questions, you can contact Sherry Niswander at sherry@andersonniswander.com or Peggy Wargo at peggywargo.wargo1@gmail.com

Masticator is Viable Alternative to Chainsaw & Chipping

By John DeLong

Use of a masticator appears to be an efficient and cost effective method to clear a fire break for some properties. On October 8, the South Skyline Fire Safe Council arranged a two-hour demonstration by Black Cat Construction to show the capabilities of their mastication equipment. A masticator is a powerful cutting/mulching head mounted on a tractor. The masticator simultaneously cuts and shreds shrubs and trees up to about 4" in diameter. Black Cat has two masticators, one mounted on the boom arm of a steel tracked excavator, and the other mounted on the front of a rubber tracked skid steer. Because most of the wood is shredded, it severely reduces the amount of chipping that may need to be done.

In our demonstration, the masticator cleared approximately 2000 square feet of dense Manzanita and scrub oak in about two hours. According to John Romandia, the owner of Black Cat Construction, the amount of land cleared per hour can vary depending on the slope, density of the brush, and how many obstacles there are, including trees the landowner has identified as not be cut. Using a masticator is faster and possibly less expensive than the normal chainsaw and chipper methods. The debris left behind with a masticator is coarser and larger than with a chipper and is normally left in place for erosion control. In the demonstration, we found many large limbs remaining that needed to be chipped later. This could be a cost effective alternative for clearing defensible space around your home and along your roadways. Please contact Black Cat Construction (831-750-7425, www.blackcatconstruction.net) for more information.

Skylines Is Going Green

For those members who receive the *Skylines* through the Post Office we are asking you to receive your copy of the newsletter on-line. This will save paper as well as postage. If you sign up for this option you will be notified by email when the next issue is released.

Update your email address with Ruth Waldhauer at: ruth_waldhauer@yahoo.com or 650-948-1466 or sign up on the enclosed membership form when you send in your \$15 dues for 2010.

Those members who live locally where we stuff mail boxes will continue to get a paper copy.

Adopt-A-Highway

By Kenneth Broome

The Adopt-a-Highway program is now part of the Public Works Committee's scope of activities. Many thanks to Ruth Waldhauer for having initiated and organized such a long-lived and important way for making the South Skyline Scenic Corridor and our Association so visible and appreciated by the public.

Most recently, Ruth, Jane Manning, Denis de Cuester, Jim Copeland, Robert Bradford, and myself picked up debris along both the South Skyline Association and the Skyline Historical Society adopted sections of Skyline Boulevard along this four mile stretch. The Vista Point was remarkably clean in the absence of the steel waste collection barrels donated by SSA member Bill Sorich. The barrels were being misused by some neighbors for dumping of domestic waste, and therefore removed. SSA Vista Point volunteers still clean the area and carry away the trash.

New volunteers are needed for the next clean-up on Saturday January 16th at 9am at Vista Point since we do not want the same people to feel obliged to keep on cleaning. Besides we want to make the opportunity of performing public service available to as many people as possible. Please let me know if you are interested at broome.assocs@gmail.com or 650-529-1810. Thank you.

There's been More Clean-up on Skyline...

Ami Jaqua organized her friends for a clean-up along Skyline from Rapley Ranch Road to the pull-out north of Windy Hill. Ami has tried for almost a year to officially adopt this stretch of Skyline, but the bureaucracy at CalTrans in Oakland is moving very slowly, so Ami decided to proceed anyway. On December 29, Ami and Dick Jaqua with Helen Haydon, Jennifer Heit, and Jane Mackey just did it.

Applause to these motivated mountain folk, and their Trash-a-thon!!!

CAL FIRE's Burn Restrictions and Burn Permits

During certain times of the year residential debris burning of dead vegetation is allowed. However, homeowners should always check with their local CAL FIRE before burning. In many areas burn permits may be required.

In Santa Cruz county backyard burn season is usually December 1 through April 30 when burning is allowed without a permit. Call 1-800-CAL-BURN to see if it is a permissive burn day in that county.

Burning garbage is prohibited statewide.

Another Big Truck/Auto Encounter on Highway 84

By Hertha Harrington

On November 11, at 5:45 PM Zoe, aged 79 years, of La Honda, was driving west on SSR 84, near Grandview. She saw headlights coming toward her. A truck came around the curve ahead, towing a 53 feet long trailer which was completely over the yellow line and on her side of the road. She braked, but there was nowhere to go to escape the on-coming truck and trailer. At impact her 4 year old Prius was dragged down hill, the front of the car turned toward the truck and the back pushed into the side of the hill. The Prius was totaled, and Zoe suffered personal injury, a badly bruised sternum and neck injury requiring a neck brace from the seat belt and the impact from the airbag.

She was transported to the ER at Stanford Hospital. Her new clothes were destroyed when they were cut from her body. She spent the night in the hospital. She has been unable to drive since the accident, and almost 6 weeks later her bruises are only now starting to fade.

Zoe has learned that the driver of the truck was from Texas – unfamiliar with this area. He was lost. Having seen the warning sign on #84 at Highway #1, he saw that it was advisory only – so he chose to ignore its message.

Once again, a huge truck has imperiled a local resident, destroyed a car, and has miraculously avoided an even more terrible tragedy. This event has been described in detail in order to keep our #84 users alert and aware – a very dangerous situation exists. The members of the SSA board continue to call attention to the situation, hoping thereby to convince CALTRANS that Highway #84 must be upgraded to modern standards and in the meantime to establish a requirement that escort cars accompany big trucks. We persist in voicing our concerns.

Since police reports of auto accidents are not released to the public, our only access to this information is via the victims. We are keeping as accurate a record as possible of accidents and near accidents involving over sized trucks and any other kind of vehicle on Highway 84. We are asking our readers to report information when they experience or witness such events to: Ken Broome broome.assoc@gmail.com or 650-529-1810, or Hertha Harrington h.harrington@aol.com or 650-851-4226

Old Haul Road Bridge Is Complete

By Patti Begley

Sometimes persistence and team work pays off. It certainly worked with the successful installation of the Old Haul Bridge over Pescadero Creek in Portola Redwoods State Park.

About three years ago Mary Hazel, the Acting Supervising Ranger of the park, learned that this critical bridge might not be replaced after it was brought down by a huge redwood tree. She was concerned about this bridge because it was the evacuation route for area residents and park visitors should a fire come down Portola State Park Road.

When Judy Grote heard about this she began spreading the word to everyone in that neighborhood that they needed to push the Mountain Parks District so that it wouldn't forget about this bridge. Residents began to write letters and call park authorities.

By 2008 the park authorities thought they had all of the permits needed by Fish and Game and the contractor started the work. It turned out that CA Fish and Game and the US Fish and Wildlife said the permits were not signed off. All work stopped.

At this point Judy Grote was stymied; but all was not lost because she got help from Sheri Olliges and Barret Moore. Barrett had good contacts with Joe Simitian and her husband Bruce Ives had good contacts with Anna Eshoo so they began working with those offices for assistance. Barrett and Sheri also kept on top of things with the CA Fish and Game and Fish and Wildlife departments until the permits were approved. Judy kept checking on the project's status and kept the community informed.

The result was that the last week of September 2009, the contractor started work again. They worked long hours and finished the job in 5 weeks. Success!

Judy offered the following advice when trying to work a project like this:

1. Be persistent. Keep checking on status, get the community involved, and have them communicate directly so it's not just your thing.
2. Get the community involved through communication: letter writing, telephone, petitions, and articles in local papers (such as the *Skylines*).
3. Use the right people with the right skills for the right job.
4. Get the right connections through knowing your community and local government officials.

Many thanks to this group of residents who worked together on this project for the last three years. It was a long "haul", but persistence and team work really did pay off.

A Letter from Lakeside School Superintendent/Principal

Dear Community Members,

For 127 years, the Lakeside Joint School district has prided itself on providing an excellent education for local students right here in our mountain community. In fact, our district is the fourth highest ranked K-8 district in Santa Clara County in student academic achievement. Children in Kindergarten through fifth grades learn in a small school environment with excellent teachers. Our middle school students receive a comprehensive education that provides them with the skills to succeed in high school, including strong core academic programs like reading, writing and math, as well as fine arts, sports, and a complete science program with labs.

Our district has a unique partnership with the Campbell Union School District whereby our sixth through eight grade students currently attend school at Rolling Hills Middle School, giving them the opportunity to experience a broad and academically challenging middle school education. With teachers who specialize in the subjects they teach, a comprehensive science program with updated labs for hands-on education and updated computer technology to help students excel in the 21st century economy – our middle school students thrive.

Changes in Funding for Lakeside Middle School Students

Due to a sudden unexpected change in funding for the Lakeside middle school students' program, the school district faces drastic cutbacks. In order to continue to provide our tradition of academic excellence for all students, a new revenue source is required. We have recently reduced administration, maintenance, and other expenses to aid in this effort, but it is not enough.

Continuing High Quality Education For all Lakeside Students

Because of this, the school Board of Trustees is considering a local education funding measure for the May 2010 special mail-only ballot. This measure would provide stable funding to continue excellent, comprehensive education for middle school students and, at the same time, preserve the small school environment at the Lakeside campus. All of the revenue from this measure will be spent locally on Lakeside Joint School District students and cannot be taken away by the state.

Without the revenue from this measure, we at Lakeside will do our best to educate the nine grades of students with a budget that currently supports only five teachers. This will likely result in two-grade or three-grade combination classes and an overall reduction in the quality of education for all Lakeside students.

With the revenue from this measure, we will continue to provide the excellent education currently available to all of our students and will continue our tradition of academic success in our

mountain community.

Please contact me by phone at (408) 354-2372 or visit www.lakesidelosgatos.org for more information.

Sincerely,



Bob Chrisman
Superintendent/Principal



A New Years' Toast

When winter rains pound through the trees at night
May your power stay on and your lights burn bright;

When cold raging winds over mountain tops blow
May your family stay warm and your SPUG rates low;

When gophers eat up the garden and raccoons get in the trash
May the beauty of nature touch you and
Poison oak not give you a rash.

~Patti Begley

Classified Ads

FOR SALE

Filter Fabric Roll. 12' X 200' (approximate) Roll. \$250.00, OBO. 650 747-9507.

Georgia's Homesewns: Several varieties of bags, pillowcases and other fabric goods & gifts. Made in South Skyline region. Phone 650-941-1068 or visit <http://www.CoastalSeams.com>

Oak antique table for sale. 54 inch round, lion's claw legs, two leaves. Make offer. Greg 408-340-0344

Trex deck boards for sale. Make offer. Greg 408-340-0344

UniCover Safari Camper Shell, white. Excellent condition, used approximately 1 year, then stored in garage.. Fits Full-sized, short-bed truck 6.5 foot box (Was on a Chevy). Outside measurement, 80" X 70". Should fit Chevy, GMC and possibly Dodge. Cab high model, light tinted glass, heavy duty rear door with single T-handle, 12 volt dome light. Sliding pass-through cab window, radius side sliding windows with screens in perfect condition. \$500. 650 747-9507.

FREE

Free local Home Seller's seminar
Presented by Karin Bird and Scott Hayes of Alain-Pinel. Our unique location and this challenging market calls for a developed set of skills to successfully sell your property. If you are considering selling your home or property in the next year, or even beyond that, we invite you to join us. Topics covered will include:

- Goal assessment
- Market analysis
- Preparing your home
- The inspection and disclosure process
- Offers and escrow

Emphasis will be placed on the issues which uniquely affect our neighborhood. For pre-registration call 650-851-8100 or email Karin@birdhayes.com

FREE

Free fire fitting. This fitting will allow the connection of a fire hose to your water supply and can be utilized by the fire department to access the water necessary for fire suppression. South Skyline Fire and Rescue, George 408-354-1401

SERVICES

Alice's Restaurant
Four Corners on Skyline
Locally owned and operated
(650) 851-0303
M-F 8:30AM-9:00PM,
Sa & Su 8:00AM – 9:00PM

Brown's Roofing Inc. Licensed Roofing Contractor, 15 year Kings Mountain resident. New roofs and repairs - no job too small. Free estimates, contact Jeff Brown at (650) 851-1125. Also, visit our website at brownsroofing.com.
References available upon request.

Care Giver who lives in Skyline area. CNA training, Massage Therapist, will travel to your home. Good local references and well experiences. Contact Olahe-lotu 650-630-5394

Defensible space clearing and fuel reduction around your home and along your roadways using a masticator. John Romandia, Black Cat Construction, 831-750-7425 www.blackcatconstruction.net

One-on-one in home tutoring by professionals at learning strategies K-12, from phonics to calculus. All subject areas plus study skills, test prep (SSAT, ISEE, SAT I & II, AP), college applications & essays, summer reading programs, writing, etc. Victoria Skinner, Director Learning Strategies P.O. Box 535 La Honda, Ca. 94020 phone/fax (650) 747-9651 victoriaskinner@creative-learning-strategies.com

SERVICES

Puppy Palace of Woodside

Let your dog can be cared for in my home while you are away. I only take a small group of dogs and they are loved like they are my own. There is a large fenced yard plus the dogs have the run of the house. We go on daily walks on the country trails surrounding the house. Call Kathy Banks 650-529-9223 home 650-400-3054 cell kathyabanks@yahoo.com

 Skyline Broadband Service

1 Mbps symmetrical broadband is now available in the South Skyline area. <http://SkylineBroadbandService.com> 650-917-9279

The Mountain Terrace

Charming and rustic atmosphere. Now available for private events. Open for wine tasting on Sat. and Sun. 12:00-4:00. (650) 851-1606

Classified Guidelines

- Any ads over 35 words may be shortened due to space issues.
- Please limit text to a short description and contact information.
- Ads are free to members.
- Deadline for Ads for the April issue will be March 21.
- Send ads to skylineseditor@earthlink.net

SOUTH SKYLINE ASSOCIATION

Box 400, Star Route 2

La Honda, CA 94020

Las Cumbres Fire Station Open House

The renovation of the Las Cumbres Fire Station is complete! Thanks again to all who contributed to the project.

**There will be an open house at Las Cumbres Station on
Sunday, January 24th,
Noon to 2PM, with a short dedication ceremony at 12:30.**

This is just prior to the SSA meeting . Stop by and see South Skyline's improved fire station and meet your volunteer firefighters.

Directions to LC Station: highway 35 to Las Cumbres Road (5 miles south of Highway 9, 1.5 miles north of Black Rd.), turn west on Las Cumbres Road. Proceed 1/2 mile. The station is on the left behind the long line of mailboxes. Park around the community center circle, which is to your right.

SSA Calendar

General Meeting – January 24 at
CDF Saratoga Summit 7:00

Business Meetings at 7:15 pm:

Thurs. January 14
Thurs. February 11
Thurs. March 11

(Call Fred Glover for location and directions)

President Fred Glover 408-354-7121
Editor Patti Begley 408-867-3973

Join SSA Today

For just \$15 a year, your membership dues to the South Skyline Association will provide the funds to publish the Skylines newsletter, offer free classified ads, allow membership in the South Skylines Propane User Group, and provide speakers for our general meetings. Send your dues to:

SSA Membership Chairperson
22400 Skyline Blvd. Box 35
La Honda, CA 94020

Membership forms can be found in this issue or on
www.southskyline.org.

Skylines Is Published Once A Quarter

Skylines invites individuals to submit articles and artwork.

Policy on Classified Ads: Ads are free to SSA members. No continuing ads will be accepted. They must be resubmitted for each issue.

Skylines Ads and News Articles: The deadline for submitting ads and articles for the next issue is March 21, 2009.

Send all ads and articles to: Patti Begley c/o 22400 Skyline Blvd #35, La Honda CA 94020, or SkylinesEditor@earthlink.net, 408-867-3973

We reserve the right to edit all submissions. We assume no responsibility for omissions, incorrect information or personal opinions.